



Commissioner Audrey M. \_\_\_\_\_

# EDMONSON



District 3 Newsletter • Spring/Summer 2008

## State of the District address



Surrounded by constituents, Commissioner Audrey Edmonson delivered the State of the District address at the Adrienne Arsht Performing Arts Center, located in District 3. Commissioner Edmonson thanked her constituents and emphasized that "any progress, whether great or small, that has been made in District 3 would not be possible" without the hard work of her constituents.

"I am fortunate to represent a district which is multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, a district whose needs are not uniform. All of those who live and work here, all homeowners and business associations who devote their time and concern to their portion of District 3, all contribute to making District 3 a vibrant and strong community," Commissioner Edmonson said. "While it is often a challenge to comply with all of your requests, please be assured that at all times my office will be accessible to you, and I pledge to continue to give you the best service possible."

For the full text of Commissioner Edmonson's address and photos of the event go to the District 3 website: [www.miamidade.gov/district03/home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/district03/home.asp).



From L-R: Rosemary Ference, Belle Meade Homeowners Association; Commissioner Edmonson; Bob Powers, Palm Grove Neighborhood Association; Fran Rollason, MiMo Biscayne Association; Damian McNamaraat, Morningside Crime Watch.



## Commissioner Edmonson's ordinance to improve construction site safety

Miami-Dade County Commissioners have overwhelmingly passed an ordinance sponsored by Commissioner Audrey Edmonson, District 3, which will require strict oversight of crane operations in the county. The crane safety ordinance includes standards and regulations that did not previously exist in the County code, including education and certification requirements for crane operators and storm preparation procedures.

The ordinance represents recommendations from the Crane and Heavy Equipment Advisory Committee, an advisory board established by Commissioner Edmonson in 2006 after a series of crane accidents in Miami-Dade County and the South Florida region. The work group is made up of construction equipment owners and operators, construction workers, municipal building departments and regulation agencies tasked with developing procedures and standards to improve the safety of operating cranes and other heavy duty construction equipment.

Continued on page 2

## Commissioner Edmonson leads effort to find help for homeowners facing foreclosure



The mortgage foreclosure crisis is hitting Miami-Dade County pretty hard. In fact, Florida and California have pushed the number of homes entering foreclosure to nationwide record highs.

Many Miami-Dade residents are finding themselves on the verge of losing their homes to foreclosure because they can't afford payments on adjustable-rate mortgages, increasing tax bills and insurance costs. This is particularly true of buyers who were enticed by zero-down mortgages on moderately priced homes. In fact, a national survey found that lower-income families, single parents, seniors and people of color are disproportionately affected by the housing crisis.

Foreclosures and the poor real estate market are also creating a new risk for tenants. If the owner of a house or condo goes into foreclosure, the tenants can be kicked out---despite having a lease.

Because working families are being hardest hit by foreclosures, as Chairperson of the Economic Development and Human Services (EDHS) Committee, Commissioner Edmonson held a special public hearing to address the issue with the help of the Miami-

Dade Affordable Housing Foundation and the Housing Finance Authority.

The topics discussed included the scope and impact of the problem in Miami-Dade, solutions to curb foreclosures, fraudulent or deceptive mortgage tactics and homeowners' and renters' rights. Among the speakers were workforce families, low-income families and representatives from Fannie Mae, the Miami-Dade Consumer Services Department, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Dade County Federal Credit Union, the Mortgage Fraud Task Force, National City Mortgage Rescue Finance, Mortgage Workouts, the Mayor's Mortgage Fraud Task Force and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN).

From this hearing emerged efforts to have the federal government take concrete steps to protect consumers from predatory lending, complete written communication to the 25 largest sub-prime mortgage lenders in the country urging they temporarily and voluntarily suspend foreclosures in Miami-Dade and a directive to the County to keep records of foreclosures by zip code so that informational campaigns can be directed to the most affected areas, among other efforts.

In addition, the EDHS hearing made it clear that you don't have to be a victim. Anyone who suspects deceitful mortgage practices should contact Miami-Dade County's Economic Crime Bureau at (305) 994-1000; call the Anti-Predatory Lending Helpline at (786) 331-5348; learn foreclosure prevention options from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) at [www.fha.gov/foreclosure](http://www.fha.gov/foreclosure); call for free or low cost housing counseling from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Dept. at 1-800-569-4287; call the Miami-Dade Housing Finance Authority at (786) 331-5361 or the Miami-Dade Affordable Housing Foundation at (305) 373-9750 for assistance on ways to face and survive foreclosure.

## Commissioner Edmonson's ordinance to improve construction site safety (continuation of page 1)

During the County Commission meeting, Commissioner Edmonson referred to a recent crane accident in New York that resulted in seven deaths and injury to 24 people. Commissioner Edmonson offered her sympathies to the loved ones of those who had been killed or hurt and made her argument for the passage of the ordinance that will improve crane safety.

"This latest accident is another reminder of the dangers that can be caused by cranes," she said. "The ordinance we are about to vote on represents two years of hard work by the Crane and Heavy Equipment Advisory Committee, the Building Code Compliance Office and the County Attorney's office. It will enforce stricter inspections and tougher regulations of crane operations and offer indispensable safety to our residents, workers and visitors."

Commissioner Edmonson's ordinance requires that operators follow the manufacturer's instructions and meet the standards recommended by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), and the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for the installation and use of cranes. It also requires the use of a special crane inspector to ensure the safety of cranes at various stages and outlines requirements for minimum training, hands-on equipment operation testing, physical examinations and substance abuse tests for operators. Under the new ordinance, operators must be re-certified every five years. The ordinance's requirements will be enforced by the County's Building Code Compliance Office. Violations will incur fines starting at \$1,000 per day.

## Start a Crime Watch group in your neighborhood



### Start a Crime Watch group

Commissioner Edmonson joins Carmen Caldwell, executive director of Neighborhood Crime Watch, a non-profit organization, and the Miami-Dade Police Dept. in promoting crime prevention measures throughout the county.

Crime does not discriminate. It strikes all of the neighborhoods in District 3. The mortgage foreclosure crisis has only exacerbated the problem by causing a drop in municipal and county revenues, more homelessness and an increase in vacant properties. People are stealing. Foreclosed homes are the target of vandalism.

Commissioner Edmonson is asking residents to take an active part in combating crime by starting a **Crime Watch** group and looking out for their neighbors. Recently, Commissioner Edmonson, accompanied by **Miami-Dade County Police** and **Carmen Caldwell**, executive director of **Miami-Dade County Citizens' Crime Watch**, attended Crime Watch meetings in the **Lake Belmar** neighborhood in the northeast part of District 3. Crime Watch groups are also being organized or revitalized in **Bayside, Belle Meade and Davis Harbor**.

**The Neighborhood Crime Watch Program** organizes neighborhoods of single family homes, apartment complexes or gated communities throughout Miami-Dade County and its municipalities. It educates residents in crime prevention, homeland security, and response to natural disasters. Learn about your local police department needs and establish a working relationship. Report crimes or suspicious activity. Create a phone chain to communicate with neighbors in times of need. For more information, call (305) 470-1670 or check out the website at [www.citizenscrimewatch.com](http://www.citizenscrimewatch.com).

## MLK Transit Village

In her State of the District speech, Commissioner Edmonson once again made clear that she is in support of the proposed Martin Luther King (MLK) Transit Village and the North Corridor Metrorail Expansion project (Orange Line-Phase 2) and will continue fighting to make them a reality.

The Commissioner spearheaded a joint meeting with Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez to discuss the status of the project with residents and business owners from the communities surrounding the project.

The Transit Village Project, proposed for the southeast corner of N.W. 62 Street and N.W. 7 Avenue, is part of a comprehensive plan for the economic stimulation of the once-vibrant Liberty City. It is expected to be a catalyst for the area's revitalization but has seen some obstacles. The meeting was held to address community and business concerns about construction delays and administrative changes at the agencies overseeing the project.

"The County made a promise to Liberty City residents and business owners who recognize that the Transit Village is good for Liberty City," said Commissioner Edmonson. "We owe it to them to remain committed to the economical renewal of this community and keep our promise."

The original plans for the MLK Transit Village were similar to the retail district surrounding the Metrorail Dadeland stations. It included a transit hub for Miami-Dade Transit buses, retail shops, commercial buildings and affordable and workforce housing units.

The Orange Line Phase 2: North Corridor Metrorail Extension is an elevated 9.5-mile double-track, heavy-rail extension of the Miami-Dade Metrorail system. The extension runs from the existing elevated guide-way just north of the Martin Luther King Jr. Metrorail station at NW 62nd Street, serving the communities along the NW 27th Avenue corridor, Miami-Dade College and the sports venues at Dolphin Stadium and Calder Race Course, to a termination point at NW 215th Street just south of Florida's Turnpike. The termination at NW 215th Street accommodates a future interface into Broward County.

Seven new stations would serve the extension at NW 82nd Street/Northside, NW 119th Street/Miami-Dade College, Ali-Baba Avenue/Opa-Locka, NW 163rd Street/Bunche Park, NW 183rd Street/Miami Gardens, NW 199th Street/Dolphin Stadium, and NW 215th Street/Calder Race Course. Provisions will also be made to accommodate a future station at NW 103rd Street.

## Events • Come and Enjoy----Everyone's Invited

Commissioner Edmonson invites you to participate in the terrific events happening in District 3:

**The Adrienne Arsht Performing Arts Center: A Musical Celebration with Gospel WMBM-1490**, Sundays, at 4 p.m. through May 25. The monthly series of free concerts celebrates great American music and features many of our community's best and brightest gospel soloists and choirs, many affiliated with Miami-Dade County churches. Gospel groups and choirs interested in participating are invited to contact Debra Toomer, WMBM Director of Marketing, at (305) 769-1100 or via e-mail at [dtoomer@wmbm.com](mailto:dtoomer@wmbm.com).

**Downtown Miami Interactive Walking Tour:** Experience the Renaissance of Downtown Miami with the "Taste of Downtown Miami" tour each Wednesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon and which includes complimentary tastings at downtown restaurants and visits to Miami's oldest and newest buildings. For more information call (305) 416-6868.



### First "green" Affordable Home

Home builder Ario Lundy shows Commissioner Edmonson some of the sustainable materials being used to construct Miami-Dade's first "green" affordable home in Liberty City. The home will produce less waste and greenhouse emissions thus saving its owners up to 65 per cent in utility bills. The home will be climate fortified and hurricane resistant, ensuring the safety of the family inside and protection from structural damage. In addition, the home will save water and reduce energy consumption.



### Tornadoes are Champions

At a County Commission meeting, Commissioner Edmonson recognized the Booker T. Washington Senior High School Class 4A District XVI Football Champions and presented the players and coaches with certificates of appreciation from the County Commission.



### Allapattah Village

Commissioner Edmonson donned hard hat to help launch the demolition of the old YMCA building in Allapattah and then joined Alfred Sánchez, President and CEO of the Greater Miami YMCA, Fred Jackson from The Jackson Foundation and Robert Sánchez, YMCA Past Chairman, at the groundbreaking of Allapattah Village, an experiment in joining a developer and a YMCA facility to fulfill two needs. Two apartment towers will rise on top of the new YMCA and will offer much needed rental housing for low and modest income families and senior citizens. In turn, the residents of Allapattah Village will become new members of the YMCA.



**Gathering of Asian Advisory Committee**

Commissioner Edmonson joined members of the Asian and Muslim community of District 3, many of whom serve on the Miami-Dade County Asian-American Advisory Board, at a holiday gathering hosted by Dr. Shakida Shakir in Miami Shores. Standing are Shabbir Motorwala; Denis Murasaki; Saif Ishoof with baby Rania; Sadrul Fasihi; Lisa Barquist, Esq., and Saad Shakir. Seated next to Commissioner Edmonson is Dr. Shakir.



**Historic Overtown/Lyric Theatre Metrorail Station**

Commissioner Edmonson joined Dr. Dorothy Jenkins Fields, director of the Black Archives and Overtown Historic Village, Ysela Llort, assistant County manager in charge of transit, and residents and business people from Overtown in re-naming the Metrorail Overtown station as the Historic Overtown/Lyric Theatre station. In addition, Commissioner Edmonson, who sponsored the County Commission resolution to rename the station, helped launched the Overtown Circulator (Route 211) which provides service around the Overtown neighborhood, including stops at the Metrorail stations, the post office and local supermarkets.



**Dominican Festival at Duarte Park**

Commissioner Edmonson joins Dr. Amada Vargas, executive director of Latinos United in Action Center, to kick-off the 2nd Dominican American Cultural Festival held at Juan Pablo Duarte Park in Allapattah.



**Homeless Trust**

As a member of the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, Commissioner Edmonson was on hand to accept a check for more than \$25 million awarded to the Trust by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (US-HUD). Joining Commissioner Edmonson are Anthony Britto from US-HUD; Ron Book, Trust Chairman; David Raymond, Trust Director; Maria Ortiz-Hill, US-HUD; and Pauline Clark-Trotman, Chairwoman, Homeless-Formerly Homeless Forum.



**Jefferson Reaves, Sr. Park Community Center**

The recreation center at Jefferson Reaves, Sr. Park was given the name of longtime community activist, Everett Stewart, Sr., for his dedication to Miami-Dade County and the Brownsville community. Cutting the ribbon are Jack Kardys, director of Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation Dept., Everett Stewart, Sr. and Commissioner Edmonson.

## Events - Continuation



### Three Kings Day Parade

Commissioner Edmonson, her granddaughter Bianca Casher, and the Miami-Dade Fire Department took part at the annual Three Kings Day Parade, riding high down Calle Ocho in Little Havana.



### Robert's Pharmacy Opens in Wynwood

Commissioner Edmonson welcomed the newest Robert's Pharmacy located at 3454 NW 7th Ave. in District 3. Joining her on opening day are the owner of Robert's Pharmacies, Aiman Aryan, and Shabir Motorwala, member of the Miami-Dade County Asian-American Advisory Board.



### Pillar Awards

The Black Heritage Committee of the Miami-Dade County Black Affairs Advisory Board recognized Commissioner Edmonson with the Pillars Award for her work within government. Here she is joined by Bernadine Bush, Tony Ojeda, Chief Sandrel Rivers and Desmond Alufohai at the 7th annual awards ceremony.



### 5000 Role Models

Commissioner Edmonson participated in the 5000 Role Models of Excellence annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Scholarship Breakfast held at Jungle Island. Left to right, Miami-Dade County Commission Vice-Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan; State Senator Dr. Frederica Wilson, founder of the 5000 Role Models Project; County Commissioner Dorrian D. Rolle; Commissioner Edmonson; County Mayor Carlos Alvarez and Dr. Bobby Jones, host and executive producer, Bobby Jones Gospel on BET.



### Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce

The Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce of South Florida helps foment business opportunities for and within the Miami-Dade County Puerto Rican community. At its meeting, Commissioner Edmonson joined County Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Eduardo Artau Gómez, president of Metro Pavia Systems in Puerto Rico; former Miami-Dade County Commissioner Maurice Ferré and Luis De Rosa, president of the chamber.



### Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy

Commissioner Edmonson was joined by District 2 Commissioner Dorrian Rolle in recognizing Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy graduates Brandon Washington of Miami Northwestern High who will attend the University of Miami; Judah Linder of Miami Edison who will attend Iowa State University and Tyrone Williams and Dante Reeves, also of Miami Edison, both of whom are being pursued by universities. The academy is sponsored by the Metro-Miami Action Plan Trust.



Commissioner Audrey Edmonson joins Sandra Stefani, owner of Casa Toscana Restaurant in the MiMo Biscayne District; Pete Hernandez, Manager, City of Miami and Fran Rollason, President, MiMo Biscayne Association at the weekly Saturday Upper East Side Green Market at Legion Park, Biscayne Blvd. at 66th Street. The market features produce, flowers, handmade soaps, jams, bread and other goods and is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Commissioner Audrey Edmonson joins City of Miami Commissioners Angel González, Tomás Regalado and Michelle Spence-Jones; City of Miami Manager Pete Hernandez; North Miami Councilman Jacques Despinosse and other dignitaries at the inauguration of the Little Haiti Cultural Complex and Soccer Park, N.E. 59th terrace and Second Ave., Miami. The cultural center will house art galleries, black box theatre, tropical garden, classrooms, dance studio and other amenities.



Commissioner Audrey Edmonson took a tour through the Allapattah neighborhood in District 3, accompanied by City of Miami Commissioner Angel González, and stopped to visit the Allapattah-Wynwood Community Development Center, a day-care facility run by Heriberto Fonseca, Sr., President, and Heriberto Fonseca, Junior, and also visited with seniors at the Allapattah Community Action Elderly Program where she was greeted by its Executive Director Miriam Urrea.

## Legislation You Can Count On

- Sponsored resolutions urging lenders to freeze foreclosures and the Federal Reserve Board to restrict the use of an adjustable interest rate to help curtail foreclosures;
- Sponsored the first law in Florida regulating the safety and inspection of construction cranes and hoisting equipment to curb construction site accidents which have resulted in workers' injury or death;
- Co-sponsored resolution urging the Florida Legislature to pass a law to provide added flexibility to property owners in making partial property tax payments because recent economic downturns have created financial burdens for homeowners and small businesses;
- Co-sponsored resolution urging the Florida Legislature to establish a program to provide matching funds for solar and other energy-saving solar water heater installations for low-income homeowners;
- Co-sponsored resolution urging the U.S. Congress to strengthen hate-crime laws.

For a complete list of these captions or any other legislation, please visit the Commissioner's website at <http://www.miamidade.gov/district03>.

Commissioner Edmonson currently chairs the Economic Development and Human Services Committee, and is a member of the Governmental Operations and Environment, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, and Transit committees. Commissioner Edmonson also serves as Miami-Dade County's representative on the Downtown Development Authority and Miami-Dade County's Homeless Assistance Trust.

## Board Vacancies

As your Commissioner, I rely on your input to make decisions which affect our daily lives. I encourage you to become a member of one of the many committees which serve to advise the County Commission on a variety of issues. Presently, I have open appointments on the following committees and urge you to call me at (305) 375-5393 if you are interested:

- Asian American Advisory Board
- Biscayne Bay Shoreline Development Review Committee
- Board of Rules and Appeals, Fire Service
- Cultural Affairs Council
- Enterprise Zone Advisory Council
- Industrial Development Authority
- Living Wage Commission
- Small Business Advisory Board

## Around the District



Commissioner Edmonson presented a proclamation to **Temple Israel of Greater Miami** in **Edgewater** in recognition of its interfaith and intercultural celebration, "A City Sings for Martin Luther King," which featured choral dance groups from throughout the county, including the **Unity on the Bay Choir**....joined Commissioners Sally Heyman, José "Pepe" Díaz, Dorrin Rolle and Katy Sorenson at Bayfront Park to raise money for breast cancer research at the annual "**Making Strides Against Breast Cancer**" walkathon.... paid a visit to the children of **Morningside Elementary School**, a magnet school which teaches children a second language starting in kindergarten....sponsored a County Commission resolution renaming North West 50th Street as "**Bishop J. D. Williams Street**" in honor of the **Brownsville** pioneer at the behest of the **African American Committee of Dade Heritage Trust**....kicked-off the **WalkSafe Program** at **Earlington Heights Elementary**, joining parents, teachers, doctors and police officers in teaching students on the importance of being a safe pedestrian....joined forces with the **Upper East Side neighborhood associations, MiMo Biscayne Association, the Upper East Side Miami and the Biscayne Boulevard councils** in sponsoring the Upper East Side Holiday Celebration and toy give-away to children from **Morningside and Phyllis Miller Elementary Schools**....celebrated at the **Rainbow**

**Pride Resource Fair** at Legion Park with **SAVE Dade, Pridelines Youth Services, Safe Schools of South Florida and Unity on the Bay**...was named by County Mayor Carlos Alvarez as **Honorary Chairperson** to the **City of Cape Town, Africa** for the Miami-Dade County Sister Cities Program....helped inaugurate the sixth **Miami Beach Community Health Center** at the **Center for Haitian Studies** which will serve the residents of **Little Haiti**....toured the **Community Smiles Dental Clinic** at Lindsey Hopkins Institute, a non-profit entity which offers free or low-cost dental care to low-income families and, joined by Mayor Alvarez, **Curley's House of Style and Hope Relief Food Bank**, a non-profit organization in which provides meals and clothing to needy families....with help from the County's Water and Sewer Dept., urged residents of **Town Park Plaza in Overtown** to replace 151 old showerheads with new, high efficiency models which save water and reduce water bills---for more information on making the switch call the Dept. at (786) 552-8088.



Commissioner Edmonson helped District 3 children prepare for school with a backpack giveaway (Top left), and by distributing toys during the holidays (above). In addition, the commissioner gave away Thanksgiving turkeys for needy families, held a movie day for District 3 children during the Christmas break, and hosted Fun Day at Olinda Park with family activities

## District Info

District 3 is comprised of the City of Miami, including the communities of Liberty City, Little Haiti, Overtown, the Upper East Side, Allapattah and Wynwood as well as the Village of El Portal, the City of Miami Shores and parts of North Miami. Please feel free to contact Commissioner Edmonson at either District 3 office:

### Downtown Office

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### District Office

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