Neighborhood celebrates paint-out of 'Great Wall'

Painting crews worked Saturdays to cover 31,000 square feet of wall along SW 152nd Street.
(Photo by Robert Holley)

BY RICHARD YAGER

Team Metro supervisor Catherine Minnis summed up the biggest wall paint-out accomplished to date in the Kendall area — a total 31,000 square feet — by saying, "Imagine, the unthinkable accomplished!"

So it was only fitting that when the project was completed there should be an informal neighborhood party for the workers and folks who live immediately south of the wall fronting SW 152nd Street opposite Coral Reef Senior High School.

During four March weekends, assembled teams shared paint-out hours to cover aging cinderblock walls, stretching along the main thoroughfare between SW 102nd and 98th avenues, with an appropriate Florida sea green color.

Carol Vilberg, vice president, and Robert Holley, recording secretary, display a record of Fairway Estates Homeowners Association beautification project during a "Neighborhood Pride Week" barbecue and outdoor celebration on Apr. 2. (Photo by Richard Yager)

It resulted in a celebration for all who pitched in to accomplish the beautification project, including student volunteers, the Greater Miami Service Corps; Fairway Estates Homeowners Association; Miami-Dade Police Department's Cutler Ridge Station, and Team Metro painters, Francisco Presinal and Danny Guerra, along with the Kendall Outreach staff.

Miami-Dade County District 9 Commissioner Dennis C. Moss led the congratulations while kids and adults alike lined up for a hot dog barbecue spread hosted by Team Metro as part of its annual Neighborhood Pride Week.

That, of course, wasn't news to Fairway Estates homeowners who displayed how they've encouraged landscaping, painting and beautification by holding contests every four months to honor residents who display pride in their homes.

"It goes back to 1999, as an offshoot of Hurricane Andrew cleanups," said Bob Holley who photographs winners with his digital camera to compile a continuing history of neighborhood accomplishments. His photos were on display at the event.

"Winners get a sign and certificate for recognition; there's no cash award," added Carol Vilberg, Fairway Estates vice president. "It's part of what our Beautification Committee urges everyone who lives here to do — cleaning up swales, beautifying areas with flowers and tree plantings, and keeping up homes.

"We've grown into Crime Watch and an email bulletin system to keep everyone up to date, too," she added with pride.