

Spring is a great season in District 3! Thanks for giving me the opportunity to update you on what is happening around our neighborhoods and our City.

First, I want to publicly congratulate College Park resident, Mr. Craig O'Neil, on being named the City of Orlando Neighborhood Watch Block Captain of the Year for District 3. Under his leadership, the Maury Road Neighborhood Watch was also named the Neighborhood Watch group of the year for the entire City. It is because of dedicated individuals like Mr. O'Neil that the Neighborhood Watch program in District 3 is the largest in the City both in the number of organized groups and the number of individual members. And it is truly my belief that it is largely due to these citizens, who embrace the importance of looking out for their fellow neighbors, that the crime rate was down significantly in District 3 from 2008 to 2009.

One of the reasons that I love Spring in College Park is because of a great event organized by College Park's neighborhood association. The Annual Sunday in the Park, taking place this year on March 21st from noon-5 p at Dartmouth Park, is a wonderful family event that brings together all that makes this neighborhood so unique, most importantly, the residents!

Another great example of the community coming together is for events such as the 4th annual Baldwin Park Arts Festival which is taking place on March 13, 2010 in the Village Center. This fun-filled event is one that is put on by many volunteers dedicated to bringing both the arts and entertainment to the area. Come and meet your fellow neighbors, enjoy art in all forms and support our City's continued mantra of "Buying Local." For more information on this event, visit www.baldwinparkartsfestival.com.

Some other events are taking place around the area in March, including Leu Gardens Annual Plant Sale on March 20th and 21st. Admission to the gardens is free both days. Don't forget to bring a wagon or cart to help you get all of your plant purchases to your car! For more information, go to www.leugardens.org. Also, on March 13th at 4 p.m., join us downtown in front of City Hall for another WMMO free concert featuring Collective Soul. For more info, check out www.wmmo.com.

College Park is also the location of the Ivanhoe Village Spring Festival taking place on March 14th. Come out to Gaston Edwards Park on the shores of beautiful Lake Ivanhoe from 2:30 p to 7:30 p to enjoy entertainment, food and fun. For more information visit their website at www.ivanhoevillage.org.

Last month, the Mayor gave his annual State of the City address. One of the topics he covered was the repair of the historic Lake Eola Fountain. He said that the fountain will be up and running on an interim basis this summer with the help of Disney's "Imagineers," and that they are close to finalizing the complete restoration plan for this City symbol. For more information on this and the other topics that Mayor Dyer discussed in his speech, visit the City's website at www.cityoforlando.net.

Also in February, we hosted a public forum at Edgewater High School to discuss potential intersection improvements at Vassar Street and Edgewater Drive. Thank you very much to those who took time out of their evening schedules to attend and provide feedback. We will be working through those comments and suggestions during the next few months. If you weren't able to attend the meeting but would like more information on the possible alternatives, please see my [webpage](#) or contact City Transportation Project Manager Tanya King. She can be reached at tanya.king@cityoforlando.net or 407-246-3220.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to Orlando Fire Chief Jim Reynolds who retired in February. As we all know, sometimes health concerns nudge us to re-evaluate our priorities and Chief Reynolds, a third-generation Orlando firefighter, had to make the difficult decision to retire from his City of Orlando Fire Department family after more than 25 years of service. Chief Reynolds always told his men to, "leave it better than you found it," and we at the City know that no truer words could be spoken about Chief Reynolds himself as he led OFD to an ISO rating of 1, something only 44 out of 55,000 fire departments nationwide have achieved.

With that in mind I would also like to congratulate 22-year OFD veteran, John Miller, on his appointment as the 18th Fire Chief of the City of Orlando. If you and your family haven't done so, please consider taking a tour of one of our City's fire stations, maybe College Park's own great Station Three, so you can see first-hand what the men and women of OFD do to fulfill their mission to "protect lives and property," here in Orlando. For more information on our City's fire department and to learn a little bit more about our new Fire Chief, Chief Miller, visit www.cityoforlando.net/fire.

As a lifelong resident of District 3, I truly appreciate your continued support of our unique and wonderful community and look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood this Spring!