

It is official- Spring is here and the great weather gives us all more opportunities to spend quality time with friends and family, especially all of the moms we know, enjoying the great amenities Orlando has to offer.

I was honored last month to attend the member meeting of BioOrlando, a chapter of BioFlorida and a program managed by the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission (EDC). BioOrlando serves as a central organization to help build our area's prominence in the healthcare, biotechnology and life science industry sectors. With Burnham Institute choosing Orlando for the location of their East Coast headquarters, I am excited about the future of this program. At the meeting I presented the first "medical marker" designation to Florida Hospital's Ginsburg Tower, located in District 3, to highlight this building as a healthcare landmark in our ever-growing "Medical City." At the meeting, they announced that BioOrlando is working with United Arts to involve our local artist community in the design of the actual marker. To find out more information about this initiative, please visit the EDC's website at www.orlandoedc.com and click on the news link at the top of the page.

As I mentioned last month, Mayor Dyer unveiled his economic initiative, Strengthen Orlando, back in February. One of the components of that plan, Buy Local Orlando, kicks off this month. Buy Local Orlando is a program geared toward incentivizing our City residents to utilize the goods and services of our local businesses. Why Buy Local? According to an economic analysis, for every \$100 spent at a locally-owned business, \$45 goes back into the community and local tax base, and for every \$100 spent at a non-local chain store, only \$13 comes back to the local area.

I am excited to report that the first business to sign up for the program, Watkins Paint on North Orange Avenue, comes from District 3! And, thanks to other District 3 businesses Barnes Drapery and Floor Covering in Ivanhoe Village as well as Infusion Tea in College Park for their willingness to work with us through this program in order to promote our City's wonderful local business community. To find out how to obtain your free Buy Local consumer card or to sign up your business for the program, please check out the website at www.buylocalorlando.net.

On May 11th, Mayor Dyer's Strengthen Orlando Responding Tour will make a stop in District 3. Please join the Mayor and me at the Rosemont Community Center (4872 Rose Bay Drive) at 7 p.m. to hear more about Buy Local as well as the other components of the Mayor's economic plan and to learn how to access valuable information and resources.

Also, on May 9th at 7 p.m., Leu Gardens is holding its Spring Jazz Stroll. Pack a picnic basket and a blanket and enjoy great music under the stars in a tranquil garden setting. Also, on Mother's Day, enjoy some culture around town as moms receive free admission to Leu Gardens and the Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Gardens in Winter Park. For a full calendar of events for Leu Gardens, including their monthly movie nights (first Friday of every month), check out their website, www.leugardens.org.

On May 22nd, please join the Mayor and me for the City's annual Bike to Work Day. We will be leaving from Infusion Tea on Edgewater Drive in College Park at 8:30 a.m. and biking to City Hall. Enjoy free coffee or tea if you bring your own mug as well as a free LYNX bus pass if you need to bus and bike to work. For more information about this event, please call our City's Transportation department at 407-246-3347.

As always, thank you for what you do, large and small, to make our City a great place to live. I hope to see you around the City this month!