

Celebrating the World Over

City Employees Hail From Each Corner of the Globe

By *Nathon Green*

The winter holiday season has come and gone. How did you celebrate? In Korea, they welcomed two New Years. Nigerians celebrated Boxing Day. Many Ukrainians ate a 12-course meal called Sviata Vecheria, and in Egypt, they recognized the Advent season. Here in Tallahassee, all these customs converged, as each of these traditions is celebrated by City employees. Through this article, we will take you around the world in 60 seconds — unless of course you get interrupted while reading.

Paul Chang: South Korea

What is your native country?

I was born in South Korea.

How long did you live in your native country?

I lived in South Korea until I was about 7 years old.

What holidays are celebrated in South Korea during the winter?

Christmas is celebrated like the United States and New Year's also. However, it's customary and still practiced by many to celebrate Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year).

Can you describe how these holidays are celebrated?

During Chinese New Year's, Koreans would visit elderly relatives to practice the tradition of bowing to the floor. After bowing to the elders, elders would give them some money and blessings for the New Year.

What are some tasty foods that are associated with the New Year?

There are rice related dishes, and the most popular food served during the New Year is rice cake and dumpling soup called Dduk-guk.

Do you still celebrate your native holidays? Why or why not?

We still celebrate our holidays primarily because of my parents and relatives that we continue to keep in touch with. I often experience these even here because of some Asian restaurants here in Tallahassee.



Children bowing to elderly relatives during New Year.

Dduk-guk

(Serves 4)

Ingredients

- 1 (1 lb.) package Korean duk (flat oval rice cakes)
- 6 cups broth (beef, anchovy or chicken)
- Soup soy sauce and pepper (to taste)
- 2 eggs (fried and sliced into thin strips or simply stir into the boiling soup)
- Dried seaweed sheets cut into thin slices
- 2 scallions, chopped (optional garnish)

Directions

- Soak rice cakes in cold water for about 20 minutes.
- Bring broth to a boil.*
- Season to taste with soup soy sauce and black pepper.
- Add rice cakes and simmer until tender, about 10 minutes.
- Ladle into individual bowls and then add egg and seaweed strips and scallions.

* If you are using store-bought broth, then mix 4 cups broth with 2 cups water and season with soup soy sauce.



Mike & Teresa Tadros: Egypt

What is your native county?

Egypt

How long did you live in your native country?

36 years

What holidays are celebrated in Egypt during the winter?

Christmas in Egypt is one of the most popular festivals and events. While December 25 is considered Christmas Day in most regions of the world, the Coptic, which is an Orthodox church, celebrates Christmas on January 7.

Can you give a description of how Christmas is celebrated?

Christmas traditions in Egypt are influenced by regional culture throughout the country and thus, have a certain diversity to boast of. The preceding 40 days of Christmas in Egypt are known as Advent season. This long period is of importance as people abstain from eating meat, poultry or dairy products during this period. The practice during the Advent season marks the self-control and devotion of all those who want to participate in Christmas in Egypt. However, people follow this dictum only for the last week of Advent. As in any other country, people shop and shop on the eve of the Christmas celebrations in Egypt. On the auspicious day of Christmas you will see Egyptians attending the church dressed in bright new outfits, and the priests wear their ceremonial clothes. The service in the church lasts till midnight. The bells of the church are rung to mark off the end of the service. After the service, the people return to their homes, where they dine on soup and Fattah which consists of meat cubes (lamb or beef) embedded in rice, garlic and crushed pita pieces in soup.

Can you list some tasty foods that are associated with each holiday?

Turkey, stuffed grape leaf, baklava, wedding cake.



Coptic Christians celebrating Christmas in Egypt.

Baklava

Ingredients

- 1 pound chopped mixed nuts
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 (16 ounce) package phyllo dough
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 9x13 inch baking dish.
- Toss together cinnamon and nuts. Unroll phyllo and cut whole stack in half to fit the dish. Cover phyllo with a damp cloth while assembling the baklava to keep it from drying out.
- Place two sheets of phyllo in the bottom of the prepared dish. Brush generously with butter. Sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons of the nut mixture on top. Repeat layers until all ingredients are used, ending with about 6 sheets of phyllo. Using a sharp knife, cut baklava (all the way through to the bottom of the dish) into four long rows, then (nine times) diagonally to make 36 diamond shapes.
- Bake in preheated oven 50 minutes, until golden and crisp.
- While baklava is baking, combine sugar and water in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to a boil. Stir in honey, vanilla and lemon zest. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes.
- Remove the baklava from the oven and immediately spoon the syrup over it. Let cool completely before serving. Store uncovered.



Celebrating the World Over

Lana Bartosz: Ukraine

What is your native county?

Ukraine

How long did you live in Ukraine?

I lived there until I was 25.

What holidays are celebrated in Ukraine during the winter?

New Year's Day, January 1, is no doubt the most popular holiday of the year. There is a saying that a person will spend the year the way he has welcomed it, so many do their best to have fun on New Year's Day. People usually spend this day or, to be more precise, evening and night with family and friends decorating a fir tree, cooking and eating delicious dishes, giving each other gifts and partying until the sun comes up. The local channels show loved-by-all films, and a few minutes before midnight, the annual festive address of the President to his nation is broadcasted.

Can you give me a description of how Christmas is celebrated?

Christmas in Ukraine is celebrated on January 7. Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar, used in North America. Therefore, the Ukrainians celebrate Christmas 13 days later than the Catholic world. Much to the Grinch's delight, Christmas celebrations were officially banned during the Soviet era. It only became an official holiday in 1991. On January 6, Christmas Eve, many families gather for Sviata Vecheria (Holy Supper). Also, in the last few years, many forgotten traditions like Kalvadki have been reviving.

What is Kalvadki?

Masked children go door-to-door to receive candy in exchange for traditional songs and jokes.

You mentioned Holy Supper. Can you tell us a little more about it?

It is a twelve-course meal that is dedicated to Christ's twelve apostles. The meal usually begins with a bowl of kutya, a mixture of cooked wheat, honey, poppy seeds, chopped nuts, and apples. This is followed by several fish dishes, mushrooms, holubtsi (stuffed cabbage), varenyky (dumplings filled with cabbage, potatoes, or prunes), fruits, cakes, such as makiwnyk (poppy seed cake), and bread.



The city of Kyiv, Ukraine decorated for Christmas.

Borscht

Ingredients

- 8 cups beef broth (Use gluten-free broth if needed)
- 1 pound slice of meaty bone-in beef shank
- 1 large onion, peeled, quartered
- 4 large beets, peeled, chopped
- 4 carrots, peeled, chopped
- 1 large russet potato, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 cups thinly sliced cabbage
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh dill
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 cup sour cream
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Bring 4 cups of the beef broth, the beef shank and onion to boil in large pot. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until meat is tender, about 1 hour 30 minutes.
- Transfer meat to work surface; trim fat, sinew and bone and discard. Chop meat; cover and chill. Cool broth slightly. Chill in pot until cold, at least 4 hours and up to 1 day.
- Spoon fat from top of chilled broth and discard. Add remaining 4 cups broth, beets, carrots and potato. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes.
- Stir in meat, cabbage and 1/2 cup dill. Cook until cabbage is tender, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in vinegar.
- Ladle soup into bowls. Top with sour cream and remaining 1/4 cup dill.



Tayo Fayemi: Nigeria

What is your native county?

Nigeria

How long did you live in your native country?

6 years

Can you list the holidays that are celebrated in your native country during winter?

Nigeria was colonized by the British and still maintains a lot of British customs. We celebrate Christmas and New Year in the traditional manner. There are a significant number of Muslims in Nigeria, but I don't think they have any major holidays that coincide with the traditional Christmastime holidays. We also celebrate Boxing Day, the day after Christmas (also a British tradition). Additionally, Kwanzaa is not a traditional African holiday, so it is less likely to be celebrated in Nigeria. In fact, I don't know if most native Nigerians know of its existence.

Can you give me a description of how these holidays are celebrated?

See above. You are less likely to see fireworks or a ball drop for New Year's there.

Can you list some tasty foods that are associated with each holiday?

General Nigerian foods. There is not as much of an emphasis on the "big Christmas dinner."



A woman in Nigeria adds a Santa hat to her outfit to celebrate the holidays.

Jollof Rice with Dodo (Fried Plantain)

Ingredients

- 3 cups of white parboiled long-grain rice*
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 Knorr or Maggi cubes
- 1 large red bell pepper
- 2-3 scotch bonnet peppers (can substitute habanero peppers)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion
- 1 medium tomato
- 1 clove garlic
- Ripe plantains

* If you're cooking more than 3 cups, double the pepper, tomatoes, garlic and add 1/2 an onion.



Directions

- Quarter the red bell pepper, onion and tomato. Blend mixture with the tomato paste. Add 1-2 cups of water to mixture and blend until liquefied (this will be a watery mix).
- Heat pot on stove over medium heat. Add 1/2 cup oil. Add blended peppers and seasonings. Stir. Slice some onion into mixture (optional). Let boil for 15 minutes on low heat.
- Add rice; continue to cook on low heat for 35 minutes. It should be almost cooked at this point; if not, let cook until rice is soft enough for you. Before it goes in the oven, it might be somewhat mushy, but not to worry, as soon as it comes out of the oven, it'll be nice and fluffy. Also, don't get flustered if the rice at the bottom of the pot burns. Most, if not all, great tasting jollof rice burns at the bottom just a tad.
- Heat oven to 325° F. Put pot in oven for another 15 minutes (this makes it fluffy).
- Remove, let sit for 5 minutes before serving.
- As for the plantains, make sure they are ripe. Ripe plantains are soft to touch, dark yellow/black on the outside and very sweet on the inside. Cut the plantains and fry until golden brown.
- Serve jollof rice with the dodo and fried chicken.

Tomorrow's Leaders, Today



The City has a growing population of talented professionals that are ready for the next challenge, and they are willing to do what it takes to get there. Now in its third round of program participants, New Public Servant Initiative (NPSI) has become the buzzword around the City when it comes to professional development, networking and exposure. The program offers comprehensive training to help employees with five years or less experience prepare for a long and fruitful career within the City organization. NPSI is a component of EMAP (the City's succession planning program) and, among other things, it provides a forum that addresses issues related to new professionals in the public service.

NPSI also uses personal assessments that are aimed at enhancing a person's capacity to take on broader leadership responsibilities. Participants will take part in roundtable and networking events, coaching and mentoring, formal training, key assignments to expose individuals to challenging projects and off-the-job activities such as involvement with community organizations and professional networking groups.

Equity and Workforce Development is pleased to introduce the 2012 NPSI participants (in alphabetical order). Take a moment to read their profile, and when you see them around the office or around town, be sure to say hello and welcome to the City family!



Michael Bell – Certified Welder

Michael Bell has worked for the City of Tallahassee Utilities Department for four years. Bell's welding career spans over 12 years. In his free time, he enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time at Lake Talquin and St. George Island.



Keith Burnsed – Transportation Mitigation Manager

Keith Burnsed has been with the City since September 2010 and works for the Growth Management Department. In his position, he reviews transportation concurrency impacts of proposed developments and determines what measures are needed to mitigate traffic impacts. Outside of work, Burnsed's preferred activity is spending time with his wife and two wonderful daughters.



Paul Chang - Civil Engineer I

Paul Chang has been happily serving the City as an engineer in the Gas Division of Underground Utilities since January 2009. Paul received his Bachelor of Science in Bioengineering from the University of Hawaii. Upon his relocation from Hawaii in 2005, he worked with Prim and Crowley LLC, Paradigm Engineers and Consultants and DEP prior to his employment with the City. His duties and responsibilities include obtaining permits, running hydraulic models for designing gas systems for new services, distribution and relocation and internal processes improvement. He was involved with the development of the department's Strategic Business Plan, which is in effect. He is currently in the Certified Public Management program and will be receiving his certification this year.

Paul states that the purpose of his relocation was to be with his wife who, then, was obtaining a master's at FSU. Now, they have a son and have made Tallahassee their home.



Joshua Davis – Safety Specialist

Joshua Davis is a retired Air Force Technical Sergeant who now works in the Human Resources Department. He has an associate degree in Aerospace Technology and Maintenance, a bachelor's degree in Management of Information Systems and will graduate with a master's degree in Public Administration in March 2012. Davis also has more than 10 years of training, management and supervisory experience. He has been employed by the City of Tallahassee since June 2011, and plans to remain within city government throughout his career.



Tim Davis – Project Manager

Tim Davis is a native of Tallahassee and has been employed with the City since September 2009. He was hired in Information System Services (ISS) as an Application Coordinator and recently received a promotion to Utilities Services ISS Project Manager. He graduated from Florida State University where he earned two degrees, a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and a Master of Science in Industrial Engineering. His previous work experience ranges from implementing IT solutions for Domestic Homeland Security in state government to managing product development teams at Yahoo.



Megan Doherty – Transportation Planner

Megan Doherty is a native of Baton Rouge, La. She has been employed since March 2010 with the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department. Doherty's prior experience includes Parliamentary Intern for Scottish National Party at British Parliament, Graduate Counselor for FSU London Study Center and Graduate Assistant for International Affairs Graduate Program. She is a three time graduate of Florida State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in History and Political Science and master's degrees in Urban and Regional Planning and International Affairs. Doherty's hobbies are walking her dogs in Tallahassee's beautiful parks, reading and knitting.



Emerson R. Thompson III – Capital Projects Grants Finance Coordinator

Emerson R. Thompson III works with the Underground Utilities Department and has served in his current capacity for more than a year. In his role, Thompson administers and develops capital and operating budgets, prepares financial reports and coordinates the department's financial activities. Prior to serving in his current position, Thompson served as director of finance and contracts for a small nonprofit and had previous experience as an auditor with the State of Florida's Office of the Auditor General. Through his work in both the public and private sectors, he has had opportunities to lead teams in the areas of governmental, financial and nonprofit accounting, as well as auditing and budgeting. A third generation Floridian and native of Orlando, Thompson graduated from

Florida A&M University's School of Business and Industry. When not working, Thompson enjoys fishing and reading, but particularly loves spending time with his family. He and his wife have two daughters, ages 11 and 6.



George L. Gilchrist Jr. – Engineering Technician IV

George L. Gilchrist Jr. was born in Hawaii. Being the son of a military member, he is no stranger to relocating. At age 11, his family moved to Tallahassee. He attended Nims Middle School and graduated from Rickards High School in 1999. He graduated from Florida A&M University with a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies in 2003. He has also worked for the Event Photography Group as Team Captain and Photographer since 2000. Gilchrist has been employed with the Public Works Operations Division since 2004. In his position, his responsibilities include database management, document support and more. He is married to Najahla O. Smith and has two children Eli (3 years) and Eana (6 months).



Jacqueline D. Hightower – Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Jacqueline D. Hightower joined the City of Tallahassee November 2011. Her professional experience spans 15 years in technology and education administration. She is responsible for all administrative duties related to the Office of the City Manager. Hightower is a native Tallahasseean. She attended Leon County Public Schools and graduated with honors from Florida A&M University (FAMU) with a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems. After completing her degree, she spent 10 years in the "fast lanes" of the information technology industry. In 2001, she returned to her alma mater as a Visiting Instructor and taught six courses in the Computer Sciences Department. In 2004, she earned her master's degree in Higher Education Administration from The Florida State

University and spent six years in administrative capacities at FAMU. After one year of service to students, she received the 2006-2007 Advisor of the Year award.



Eric Houge – Public Works Technical Operations Administrator

Eric Houge has been with the City for six months. In his positions with Public Works, he manages facilities for the Operations Division, supervises the technical operations unit and provides engineering and technical support. He received his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Iowa State University in 2004. Previously, he worked for a highway contractor. In his spare time, he enjoys competing in triathlons, but as a married father to a 2½-year-old daughter, he spends most his time chasing after her and relaxing with his family.

Tomorrow's Leaders, Today



Nico Lauw – Industrial Engineer III

Nico Lauw is a transplant from Miami who has lived in Tallahassee for five years. Lauw has worked his way up the ladder from an apprentice in manufacturing to a manager in pharmaceuticals operations. He received a certification in six-sigma lean manufacturing from Florida International University (FIU) and is very passionate about process and structures. During his career, he has managed up to \$3,000,000 projects, \$10,000,000 operations and supervised up to 40 employees. After beginning his career with the City of Tallahassee, he acquired two certifications in wastewater and collections systems and became a Senior City Certified Supervisor. Lauw holds a Bachelor of Science in Industrial and Systems Engineering from FIU and two master's degrees in

Industrial Engineering and Business Administration. His wife of 33 years was his high school sweetheart. He is the proud father of two children and two grandchildren.



Charles Main – Planner I

Charles Main has worked for the City since June 2011. He has a bachelor's degree in History Education from Brigham Young University – Idaho and a master's degree in City Planning from the University of Utah. Previously, he worked for the Utah Transit Authority, helping to implement new light rail and commuter rail systems. In his current position, Main works to make StarMetro's system more efficient by examining the broader picture of the transit system as a whole, working with the public for future changes and redesigning bus routes and stop locations.



Jeremy Nelson – Electrical Engineer I

Jeremy Nelson has been employed with the Power Engineering Division since February 2007. Nelson holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Florida State University. Previously, he was employed as a project manager for Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative from 2005 until 2007. Nelson has extensive engineering and project management experience in the area of distribution electric power systems. As an Electrical Engineer, he is responsible for engineering design and project management of distribution electric system projects.



Gia Scruggs – Accounting Systems Supervisor

Gia Scruggs is a native of Thomasville, Ga. Scruggs obtained a bachelor's degree in Biology from Albany State University, holds a master's degree from Thomas University and is completing a Doctor of Business Administration (Information Systems) from Argosy University. She was hired as the City's Payroll Supervisor in January 2010. In this capacity, she is responsible for the administration of active City of Tallahassee payroll as well as the retiree payroll. Prior, she managed the disbursement unit of large institutions such as Urology Institute and Continence Center and served as Assistant Controller at Florida A&M University, Payroll and Benefits Administrator for Thomasville City Schools and Vendor Coordinator for Flowers Industries. Scruggs is a member of several

professional organizations, including the Association of Government Accountants and American Payroll Association. Her career goals include becoming a division director and eventually the City Manager or County Administrator for a city or county government that fosters a sense of community and provides economic opportunities for all citizens.



Tomica Archie Smith – Executive Director of the Palmer Munroe Teen Center

As the head of the Palmer Munroe Teen Center, Tomica Archie Smith took on completely new territory, as it is the City's first space dedicated to teens. She was more than capable of taking on the task though, as is evidenced by the success of the Teen Center. Before joining the City's award winning Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department, she was an administrator in the nonprofit fields of maternal and child health and youth prevention. Smith has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of West Florida and a Master of Science in Counseling Education from Florida A&M University. She is a wife and mother of three beautiful children.



Heather Teter – Transit Marketing Specialist

Heather Teter has been employed with the City for four years as the Marketing Specialist for StarMetro. While she manages all of StarMetro's public relations and marketing efforts, she also works very closely with the Department of Communications on public relations and marketing assignments. Teter graduated from Valdosta State University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and in 2007 with a Master of Public Administration.



Juan Victoria – Administrative Specialist I

Juan Victoria began his career with the City of Tallahassee as a temporary employee in the Energy Services Department in August 2008. A year later, he was promoted to permanent status as the Administrative Specialist for the City's Demand Side Management Program. Victoria received a Bachelor of Science in Marketing with minors in Psychology and Communications in 2007. Growing up in Immokalee, a small farming community in southwest Florida east of Naples, Victoria went through a cultural shock when he first came to Tallahassee. However, he quickly adjusted to the City and loved all the opportunities it provided.



Karen Webb – Electrical Reliability Compliance Analyst

Karen Webb has been with the City of Tallahassee since October 2010. She is originally from South Carolina, just outside of Charleston. She came to Tallahassee in 2001 to attend FSU. She earned two degrees from FSU, a Bachelor of Science in Finance and a Master of Business Administration. Although her previous position with the Florida Public Service Commission dealt heavily with the electric utility industry, coming to work in Reliability Compliance has been a whole different game to learn, and it suits her working style.



Zack Wetzel – Supervisor-Swimming Pool Complex

Zack Wetzel began his city career in the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department in September 2011. As a Pool Supervisor at the Trousdell Recreation Center, he manages more than 50 lifeguards and administers lifeguard certification classes. He graduated from Florida State University in 2006 with a master's degree in Recreation Administration. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional and has always wanted to work in the recreation field where he can administer programs that have a positive effect on the lives of people. In his free time, Wetzel enjoys recreating with his family as much as possible.



Jarrod Whitaker – Civil Engineer II

Jarrod Whitaker works in the Underground Utilities Department's Water Resources Engineering Division. He has been with the City of Tallahassee since June 2010, initially as a temporary employee and as a permanent employee since June 2011. Prior to his employment with the City, Whitaker worked for the Tallahassee office of Wilson Miller, a consulting engineering firm. His experience also includes running a 6,500-acre row crop farming operation in Leesburg, Ga. He holds bachelor's degrees in Crop Science from the University of Georgia and Civil Engineering from Florida State University. He is certified as an Engineer Intern by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers. Whitaker is originally from Blakely, Ga., is married to Amanda and has a one-year old son named Mack.



Wagner Yajure – Principal Engineer, SCADA

Wagner Yajure is the Principal Engineer for the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) Systems for all of Underground Utilities. Yajure was born in Venezuela and is bilingual in Spanish and English. His education includes a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from FIT and a Bachelor of Science in Physics from Jacksonville University. In his free time, Yajure enjoys playing golf, spending time with family, researching and learning new technologies.



Charles Ziegmont – Water & Wastewater Regulatory Compliance Manager

In addition to his job as Regulatory Compliance Manager for Water and Wastewater, Charles Ziegmont is the Supervisor of Maintenance for the Thomas P. Smith Water Reclamation Facility. He also serves as the Manager for the Environmental Management System (EMS), which is certified as meeting International Standards (ISO-14001). Underground Utilities is the first mid-size Utility to achieve third party certification for their EMS. He joined the City of Tallahassee in August 2010. Prior to working for the City, Ziegmont's experience included 23 years of environmental regulation through his employment with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. His expertise was in regulatory issues for waste cleanup, petroleum storage, surface water quality and wastewater compliance and enforcement. Ziegmont has also served on numerous national committees with EPA to develop policy for water compliance and enforcement issues.

City Recognizes Lin-credible Award Winners

The ceremony for the Lin-credible Awards was held on Thursday, March 29, to recognize 23 exemplary City of Tallahassee employees.

The "Lin-credible Awards" were named after Jeremy Lin, an Asian-American professional basketball player for the New York Knicks. Inspired by his story, the City developed a program that gave employees the opportunity to nominate co-workers who they believed were Lin-credible.

One employee from each City department was recognized. Some smaller departments were grouped together. The 23 Lin-credible Awards winners are listed below. Congrats to all!

And the Winners Are:

City Auditor's Office
Michelle Davis

Aviation
Fred Spivey

Blueprint 2000
Violeta Wall

City Attorney's Office
Nita Kirkpatrick

City Commission/Office of the Mayor
Max Stout

City Manager's Office/
Communications/Property
Management
Wayne Britt

Capital Region Transportation
Planning Agency
Jack Kostrzewa

Department of Management and
Administration
Joseph Doredant

Economic and Community
Development
Mack Rush

Electric Utility
Shawn Beaty

Energy Utility
Veronica Towels

Fire
Lt. Troy Anzalone

Growth Management
Lemuel Skillens

Planning
Frank Dietrich

Police
Monica Williams

Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Affairs
Charles Dickey

Public Works
Terrance McDowell

Solid Waste
Sam Akins

Star Metro
Quintus Douglas

Treasurer-Clerk's Office
Donna Raffensperger

Utility Business & Customer Service
Michael Rutherford

Underground Utilities
Monica Boland



Assistant City Manager Rick Fernandez shows his team spirit while shaking a pom-pom.



City Attorney Jim English leads the crowd in "the wave".



Veronica Towels, the Lin-credible winner from Energy Services poses with David Byrne.



The award winners also brought family and friends to cheer them on.

More fun from the Lin-credible Awards Ceremony in Images From Around the City.

Well Dones

"I called the City of Tallahassee Utilities Department and spoke with **Shantel Bramlett**. She gave me the absolute best service I can remember getting! She completely took care of my issue, and her service and etiquette were pristine. She is a rarity in today business world and should be recognized. She represents the best of how I will forever view Tallahassee."

– Dawn

"I would like to extend a compliment to **TPD** for their excellent treatment of the Occupy Tallahassee protesters. The police who have shamed themselves and their cities in New York, Chicago, Oakland, San Francisco and elsewhere certainly make me very pleased with TPD and swell my civic pride. Thanks again and keep up the good work in this area."

– Joshua

"We just picked up our son at the airport! Great idea to have everyone there in red welcoming the travelers!"

– Deborah

To assist with StarMetro's system decentralization, Public Works undertook a huge task to repair and expand the sidewalk system to provide coverage for the new routes. Over 35 sidewalk projects were constructed in the span of approximately six months, which were overseen by the Public Works Capital Division. Simultaneously, StarMetro upgraded and constructed new Bus Shelters. One in-house Public Works concrete crew was tasked with the demolition and construction of 33 concrete bus pads in approximately three months. During this time, the five person crew had one employee retire and another go on personal leave for over two months. This frequently left only three people to do the work of five. Since we are all doing more with less these days, the crew was expected to keep up with their normal work load of concrete restorations to all of Utilities' repairs. The crew worked 10 hours a day during a brutally hot summer to keep up with their "normal work" and then worked many weekends to get all the bus pads done on time and under budget. At one time, this kind of effort and teamwork would have been honored with a Super Achievement Award. While the awards are

no longer being offered, the appreciation for a job well done needs to be recognized. Great job to Carlos Bowers, his crew, fellow colleagues and various departments that lent a helping hand in constructing the great looking new bus stops. Super Crew: **Carlos Bowers, Bert Harrell, Jamie Hall and Jimmy Siplin**.

"I am writing to commend the actions of members of your police force and their willingness to go above the call of duty to provide me, a stranger, with outstanding public service. My name is Bryan K. Finnie, and I am the City Manager of Opa-Locka, Fla. On Friday evening, September 2, 2011, I was in Tallahassee visiting my wife who recently relocated to your City after accepting a position with the Department of Juvenile Justice. After a pleasant dinner at a downtown restaurant, we strolled through a park across the street. Somehow around 9 p.m., I lost my city phone (new Blackberry). About two hours later, I received a call on my personal phone from **Officer Mark Meadows**. He informed me that the phone was in his possession and I could pick it up. First of all, I was shocked that I had lost my business phone. Secondly, I could not believe that someone would turn in a new state-of-the-art phone. Now I know why my wife just loves Tallahassee. If this is a small example of the quality of life that exists in your city, you are blessed. In terms of your officers, Mark Meadows and **Steve Slade**, they obtained my personal phone number by contacting the City of Opa-Locka Police Department. They were efficient and resourceful professionals that took the extra step to provide a public service. I appreciate and applaud their efforts. Thank you all very much."

– Bryan

"Thank you to **the crew of Fire Station 3/C** for delivering toys, bikes, clothes, towels, sheets and other items to a family of five on Coleman Street. Thanks to all who made this possible for this family. They lost all of their belongings to a house fire. 3/C put the fire out, and the home was saved. The family spent the last month fixing the inside and moved back in after living in a motel for four weeks. The 4-year-old boy was especially overwhelmed and

happy to see Santa (**Mike Sorrell**). Mike did an OUTSTANDING job, and he brought about a lot of smiles and a memorable Christmas for the Taylor Family."

– Troy

"Please pass on my thanks to the **gentlemen who responded to my weekend call about my streetlight being out on Red Fern Road**. Monday evening, they replaced the fixture and got it operational in a very short time. The fixture was different than the original, and while it lighted the street just fine, it didn't light the front of my house or the house next door. When I mentioned my disappointment to one of the gentlemen, he said they would return the next day and change the fixture to one like the old one. Sure enough, last night they showed up and changed the fixture, and things are back to normal. They even drove by later in the evening to verify that it was working properly. I didn't get their names but hopefully you can pass on my thanks."

– Anonymous

"Last week, I completed the Tallahassee Neighborhood Leadership Academy. The experience was invaluable in understanding how our city operates. Each department presentation was exceptional, each unique in its educational process, all very professional and open to inquiry. Touring the facilities and understanding their place in the structure of our city was enlightening. Did I mention fun? Every department included interactive opportunities from games to driving a bus simulator! All of the extraordinary events mentioned were possible through the organizational skills of **Andrea Griffin**. She also presented us with a CD of photos, which I will treasure. City leadership is very wise to offer this opportunity to its citizens. It is educational and an excellent marketing tool, one that will reap benefits far beyond expectations. I am very grateful for the opportunity to attend."

– Patsy

Awards & Honors

Jim Van Riper was promoted to the position of Technology Planning & Advancement Administrator. Jim has over 29 years of IT experience, seven of which have been with the City in ISS. To date, Jim has successfully managed wide scale implementations of GIS applications and data analysis across many City departments. In addition, Jim has championed and directed the implementation of numerous citizen self-service applications. In his new role, Jim is responsible for the Technology Planning & Advancement Division in ISS with focus on web solutions, GIS and smart technology initiatives. Congrats, Jim!

Brian Horton has been promoted to manage the Power Engineering Division of the Electric Department. Horton has been with the Electric Utility since 2001 and served in various roles. In his previous position, he was instrumental in developing the City's compliance strategy and compliance program to comply with the NERC reliability standards. He is recognized in the state as being a leader in this arena. He will bring a strong operational and compliance background to his new role in Power Engineering. Congrats to Brian! The position he is filling became available due to the retirement of another Brian, **Brian Fisher**, who left at the end of January after over 22 years of excellent service to the City and its customers. He will be missed. Best of luck in all your future endeavors, Brian!

The City of Tallahassee **Your Own Utilities** float was awarded "Best in Parade" during the 2011 Winter Festival.

Becky Simpson retired from the City in early December. She accepted a position with the U.S. Treasury Department. **Fred Anderson** has stepped in as Interim Budget Manager until the position is permanently filled.

The Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) awarded **Tallahassee Animal Services** with the 2011 Outstanding Cooperative Team Achievement award in recognition of the collaborative efforts between Animal Services and Communications that led to our winning the community engagement portion of the

ASPCA challenge. What a great reminder of the things we can accomplish when we all work together toward a common goal.

The Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) recently recognized the City of Tallahassee **Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs Department** at The Landscape Show for having and emphasizing the importance of trained and certified employees, which lead to beautiful – and environmentally sustainable – landscapes.

In January, the City Commission named **Jim Cooke** as the new Treasurer-Clerk. He brings over 24 years of experience to the job, both in the private and public sector. Cooke most recently served as the Deputy City Treasurer-Clerk and has been with the City since 2002. As Treasurer-Clerk, Cooke supervises a staff of 55 employees in five divisions, which include records management, risk management, retirement, revenue and asset/liability. Previously the position was held by Gary Herndon who retired on April 30, 2011. Congrats, Jim!

Tallahassee City Auditor **Sam McCall** has been selected to serve a five year term on the prestigious Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB). McCall's term to the nine-member board began January 1. McCall has over 40 years in governmental auditing and has served as City Auditor since 1999. Congrats, Sam!

TPD Investigator Robert Rohrbacher was honored with the Florida Retail Federation Law Enforcement Officer of the Year 2011 Runner-Up. He works in the Financial Crimes Division. His constant vigilance, exceptional collaborative efforts and astute observation led to him break a substantial theft ring in 2011. In January 2011, Rohrbacher was eating lunch at a local restaurant when he noticed a customer with an out-of-state drivers' license purchasing gift cards with a credit card. Suspicious of possible credit card fraud, he then observed the suspect and his accomplices repeat the process at several other restaurants. Rohrbacher then quickly organized a rolling surveillance operation. Investigation revealed that all

three suspects possessed fraudulently created debit / credit cards in which the subjects' names were embossed, but the cards had been re-encoded with victims' stolen credit card information. This trio was arrested and substantial evidence seized. Further investigation revealed that one of the suspects was the leader of a group committing credit and debit card fraud across the southeastern United States. This group was responsible for purchasing approximately 16,500 merchant gift cards valued at more than \$1.4 million through using stolen accounts.



(Pictured, left to right, Dan Doyle, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer of Beall's Inc., Investigator Rohrbacher, and Dennis Wamsley, Director of Loss Prevention of Publix Super Markets Inc.)

The White House recently highlighted **Cynthia Barber**, director of Environmental Policy and Energy Resources, as one of nine individuals recognized as 'Champions of Change' for leadership in sustainability and environmental policy efforts. The Champions of Change program was created as part of President Barack Obama's 'Winning the Future' initiative. A different sector is highlighted weekly, and groups of Champions are recognized for their efforts to serve and strengthen their communities.

"This is a tremendous honor for Ms. Barber," said Mayor John Marks, "It also verifies what we in Tallahassee have known for some time now. Namely, that the City of Tallahassee is known throughout the nation for its proactive efforts on sustainability and doing all we can to create and maintain a vibrant and healthy community."

Images from Around the City

Pink Heals Tour - October 2011

The Pink Heals tour rolled into town again in October 2011. The Pink Heals Tour is a group of men and women who travel the country in pink fire trucks to help local communities raise money in the fight against cancer and to support women who are dealing with cancer. One of its stops in Tallahassee was at Fire Station No. 1 on Adams Street. City employees gathered to show support and sign the big pink trucks.



Fire Chief Cindy Dick says a few words during the event.



(L) Dave Graybill, founder of the Pink Heals Tour, recognizes Sarah Cooksey (far right) during the event.



Catherine Brey showed her support for those struggling with cancer by signing one of the trucks.



The Pink Heals Tour group poses with Tallahassee Fire Department staff in front of one of their signature pink fire trucks.

Images from Around the City

Public Safety Complex Groundbreaking - October 2011

The groundbreaking ceremony for the planned Public Safety Complex was held past October. The new, \$45 million complex will house the public safety emergency communications center. The PSC will also include a regional transportation center and other public safety operations. The 90,000 square foot facility is expected to be completed spring 2013.



City Manager Anita Favors Thompson takes a moment to organize her thoughts before the event.



Assistant City Manager Tom Coe and Fire Chief Cindy Dick chat before the event.



(L-R) County Administrator Vince Long, Police Chief Dennis Jones (behind Commissioner Gillum), City Commissioner Andrew Gillum, Sheriff Larry Campbell, City Commissioner Nancy Miller and Fire Chief Cndy Dick listen to the other speakers and show their support for this joint effort.

Images from Around the City

United Way "LIVE UNITED" Kick-Off - October 2011

Every fall, the City participates in the annual campaign to help raise funds for the United Way of the Big Bend. The kick-off is always full of energy, but 2011's pep rally style event really got the crowd excited to Live United!



Sandra Manning stirred up the crowd while dressed as a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader.



Chuck Cleveland takes time to enjoy the festivities.



Tanya O'Neill looks on while Jay Schuck holds up a sign in support of the event's mission.



Cindy Cook and Michelle Davis hold up signs in support of the event's mission.



(L-R) Hazem Tamimi, Tony Barber and Mark Beaudoin showed team spirit by dressing up as football players.



John Baker and the rest of the crowd cheered on the presenters.

Images from Around the City

Hilaman Oak Tree Funeral - September 2011

In June 2011, the historic live oak located on the Hilaman Golf course was struck by lightning, and it was determined that the tree would have to be cut down. On September 27, 2011, golfers, City leaders and City employees gathered around the tree to say goodbye.



The tree before it was removed.



People received these as a keepsake. Several small pieces of the tree were taken and made into decorative items.

Community Gardening Kick Off - October 2011

This fall, the City launched a new program to help develop community gardens. The kick off was held October 17, 2011, at the Frenchtown Community Garden.



Assistant City Manager Tom Coe, EPER Director Cynthia Barber and Assistant City Manager Jay Townsend sought shelter from the rain under the pavilion at the Community Gardening launch.



Zack Galloway pours soil during the Community Gardening launch.



Mayor John Marks helps add soil to the garden.

Images from Around the City

Lin-credible Awards Ceremony - March 2012

The ceremony for the Lin-credible Awards was held on Thursday, March 29, to recognize 23 exemplary City of Tallahassee employees. The City developed a program that gave employees the opportunity to nominate co-workers who they believed were Lin-credible. Congrats to all!



Gene Deckerhoff, the "Voice of the Noles", was the featured speaker at the ceremony.



Cassandra Jackson thanks the attendees and their family and friends for coming out.



All of the Lin-credible winners signed the championship basketball, which was raffled away after the ceremony.



City Auditor Sam McCall chats with Ed Young during the ice cream social after the awards.



(L) Nathon Green and Natalie Prato posed for a picture before the ceremony began.



(L) Shelonda Meeks takes a shot to win a ticket in the raffle for the championship basketball as (R) Lizzy Kelley looks on.



(R) Rick Feldman also showed off his shooting skills to win a ticket in the raffle for the championship basketball while (L) Heather Teter kept score.

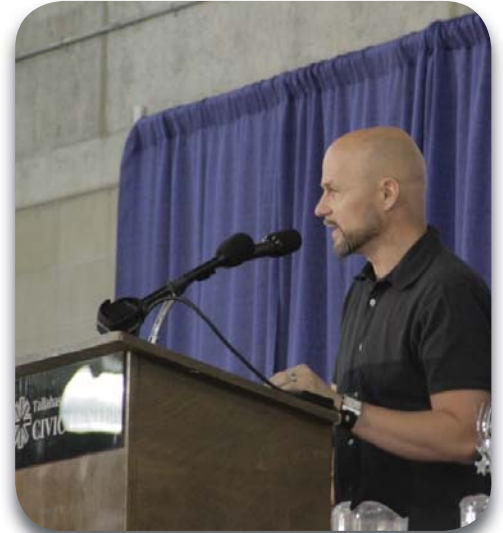
Images from Around the City

Mayor's Summit on Race, Culture and Human Relations - April 2012

Held on April 9 and 10, the theme of the this year's Mayor's Summit was "World Conversations, Local Implications." The community heard from dynamic national and local experts and participated in discussions to actively promote an understanding, appreciation and awareness of human diversity.



(L) Mayor Michael Nutter of Philadelphia speaks to the crowd about how to improve conditions for African American males and the community in general.



(R) Keynote Presenter Joe Gerstandt took the crowd through an interactive process to demonstrate the need for diversity.



Dancers added entertainment to the lunch during the summit.



Teens participated in the "Victory over Violence" campaign at an evening event hosted at the Palmer Munroe Teen Center.



Summit attendees listened to and participated in various workshops designed to highlight an appreciation of human diversity.



Images from Around the City

Veronique George and Cynthia Barber smile during the successful Sustainable YOU Conference.



Mayor Marks speaks with a bus rider to ensure he knows about the StarMetro route changes.



Animal Service Center veterinary technicians Katie Watson and Amy Greene take a breather during an ASC clinic.



Adam Jacobs, Cynthia Barber and a friend pose for a picture during the Sustainable YOU Conference.



L-R: Rob McGarrah, Electric Director; Mike Lee, Purdom Plant; Cassandra Jackson, HR Manager; Barbara Johnson, Wellness Coordinator.

Congratulations to Mike Lee who received an honorable mention from Working Well for the "Inspiring Star Award."

Mike has been an inspiration to coworkers and others by telling his life-saving story after getting an AngioScreening through the City's Wellness Program.

Learn about Mike's story at the HR-Wellness website on CityNet (HR > Wellness > Know Your Numbers).