



MBPD Retiree News

"Unity is strength for a better retirement"

Happy Valentine's Day!

February 2011 Issue

February Special Days
to Remember

February 2nd...
Groundhog Day

February 14th...
Valentine's Day

February 21st ...
President's Day

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The Music of Friendship

by Linda Veski

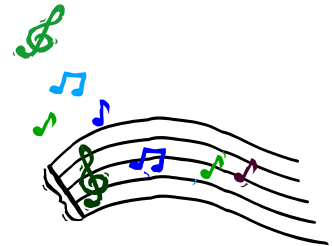


This is a story about friendship and about the music it brings into our lives. Nearly three decades ago, my fairly new career crossed paths with Buck Griscoms, whose career was nearing its legendary end. I considered myself extremely fortunate to receive his training and perspective back then, and in the many years since. I have also cherished not only the wisdom he imparted upon me, but the long friendship we developed; which of course extended to his lovely wife Fran.

What impressed me most back then was that Buck talked to everyone, particularly people that most people don't think mattered. I have always admired his ease in putting others at ease, a gift that comes from a sincere and genuine interest in the lives and stories of others. He also loves history and the law and often quoted the Constitution to me. He was restless and had boundless energy in those days. I had a hard time keeping pace with him.

In the years since his retirement, Buck and Fran moved to Gulf Breeze, a small town in Florida's panhandle, where they share their lives with family. A frequent visitor to South Florida and guests of Charlie and Nancy Seraydar, we often visited. And of course, we always talk on the phone. Buck begins every con-

versation with a joke. He called one day and told me, "I think my wife is dead." My heart immediately skipped a beat, because his tone was alarmingly serious. I responded- "Why Buck?". His reply to me was "Well the sex is the same but the dirty dishes are piling up!" What a relief! The conversations continue, where more jokes are followed with an update on our families, discussion over current events and then Buck, my personal "Paul Harvey", shares some of his historical knowledge. Still training the new kid!

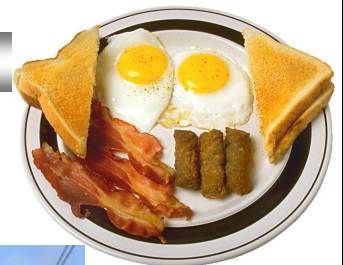


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Vinny's Breakfast

On January 14, 2011 a breakfast was held at **Lester's Diner** in Sunrise with 20 people attending. Retirees attending were Pat Ryan, Jack & Amy Tighe, Vinny Aprile, John & Cathy Tighe, Carlos Devarona, Jim Burnette, Lisa Newland, Chuck Press, Bobby Morehead, Bobby Jenkins, Tony Sammarco, Carl Ward, Joan Ochoa, Lynda Veski,

Joe Brownlow and Charlie Seraydar, also active Officer Pat Quinlan and FOP President Sgt. Alex Bello.



The Music of Friendship

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I sometimes get letters from Buck and cards and notes from Fran; and I treasure them. Most people don't know that Buck loves to write poetry; and that the subject of his poems more often than not is Fran, the love of his life.

Now I pause to start another story which will cross paths with this one.

My son Jason (without my consent, as he wouldn't have gotten it), joined the Army over 2 years ago. Just as he was graduating Airborne school, and I realized he would be Afghanistan bound, my husband Lenny's oldest and dearest friends came for a visit from France. I wanted to attend Jason's Airborne graduation and do something special for our friends at the same time. Since they love country music, which is very popular in France, I planned a trip to Nashville, and on the way home, the graduation at Fort Benning.

While in Nashville, we went to the famous Bluebird Cafe. Owned by the Songwriters Guild, the Bluebird is a starting place for nearly everyone in all music genres. Performers must sing and play only original music. It is considered an honor to even be invited to perform there. This night, a young singer and songwriter named

Mare

Wakefield was performing. Mare (pronounced 'Mary') sang a song she had just written called "About the War". I will not lie, I started crying from the first line which was "I had another bad dream again about the war". The entire song expressed everything in my soul.

After the show, I spoke to Mare and her husband Nomad. I explained to them that I *had* to have that song. I knew many military moms who needed it. Mare explained she had not yet recorded it but



I was insistent and emotional. She suggested I give her my e-mail address which I did, writing it on a napkin. She told me she'd do a demo of the song and e-mail it to me. I thought to myself, "yeah, right, I'll never hear from her".

When I arrived home a few days later, I was shocked and delighted to find the song I wanted waiting for me. It was a rough copy, but Mare's beautiful voice and her guitar came through beautifully. The song has since been a winner in the Great American Songwriting contest; and just last week, Mare included it on her newly released CD. So began a new friendship with Mare and Nomad as we emailed while she toured and wrote new songs. Last June, Mare and Nomad came to visit and I planned a "private" concert in my home. Of course I asked many of my police friends to come. First on my list of course, were Fran and Buck. Buck loved the story of how I met Mare and the song that drew me to her, so he agreed to come as he said "one last time".

Buck told me he wanted to visit some graves, some places and some friends during his visit. I had the privilege of chauffeuring him to some of his meetings with old friends. First was breakfast with Jack Tighe. I always love to see Jack. Although he finds it difficult to speak these days, he is always understood, perhaps because he is conversing with old friends who know him so well. Either way, Jack is a beautiful person and Amy and he are yet another great love story. Next was Lou Reilly, whom we met for lunch. Lou still has his movie star good looks; and the first thing Fran asked me afterwards was if he was still gorgeous! A classy, decent man and a great boss. Last was Jim Kelly. Jim still owns Kelly's Bar, for more than 2 decades in downtown Hollywood, but is usually there only in the early morning. What a character! I wish I could share with all what they spoke about, but after some consideration, I decided to keep private what was said in what may be final meetings between old friends and co-workers.

I will always remain grateful to them for allowing me to be a part of it, and I'll also say that what I witnessed is what this organization is really all about. Buck did not get to see all the dear friends he wanted to, there simply wasn't enough time as he and Fran needed to get home. Besides, for the first time, I was keeping pace with him!

And then there was the concert. Mare and Nomad fell in love with all my police friends and they them. Though she began a European tour the following week, she and Nomad e-mailed often to say they were telling everyone about the Beach cops they had met. At the concert, they spent time with everyone, but Mare was struck by the love she observed between Buck and Fran. With Buck's permission, Mare took some of his poems with her. After her European



The Music of Friendship*continued from pg 2*

tour, she emailed me to say she wanted to put one of the poems to music for Buck and Fran. She choose one called "Dakota Darling", a love poem written for Fran, professing his enduring love for her for all the seasons of their lives. A couple of months ago, Mare sent me a rough copy of that beautiful voice again with her guitar; and that beautiful heart for doing this for Buck, Fran, and for me.

Last week, Buck sent me another poem he wrote for Fran for Valentine's Day last year. The accompanying note was uncharacteristically short. I called him to talk and say "thanks" for the poem. Some-

thing in his note and in the phone call made me stop and take measure of how much his and Fran's friendship has meant through the years. It's winter time now and it seems the appropriate season to reflect on some of the people who are important in our lives. I just did. And thanks again to Buck who showed me that the road to a friend's house is never long. So like he did, make that drive or call, send that letter or e-mail, let a career long friend know you are thinking about them.

Note: To all our members living near Nashville, check out the Bluebird Cafe. If you would like to hear Mare Wakefield's "About the War", you can download it on her website (www.MareWakefield.com).

Check out her concert schedule and if you make it to one, be sure and introduce yourself to her and Nomad and to tell them you are a Miami Beach Police retiree. If you want to hear the song "Dakota Darling", email me at lyndaveski@yahoo.com and I will send it to you.



Happy Birthday
February!!!

News Capsules**GENERAL MEETING**

No, it's not what you think. This is not a meeting of Generals, you know, like Army Generals, or even a meeting of degenerates, although some might question that as well. This is a *general* meeting of the Miami Beach Police Retirees Association that will take place on Wednesday, February 23rd, 2011 at 12 noon. The location will be Rickey's Restaurant and Lounge, 220 NW 180th Ave, Pembroke Pines. The phone number for the joint in case you need to call for some ridiculous reason is 954-441-9464. The cost will be \$13.00 per person. In case you smart alecks are wondering, that does not include booze!

POLICE UNITY TOUR

I don't look good on a bicycle. Heck, I don't even look good in a car! But I'll tell ya who probably

does; it's Lieutenant Sean Casey of the Highlands County, FL Sheriff's Department. Sean, who is Jim Casey's son, is participating in the Police Unity Tour in May to benefit the National Law Officers Memorial Fund. The Unity Tour is a 250 mile bike (geez that's far) ride from Portsmouth, VA to Washington, DC. If you would like to make a donation, Sean Casey's address is 5825 Olive Road, Sebring, Florida 33875. Checks should be made out to Police Unity Tour Florida....And don't forget, its tax deductible!

ANN PATTON

Ann Patton wrote the following message to retirees on our web site: "I have just found your site on the internet and was very pleased to know you have a retirees web site, although it was my late husband who was with the police department, I am very

interested in hearing from some of the retirees who are active in what is going on. There were so many nice and great people I remember and who were close friends with my late husband. I especially remember Jack Tighe. Thank you and look forward to hearing from someone, warmest regards, Ann Patton."

Ann can be reached at 954-493-8173. Her address is 2830 N.E. 59th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308. Ann's e-mail address is missartistry@comcast.net.

JIM PRESTON

Retired MBPD brother James C. Preston passed away on December 16th, 2010. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his friends and family. I wish I had more information for you on this but we don't at this time. If anyone wishes to send something in, please don't hesitate.

Charles Appel
Eddie Avila
Bobby Bishop
Peter Bitume
Joe Brownlow
Carlos Devarona
Marshall Garber
Pete Gutierrez
Bill Jones
Marc Hochstadt
Lori Figliolia-Harris
Ellen Knight
Bill MacDonald
Pat Ryan
Jesse Webb
Lori Wieder
Bernie Winer

2011 Annual FOP Dinner Awards Presentations



"I just got my hot little hands on 14 pages of stuff about who last year made Officer of the Month, Medals of Valor, Outstanding Service Awards, civilians given awards, and Officer of the Year".



During my tenure with the Miami Beach Police Department, I managed to pick up an award or two over the years. For what? I have absolutely no idea, but it whatever it was, was pure luck, because knowledge, skills, or abilities had absolutely nothing to do with it. But I just got my hot little hands on 14 pages of stuff about who last year made Officer of the Month, Medals of Valor, Outstanding Service Awards, civilians given awards, and Officer of the Year.

I love reading this stuff because it makes me proud of where the Department is going these days. People (including myself) yak about how bad some things have gotten over there, but when I read about the great accomplishments of our men and women on the Beach, I know they're still to this day "taking care of business." Although I don't recognize some of the names, I can tell that whoever they are, they are amongst the new "shining and rising stars" of the Department, and will carry on when many of us are long gone. Sorry for sounding so morbid, but hey, that's life! I will introduce the names of the award recipients with a short summary:

OFFICERS OF THE MONTH FOR 2010

January- Officer Leon Azicri (One of retiree Sammy's sons): While off duty on West Avenue, caught up with and arrested a thug wanted for armed threats, even finding a bb gun in the car.

February- Officer William Becker: Arrested a career criminal for armed robbery (knife) that occurred on the boardwalk @ 20th Street. When he caught up to the guy at 24th and Collins, the guy fought, but was "taken down".

March- Officer Reginald Lester: Tracked down a subject who stabbed two females at 5th and Ocean. With help from **Officer Christi Tanner**, he arrested the guy and recovered the knife.

April-Officer Skip Wilder: Arrested two males on the Julia Tuttle after they broke into a car at 45th and Jefferson. Got a confession and recovered a laptop, roll of quarters, digital camera, and a Glock 40 cal. Pistol.

May- Detective Robert Montesinos and Mishart Torres: Caught a guy at Open Space Park who had just forced his way into the apartment of an 80 yr old female, beat her up, and took her jewelry off her body along with her purse. The guy tried to run but didn't get far. They found out it was also the same guy who robbed two other elderly persons two days prior. Way to go!

June-Officer Wilson Romero: While on a burglary detail at the 28th street parking lot, he saw a guy looking in car windows. The guy left in a car but they stopped him at 71st and Rue Vendome. After stopping him, they realized it was the same guy wanted in a North End shooting. Two for the price of one!

July- Sergeant James Nolan: Saw a guy wanted in an aggravated battery flyer at the 1100 blk of Washington Ave. After handcuffing him, the guy ran. They caught up to him in the 1300 blk of Collins in a parking garage where K-9 caught him hiding under a car. He was also found with stolen property, so they loaded that charge on him too.

August- Officer Wilson Romero: Once again, Officer Wilson Romero, our rising star

has made Officer of the Month for August. I don't know Wilson, but this month he was honored for not one event, or even two, but for four exemplary events. A narcotics arrest at 950 Pennsylvania where where a convicted felon was arrested with a loaded gun along with cocaine and marijuana. An aggravated stalking arrest at 7840 Harding Avenue, a burglar at 27th and Collins, and a bunch of "Beach Thieves" at various areas of the sand. This guy is amazing! Are we proud of him or what?!

September-Officer Tino Serrano: There was a stabbing/ murder at 81st street. Tino was at roll call and heard the BOLO for the subject. He decided once he got on the street to look for the guy they were looking for. He found him at 74th and the Beach. The guy confessed and is now in jail. Just like that!! They make it look easy!

October-Detective Ricardo Arias: Well, this one is very complicated, but to make a long story short, he was also honored by United States Secret Service for "International case of the year". It involved money laundering and some chap from a country called Estonia who was involved in millions of dollars of theft, check cards, ATM machines, and people from other countries such as London, England. I tried reading about it and frankly, it gave me a headache. Needless to say, this guy is incredible and he's my hero! I can say it's nothing I've ever done or probably could have done in my over 30 year career will ever match it, so yeah! I am jealous!

November-Officer Andy Lozano: He's been with the Beach Police for only 3 years yet in November of 2010, he distinguished himself with 3

2011 Annual FOP Dinner Awards Presentations

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good catches, among other things. A burglar from a construction site who stole \$30,000.00 worth of copper wire from 11th & Collins, a stolen car with drugs in it, and a burglar from 6422 Collins who confessed to another one at 5757 Collins Ave. Great job!

December- Officer Fugi Medina: He went to 757 West about a woman threatening suicide on a ledge on the 11th floor. She was ready to go over, with her feet dangling over the edge. A suicide note was already written and was found inside. Our cops spoke to her and distracted her to the point where Fugi (my friend) was able to grab her and bring her back to life. I am beyond proud of all of them! Turns out they gave her new medication which did not agree with her.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

Many of you probably know Sgt. Jeff Cohen, who is the Motor Supervisor. Well, last year he was doing a Super Bowl escort when a Maserati pulled out in front of him at 13th and West. He crashed and got hurt with some bad road rash. While in the Rescue truck, he pulled out his radio and continued coordinating the escort for 20 buses to the Sunlight Stadium. He got treated and released and went back to work within an hour and a half of his accident. I say he's crazy, but my real opinion, he's why I'm glad I worked for MBPD. True crazy heroes, if you ask me!

MEDAL OF VALOR

Officer Duane Rezende: Officer Rezende, with the Marine Patrol risked his life during a tropical storm to help save a diver in distress. He, along with the US Coast Guard and MB-Fire Rescue ventured out in 6-8 foot (and sometimes reaching 11-13 ft) waves, winds at 28-33 knots with gust reaching 45 knots approximately 6.2 miles from shore. He was operating one of MBPD's 25ft open fishermen boats. The diver was found alive! Score one for MBPD's Marine Patrol! By the way, the equipment he was in was far inferior to what everyone else had; yet, our guy persevered!

Officer Jose Reina: The weird thing is that I was there when this happened. A thug took a taxi from 36th and Biscayne to 17th and Alton. When they got there, the "passenger" tried to rob the cabbie. After a struggle, the thug fled the cab, but came back, putting a gun to the cabbie's head. The cabbie got pistol whipped and drove to 17th and Meridian. Crime Suppression Detectives Jose Reina and Mishart Torres got there and found a guy fitting the description walking at Lincoln and Jefferson. He ran. During the chase, they saw him turn and saw what looked like a gun in his hand. They "unloaded" on him. The bad guy caught a bullet at Lincoln Lane south and went down. I arrived to hear gunshots echoing throughout the whole area. I got the guy hiding under a car and held his head down with my foot until rescue

got there. Man, it was crazy! Jose, you did a great job, my hat's off to you buddy!

There were also some civilians who got awards of one kind or another, they are: Complaint Operator Madeline Jimenez, Dispatcher Fahad Mumtaz, Payroll Coordinator Michelle Patrick-Harris, Pss Linda Carlson, Crime Scene Tech Lenett Holbrook, Pss Elsa Gordo, and Administrative Assistant Robin Henson.

And now...For OFFICER OF THE YEAR AND CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR!

2010 Officer of the Year

Detective Elise Spina-Taylor (or Dr. Spina-Taylor, since she got her PH-D). Elise was the detective assigned to investigate a string of burglaries in the Middle. To make a long story very short, they identified a suspect in custody in Ohio. Elise and her co-workers were able to solve over 40 burglaries in Miami Beach, Coral Gables, and other locations in Dade County. Great Job!

2010 Civilian of the Year

Since 2005, Robin (daughter of Chuck Hayes) has been the backbone of the MBPD Patrol Division. Without getting into details, she handled just about everything and could probably handle the patrol division by

herself without any help at all. I had the pleasure of working with her while I was still there and I can attest to this. This award was long overdue and I congratulate her for her accomplishments!

All in all, I congratulate each and every award winner for 2010. There are many more who probably should get rewarded but hey, you can only give out so many. As you can see, the MBPD continues to provide their all in service to their community. Those of us who have retired in years past can certainly take comfort in the fact the the MBPD is in the hands of a new, extremely competent, and dedicated generation of cops and civilian employees. I'm happy with it and I hope you are too!

-S. Gam

Congratulations



Tighe's Corner ... He's back!

Jack Tighe is back with some thoughts for February, 2011. I present him to you completely unedited! Would we have it any other way? -S. Gam

GAM'S writings on his cross country trip reminded me of a 90 day vacation Amyann and I took in a 25 foot RV after my retirement from the Pines. There are some beautiful things to see in this Country. We went by AAA listings on special places to visit. Have you ever heard of the la Brea, California tar pits. In the winter the tar is hard and animals run across with no trouble. In the summer they are caught and sink in the pit and preserved, proving their existence to future scientist. Camels, 6 ft sloths but most surprising the saber tooth tiger

On the same trip we stopped at a diner in JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming. noticed a large picture on the wall of Miami Beach Officer HOMER CROCKETT (51-72) in uniform with the beach motorcycle and a beautiful female MAROLYN MONROE. When I told them I knew Homer, they called him, he came over and we traded sea stories

Death, Remember last months letter with FRED WALDER in a \$20,000 black Corvette convertible. He willed it to ST JUDES Children's Hospital.

RICHEY FRANCHONI was the basis for a lot of stories including his total belief in the old police code 'never give up your brother officer'. For the national convention the department assigned him to the roof top of the Convention Hall. I don't know what items he was given to keep him in the shade but three sand bags were among them. When it got hot he

went looking, noticed the roof on the smaller building was shady, decided to move to that location. He got one bag lugged it and dropped it to the lower roof. He then went back repeated dropping sand bags. What Ricky didn't know and never realize was the lower roof was thin and each bag broke through in effect bombing the offices underneath, which was the headquarters for the FBI, who became highly excited believing it was a plot by the hippies and demonstrators bombarding them.

Death JIMMY PRESTON (57-83) was the model of most officers, did his job unnoticed. I heard from him once after retired when he lost his wife

I attended the yearly dinner, and noticed (I was the oldest person attending; 2). ten retirees served in my time, until LEE ANN FUSCO GUTIERREZ(74-89)introduced herself (both her and husband have moved back to Florida) 3.Seeing Al BOZA reminded me of an incident while a raw rookie. He was signed to east Lincoln Beat, where we had sudden/rash of store B& E's Al was given a set of binoculars and posted on the roof of the Albion hotel on James Ave. A store was hit description of his clothing James Ave. A store was hit and Al came on the air giving the complete description saying "white male walking on Lincoln Rd with sneakers with multicolored shoe laces. Needless to say the burglar was found and arrested.

Finally. the Tighes, die hard Hurricane fans. As we left our party we found the U had the rooms next to ours and as we waited for the eleva-

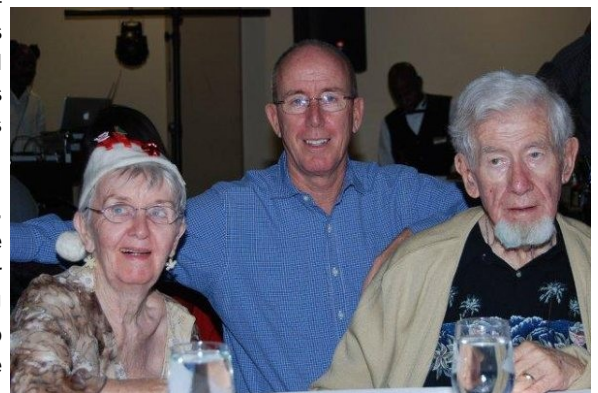
tor, Sebastien the Ibis, U Miami's mascot was coming out. Tighe family greeted him with a C A N E S

Newspaper published a obit on Hallandale Chief of Police THOMAS MAGILL adding two brothers were also Officers in different agencies. All are sons of old time Beach officer Bill MAGILL who died while working in the jail. In 1958

Bet you didn't know. The burial of the two Officers had a touch of Miami Beach. When Dade County Police Director JAMES LOFTUS gave his speech he had two Metro Uniform Officers on either side. To demonstrate to the children of the fallen Officers that life continues. These Officers are siblings of Matro Detective THOMAS HODGE who was one of three Detectives killed in the north end of the Beach in 1977.

Knowing how tough it is to write these letters I will write the retirees bio's again but due to my limitations it will be by e-mail

Thank you and happy, healthy New Year to members who sent Christmas greetings. Health and relative reasons and laziness caused a failure to send greetings.



Odds n Ends

The following was written by Chief Carlos Noriega and was placed in the MBPD's Official Bulletin.

INCREASED ASSAULTS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

The two MDPD Officers killed in the line of duty last Thursday and the two St. Petersburg Officers killed in the line of duty on Monday, serve as tragic reminders about the perils inherent with our profession. In addition to those two horrific incidents, there has been a disturbing trend of increased assaults on law enforcement personnel across the country. In a story dubbed "War on Cops" released a couple of days ago by Police Magazine, it was documented that eleven officers around the nation were shot in a 24 hour period. This story and other recent similar stories have implied that law enforcement personnel are becoming "targets". Yet, in spite of what we as public safety professionals risk each day, local publications like the New Times continue to maintain an antagonistic position against Law Enforcement. I want to take this opportunity to remind all of our personnel that Officer Safety is our primary objective, prior to anything else we do to serve our community. Initiatives to include an Officer Safety Committee, an Assault Rifle Program, a mass casualty "Operation Cassandra" exercise, an upcoming department wide transition to an new and improved firearm, the purchase of an automated "FATS" simulator to expose our officers to a variety of real life shooting scenarios, and improved/enhanced training (to include ground fighting tactics) are all initiatives implemented under this administration. We will continue to look at anything and everything we can do to ensure that Officer Safety is maximized for our personnel.

Please think safety first as you conduct your duties and responsibilities in the most professional manner possible.

TRUST FUND ESTABLISHED FOR SLAIN OFFICERS FAMILIES

The Police Officer Assistance Trust (POAT) has established a trust fund on behalf of the families of slain Police Officers Roger Castillo and Amanda Haworth, who were brutally shot and murdered while serving the citizens of Miami-Dade County.

There are two easy ways to donate: Online at www.poaat.org. Click on the link on the homepage to make your donation with a credit or debit card. Checks should be made payable to the Police Officer Assistance Trust or POAT. Please notate Officers Castillo/Haworth Trust Fund in the memo area of your check and then mail to: **Police Officer Assistance Trust, 1030 N.W. 111 Avenue, Miami, FL 33172.**

RECRUITMENT OF CERTIFIED POLICE OFFICERS

If you folks out there know certified police officers who would like to work for the Beach, which as I recall, was not a bad place to work, now is there chance to join the best police department in the world. Effective January 24, 2011, the Police Department commenced continuous hiring of Certified Police Officers. The list of required knowledge, skills and abilities for the position are listed on the Miami Beach Human Resources (HR) website. Please note that applications are to be completed online as HR no longer accepts paper or e-mail applications. To complete your application, please go to www.governmentjobs.com and create your account.

The following documents **MUST** be downloaded and are available on the City's website. Please call Human Resources at ext. 7520 for further information.

