

0500097

Cal K
Citizen Comment
6/13/05

The Gainesville Sun, our only real press source for local news, has been gushing about business and political leaders, and their spouses, who went off at some taxpayer expense to see for themselves why Madison, Wisconsin, might be considered as a role model for Gainesville today. That City was the first stop in 2005, after our gadabouts stopped by to look at New Haven, Connecticut, Norfolk, Virginia and Athens, Georgia for similar purposes.

The Madison contingent has assured the public that they made valuable contacts with one another that apparently could not be made locally. So the Chamber of Commerce and other private interests now are assured of the ears of the Mayor and at least some City Commissioners that they didn't have before they all shared the Madison experience.

I suggest tonight that these visits may be teaching our leaders some valuable lessons in politics, for example, how to hide especially in this one daily town about, for example, lack of meaningful progress in the first term of Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan. What am I talking about? Well, the same informative Gainesville Sun, alerted us readers that five Russian judges will be meeting with the Mayor, among others, to learn about our legal system and how it operates locally during this coming week.

Will they learn more perhaps than I seem to be able to find out by requests for information from the City that I file pursuant to the Florida Constitution and the State Public Records Act? Are our Russian judicial visitors being shown the real Gainesville, Florida, or are they being shown a Potemkin Village?

A Potemkin village is so called after Grigori Aleksandrovich Potemkin, who had elaborate fake villages built in order to impress Catherine the Great on her tours of the Ukraine and the Crimea in the 18th century.

"Potemkin village" has come to mean, especially in a political context, any hollow or false construct, physical or figurative, meant to hide an undesirable or potentially damaging situation, the irony is that in fact there appears to have been no such thing. The term "Potemkin Village" is also often used by judges, especially judges who dissent from the majority's opinion on a particular matter, to describe an inaccurate or tortured interpretation and/or application of a particular legal doctrine to the specific facts at issue. Use of the term is meant to imply that the reasons espoused by the majority in support of its decision are not based on accurate or sound law and their restrictive application is merely a masquerade for the court's desire to avoid a difficult decision. Often, the dissent will attempt to reveal the majority's adherence to the restrictive principle at issue as being an inappropriate function for a court because the decision involves more than traditional adjudication because the resolution of the case will effectively create an important and far-reaching policy decision, which the legislature would be the better equipped and more appropriate entity to address. These definitions are provided by on-line dictionaries.

I think our visitors can judge for themselves. But I have decided to share with them the materials I am providing to the City Commission tonight for future reference.

Russia judges look for ideas in Gainesville

By DEBORAH BALL

Sun staff writer

After a day of flying halfway across the world, five federal judges from Russia arrived at the Gainesville Regional Airport on Saturday to spend a week learning about the United States' legal and political systems as part of the week-long U.S. Library of Congress Open World Program.

Gainesville attorney Steve Kalishman, local facilitator of the visit, said that this is the fourth year a delegation has visited Gainesville to observe local attorneys, judges and law enforcement officials in action.

Exhausted, but excited about their first-ever trip to the United States, the judges chatted with their American hosts as they waited for their

JUDGES on Page 4B

THE GAINESVILLE SUN LOCAL & STATE SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 200

JUDGES: Courthouses, law offices on itinerary

Continued from 1B

uggage after a delayed connecting flight from Atlanta.

"In Russia, they are going through a transitional period," Kalishman said, "and they're looking for models and ideas. They look to (the United States) as the land of innovation, so it's nice to be in a position where we can influence how things will change there."

The judges will visit law offices, area courthouses and the University of Florida's College of Law, among other places, and meet with public officials, including Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan and State Attorney Bill Cervone. The delegation also will have time to do some shopping and sightseeing in Crescent Beach and St. Augustine.

Viktoriya Yuryevna Ivanilova, 37, a judge for the past nine years in Lipetsk City, Russia, said through a translator that she is interested in how the American criminal court system operates.

"We have many things in common, America and Russia," Ivanilova said. "But our constitution in Russia specifies requirements for judges, such as age. Russian judges are younger and 80 percent of



DEBORAH BALL/The Gainesville Sun

Russian federal judges Yelena Smirnova, left, and Irina Bogacheva, center, speak with Aleksandr Chubin of Gainesville, one of their American hosts, after their arrival Saturday at Gainesville Regional Airport. Smirnova and Bogacheva are part of a delegation of five Russian judges visiting Gainesville on the weeklong U.S. Library of Congress Open World Program to learn about America's legal and political systems.

But while Ivanilova said she is happy to visit a new country, she's not interested in sightseeing as much.

"I want to get to know the people much better," Ivanilova said.

For Aleksandr Aleksandrov-

Yekaterinburg City, Russia, American food, highway signs, narrower streets and geometric houses were new sights for him, he said.

"It's a lot cleaner here," Osokin said through a translator. "The tomatoes and cucum-

And while American food and sights are a transition for Osokin, he said he is eager to get down to business and see how American judges deliver verdicts in the courtroom.

"This is the East meeting the West," Osokin said. "We should learn from each other."

Liberals, race and past distortions

If the share of the black vote that goes to the Democrats ever falls to 70 percent, it may be virtually impossible for the Democrats to win the White House or Congress, because they have long ago lost the white male vote and their support among other groups is eroding.

Against that background, it is possible to understand their desperate efforts to keep blacks paranoid, not only about Republicans but about American society in general.



THOMAS SOWELL

progress must be depicted as dependent on the same liberalism.

In reality, reductions in poverty among blacks and the rise of blacks into higher level occupations were both more

pronounced in the years leading up to the civil rights legislation and welfare state policies of the 1960s than in the years that followed.

requested to interpret the law.

Decisions are written in books that form the foundation for interpreting how to apply the law to each new set of facts. That is called case law or precedent.

These written opinions set forth the judge's decision and the reasoning for that decision. The opinions cite prior cases that were used to apply to the facts of each particular case.

If judges, as Sowell claims, are "rule of lawlessness on the bench," then any American has the right to appeal that judge's ruling to a higher court.

Judges rule upon the plain meaning of the law as written by the legislature.

If the result of that judicial interpretation is different than the intent of the lawmaker, the legislature can enact a new law clarifying its intended purpose.

In this way, the branches of government work together in ensuring that the laws enacted by the legislature do, in fact, carry out its intended purpose.

Our freedom is dependent upon an independent judiciary to assume the responsibility of ensuring the fair application of the law. We should all have confidence in this great American institution.

Robert A. Rush,
Florida Bar Board of Governors,
Eighth Judicial Circuit,

Liberal Democrats, especially, must keep blacks fearful of racism everywhere, including in an administration whose Cabinet includes people of Chinese, Japanese, Hispanic, and Jewish ancestry, and two consecutive black secretaries of State. Blacks must be kept believing that their only hope lies with liberals.

Not only must the present be distorted, so must the past — and any alternative view of the future must be nipped in the bud. That is why prominent minority figures who stray from the liberal plantation must be discredited, debased and, above all, kept from becoming federal judges.

A thoughtful and highly intelligent member of the California supreme court like Justice Janice Rogers Brown must be smeared as a right-wing extremist, even though she received 76 percent of the vote in California, hardly a right-wing extremist state. But desperate politicians cannot let facts stand in their way.

Least of all can they afford to let Janice Rogers Brown become a national figure on the federal bench. The things she says and does could lead other blacks to begin to think independently — and that in turn threatens the whole liberal house of cards.

If a smear is what it takes to stop her, that is what liberal politicians and the liberal media will use.

It's "not personal" as they say when they smear someone. It doesn't matter how outstanding or upstanding Justice Brown is. She is a threat to the power that means everything to liberal politicians. The Democrats' dependence on blacks for votes means that they must keep blacks dependent on them.

Black self-reliance would be almost as bad as blacks becoming Republicans, as far as liberal Democrats are concerned. All black progress in the past must be depicted as the result of liberal government programs and all hope of future

Moreover, contrary to political myth, a higher percentage of Republicans than Democrats voted for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But facts have never stopped politicians or ideologues before and show no signs of stopping them now.

What blacks have achieved for themselves, without the help of liberals, is of no interest to liberals. Nothing illustrates this better than political reactions to academically successful black schools.

Despite widespread concerns expressed about the abysmal educational performances of most black schools, there is remarkably little interest in those relatively few black schools which have met or exceeded national standards.

Anyone who is serious about the advancement of blacks would want to know what is going on in those ghetto schools whose students have reading and math scores above the national average, when so many other ghetto schools are miles behind in both subjects.

But virtually all the studies of such schools have been done by conservatives, while liberals have been strangely silent.

Achievement is not what liberalism is about. Victimhood and dependency are.

Black educational achievements are a special inconvenience for liberals because those achievements have usually been a result of methods and practices that go directly counter to prevailing theories in liberal educational circles and are anathema to the teachers' unions that are key supporters of the Democratic Party.

Many things that would advance blacks would not advance the liberal agenda. That is why the time is long overdue for the two to come to a parting of the ways.

Thomas Sowell writes for Creators Syndicate.

*The Gainesville Sun,
May 25, 2005*

Attack on judiciary shows columnist's ignorance

The unwarranted attack on the judiciary by commentator Thomas Sowell demonstrates his fundamental ignorance of our American system of government, including the checks and balances designed by our founding fathers to protect our freedom.

The United States Constitution provides for the separation of powers three co-equal branches of government. The legislative branch drafts the laws. The executive branch carries out the law, and when there is a case and controversy on the meaning of the law, the judiciary is called on to interpret the law.

In most judicial actions, the application of law to the facts is clear and does not require interpretation by the courts.

Occasionally, the complexity of modern society presents issues that are unique, such that people of reasonable minds may reasonably disagree on the meaning of the law and how it should be applied. Only then are the courts

Independent judiciary important

The recent debacle in the U.S. Senate over judicial appointments may be a sequel to molding the judiciary to be the mere enforcer of "political decisions."

The idea the judiciary is restricted merely to that of "an enforcer of political decisions made by elected representatives," advocated on the Senate floor by U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, is so precedentially fallacious it is inconceivable it was sincerely made.

Our greatest chief justice, John Marshall, a contemporary of our founders, served with George Washington in the Revolutionary War, and later as sec-

My WORD

RUSSELL TROUTMAN

retary of state, declared in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) it is the exclusive function of the court "to say what the law is."

Marshall's opinion is unsailable to those embracing original-intent philosophy to confer check-and-balance powers to the three branches of government.

For example, the legislative branch enacts legislation. The executive branch may veto the legislation; the legislature may override the veto; the judicial

branch is empowered to review the constitutionality of legislation, but only when a pertinent case is brought to the court; the legislative branch in turn has the check-and-balance power to initiate the amendment process.

It speaks well for Marshall's interpretation of the Constitution that notwithstanding 27 successful amendments, neither the legislative nor executive branch has proposed an amendment obviating judicial review or any part of separation of powers, nor are they likely to. Like wise, no state has convened a convention to propose an amendment to eliminate that necessity.

J-26.05-

to separation of powers

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's quote, "The time will come when judges will answer for their behavior," suggests judges must reflect public opinion or be punished. The contrary is true. To demonstrate the resoluteness of our Founding Fathers to have an independent judiciary, they provided for the election of the executive and legislative branches of government but appointment for life of federal judges. Their purpose was to assure public opinion, when misguided, would not compromise intellectual honesty.

Instead, these dedicated men and women have an unswerving

duty, to quote Abraham Lincoln, "To do the right as God gives us to see the right." They must perform their function with intellectual detachment in the face of impeachment threats, which happened with Chief Justice Earl Warren following the desegregation decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) or even threat of life.

Judges are defenseless to answer charges and protests. Even when rulings arouse angry emotions, judges do not deserve threats, especially by august leaders to "answer for their behavior" or intimidated to be "an enforcer of political decisions," or life threatened as did one ma-

levolent who offered a reward to anyone who kills a St. Petersburg judge ruling in the Schiavo case.

Indeed, the judiciary has and will displease many for whatever reason, but to reduce that equal branch of government to serve as a minion to the executive and legislative branches of government not only does violence to constitutional sanctity but violence to the founders' original philosophy that an independent judiciary is indispensable to a democratically free society.

Russell Troutman is a lawyer in Winter Park.

Attorney sues state licensing body as it looks into

By ANTHONY COLAROSS
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

In a town where many lawyers find virtue in keeping their names out of the newspaper, Steven G. Mason doesn't mind so much seeing his name in print.

The veteran Orlando attorney also isn't afraid of taking on government, commenting on judicial improprieties or just plain speaking his mind.

"I've been fighting for the under-

dog my entire career," Mason says. "And I'm not going to stop now."

But Mason's penchant for speaking frankly about court decisions he disagrees with might have finally caught up with him. Soon after he was quoted in the *Orlando Sentinel* in early April at the height of the mayoral-election debacle, The Florida Bar began a grievance inquiry against him based on his published comments.

And now it appears two 9th Judicial Circuit judges called the Bar

concerning his comments, according to a letter Mason's lawyer wrote to a Bar attorney.

The inquiry will determine whether Mason violated rules of professional conduct and made disparaging comments about a judge in one case and a jury in another.

Mason, who insists that the complaint was handled inappropriately, has fired back.

He filed a federal lawsuit late last month, arguing that Florida Bar rules under which he was cited "un-

ORLANDO SENTINEL

5.12.05
his comments

constitutionally inhibit free speech."

The outcome of the lawsuit could have broader implications on what Florida lawyers may say publicly and privately about judges, jurors and one another.



ORLANDO WEEKLY

[news](#) | [music](#) | [calendar](#) | [movies](#) | [dining](#) | [arts and culture](#)
[books](#) | [culture to go](#) | [selections](#) | [dog playing poker](#) | [happytown](#)
[blister](#) | [bad sport](#) | [savage love](#) | [slug](#) | [horoscopes](#)
[comics](#) | [news of the weird](#) | [classifieds](#) | [notable noise](#) | [local links](#)
[message boards](#) | [best of orlando](#) | [letters](#) | [home](#)

SHUT HIM UP!



(photo: Vince Hobbs)

By [Jeffrey C. Billman](#)
Published 5/12/2005

If you read the *Orlando Sentinel*, you probably know who Steven G. Mason is. If not, here's the short version: Mason is a lawyer with a propensity for taking controversial, high-profile cases and talking

Ads by Goooooogle

**Criminal & Court
Records**

Nationwide
Criminal-Lawsuits-
Assets Address
History-Property-
Liens-More

www.Intelius.com

about them openly with reporters – which we love. Mason is something of a media darling in this town, a sharp wit who has no problem sharing juicy quotes with those who make a living scribbling them down.

But Mason's gift for gab has annoyed two Orange County circuit court judges – Jay Cohen and Frederick Lauten – who phoned in complaints on April 4 to the Florida Bar and prompted an inquiry into whether Mason broke Bar rules against unfairly criticizing judges and juries, according to documents obtained by *Orlando Weekly*.

**View Court
Records**

Get Access to
Court Records and
Other Private
Documents! aff.

www.Investigator.com

Specifically, the complaints center around two *Sentinel* stories. The first, written by Mark Schlueb April 2, came after Judge Cohen ruled that the city of Orlando's planned special election was legal. Mason represented the Orange County Democratic Party, which sought to toss the then-upcoming election.

"It's an illegal election," the *Sentinel* quoted Mason as saying. "We'll find some judges on the appellate court who aren't afraid of the political heat, and we're going to win this thing."

**Instant Detective
2005 Ed**

Check Public
Records & Files.
Instant Access
Online!

www.SafeSpy.net

The implication that Cohen caved to political pressure apparently got under the judge's skin. "I don't know what went on in his mind," Mason says. "I can tell you honestly that I never had any intent, and that statement had nothing to do with his qualities as a judge or human being."

While he wasn't misquoted, Mason says Schlueb pulled those comments from a half-hour conversation that touched on everything from the ruling to a rant about city government. "You pick the quote that fits in with the context of the story," Mason says.

**Online
Courthouse
Records**

Search Courthouse
Records Online.
Easy and
Confidential.

[www.Records-
Search.Net](http://www.Records-Search.Net)

Neither Judge Cohen nor Judge Lauten – who recently transferred to Osceola County, where he heads the criminal division – could be reached by phone for this story.

The other story, written by Anthony Colarossi and published Feb. 12, came after another of Mason's clients, a former bingo-hall operator, lost a civil racketeering lawsuit. Mason expressed disbelief at the verdict because jurors were never told that his client had previously been cleared of all criminal charges.

"Unfortunately, this jury got absolutely buffaloed," Mason told Colarossi. "They got snookered, beyond snookered. I would like to see their faces when they find out another jury in this courthouse found these people not guilty of every single charge based on the exact same facts."

Neither Lauten nor Cohen was the judge on the case in question, and it's unclear why Lauten phoned in a complaint to the Bar.

But if Cohen's upset about being derided as a political coward, Lauten has a much deeper history with Mason. In 1988, Lauten was Mason's supervisor when he worked in the state attorney's office. Later, Mason became a well-known defense attorney. Before that, Lauten

had prosecuted for the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation, the region's vice squad and an organization that frequently battled Mason's clients. When Lauten became a judge, Mason butted heads with him over the constitutionality of so-called "knock and talk" arrests and the legality of an MBI raid of exotic dance clubs a few years ago.

Mason has, over the years, also been the principal architect of an annual survey that asks prosecutors and defense lawyers to - anonymously - give their opinions about judges. The results can be brutal, and Mason gives the surveys to local media outlets, including *Orlando Weekly*. It's common knowledge that many judges aren't thrilled with the survey. In 2002, Lauten - who rated highly in the survey - said publishing the results "can be unfair, and it raises some ethical issues."

On April 14, the Bar fired off a letter to Mason, demanding a response to the complaint within 15 days. Specifically, the Bar wanted to know if Mason had been accurately and contextually quoted in the *Sentinel*. The Bar had convened a grievance committee, which acts like a grand jury in these matters and decides whether or not to carry the case over to a formal hearing, which ultimately could sanction Mason if he was found to have violated Bar association rules.

At issue here is Florida Bar Rule 4-8.2(a), which says: "A lawyer shall not make a statement that the lawyer knows to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, mediator, arbitrator, adjudicatory officer, public legal officer, juror or member of the venire, or candidate for election or appointment to judicial or legal office."

Another Florida Bar rule, 4-8.4(d), says a lawyer shall not "engage in conduct in connection with the practice of law or in connection with the practice of law that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, including to knowingly, or through callous indifference, disparage, humiliate, or discriminate against litigants, jurors, witnesses, court personnel, or other lawyers on any basis, including, but not limited to, on account of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, employment, or physical characteristics."

Mason first thought the complaints were lodged anonymously, because no one would tell him who filed them. That, however, would be against Bar rules as well, because any lawyer who files a grievance against another lawyer has to attach his or her name to it. Mason's initial response to the Bar dwelled on that point.

But it turns out the complaints weren't anonymous. Officially, the investigation began after the local Bar office received phone calls from Judges Cohen and Lauten complaining about the quotes in the *Sentinel* related to the election lawsuit. After that, Bar staffers pored over the *Sentinel* archives and dug up the racketeering story. Together, the stories formed the basis of the complaint.

Mason responded on several fronts. First, in a federal lawsuit filed

against the Bar, he asked for a declaratory judgment, arguing that the Bar rules restricted his right to free speech and were thus unconstitutional. Then, in his first response to the Bar, he argued that he didn't break the rules, and that other lawyers had given much more slanderous quotes about public officials with impunity. For instance, after prosecutor Brad King dropped charges against Buddy Dyer, several big-shot attorneys, including Bill Frederick, Bill Sublette and William Sheaffer, lambasted King in print. Frederick, for example, said, "I cannot express my incredulity at the stupidity of this prosecutor."

That comment seems a lot more direct than anything Mason said. Thus, Mason argued, the Bar was unfairly targeting him – especially considering the fact that the local Bar staff appeared to drop everything and chase down the complaint once the calls came in, he says.

But why him? Mason points to a federal lawsuit he brought against the Bar in the late 1990s over advertising. The Bar had complained about ads Mason ran in the Yellow Pages, saying they were improperly "self-laudatory." Mason sued, alleging the restrictions violated his First Amendment rights. After losing in district court, he appealed and won. The Bar had to pay his fees and costs.

"The Bar has a tendency to go on these crazy crusades," he says. "Do I think there may be some residual issues there? Hell, yes."

After Mason discovered the source of the complaint, he filed a motion to disqualify the Florida Bar from judging it on the grounds that he "has a reasonable fear that he will not be treated fairly by the Bar in this matter." In essence, Mason says the Bar tried to hide the source of the complaint from him, and that by accepting and acting upon "secret telephone calls from local jurists" the Bar had made itself a prejudiced player in the ordeal. Mason says he still doesn't know if the Lauten and Cohen calls came in together or independent of one another, or if the judges were complaining of a single perceived slight or many.

(Frances Brown-Lewis, the Bar lawyer handling the Mason case, did not return repeated phone calls by press time.)

True to his hell-raising nature, Mason sees a bigger picture. "I see it as an attack on the free press, I truly do. I think there is an institutional element that wants to inhibit lawyers from speaking candidly with the press, to make us robots, to sanitize everything. I see it as a form of elitism. What else could it be?"

Green for county court

Walter Green will bring his experience working with county court as well as needed diversity to the bench.

Walter Green knows county court. Inside and out.

He has spent most of his working days for the past 15 years in county court. He is as well prepared as anyone we can imagine to don the robes of county court judge.

As a career prosecutor under three state attorneys, Green has tried hundreds of cases in county court. As the State Attorney's division chief for county court, he supervises the daily work of half a dozen other prosecutors.

Virtually the only time Green is not involved in the daily business of county court is when he is working with Drug Court, Mental Health Court and Teen Court, three programs whose worthy goal is to keep non-violent, first-time offenders from getting caught up in the criminal justice system's revolving door. Green is an enthusiastic supporter of such diversionary programs because he doesn't believe that formal adjudication



Green

and incarceration is always an appropriate response; that justice is often better served when people who have made mistakes are given a second chance to turn their lives around.

The other contender in this race is Emory Springfield, a longtime practicing attorney in Gainesville. He has a good reputation in the local legal community, but his qualifications for the job do not match Green's.

All other things considered, we also recommend Walter Green because he would bring much-needed diversity to the county bench. Frankly, a university community that celebrates diversity as much as this one does should be embarrassed by the all-white makeup of its county court.

We urge Sun readers to vote for **Walter Green** for county court.

LAW

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE LITIGATOR, by Duffy Graham (University of Michigan Press; 115 pages; \$22.95). Explores the moral consciousness of the litigator and his or her role in the judicial process.

DOES GOD BELONG IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?, by Kent Greenawalt (Princeton University Press; 261 pages; \$29.95). Discusses the problem of maintaining the constitutional separation of church and state while ensuring that children understand the role religion has played in American society.

EXPERTS IN COURT: RECONCILING LAW, SCIENCE, AND PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, by Bruce D. Sales and Daniel W. Shuman (American Psychological Association; 162 pages; \$49.95). Discusses standards of evidence admissibility and other issues related to the testimony of expert witnesses; focuses on mental-health professionals.

SUING THE GUN INDUSTRY: A BATTLE AT THE CROSSROADS OF GUN CONTROL AND MASS TORTS, edited by Timothy D. Lytton (University of Michigan Press; 424 pages; \$49.50). Writings on the history of legal action against the gun industry, and on the lessons that can be drawn from similar litigation against the makers of asbestos, silicon breast implants, cigarettes, and other products.

THE SUPREME COURT UNDER EARL WARREN, 1953-1969, by Michal R. Belknap (University of South Carolina Press; 406 pages; \$49.95). A study of the Warren Court's revolution in constitutional law, including landmark decisions on segregation, criminal procedure, political districting, and the right to privacy in sexual matters.

LINGUISTICS

IMPERSONAL PASSION: LANGUAGE AS AFFECT, by Denise Riley (Duke University Press; 142 pages; \$69.95 hardcover, \$19.95 paperback). Explores aspects of language and emotions, including the embarrassment of public sexual discourse.

LAW

DEFENDING RIGHTS IN RUSSIA: LAWYERS, THE STATE, AND LEGAL REFORM IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA, by Pamela Jordan (University of British Columbia Press; 256 pages; US\$85). A study of how Russian lawyers have redefined their profession in the post-Soviet era and achieved greater, if not complete, autonomy from the state.

05-2805

The price of silence

Shortly after he became president of the University of Florida, Bernie Machen initiated a campus-wide dialogue about Beverly Daniel Tatum's thought-provoking book: "Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?"

It was a good start toward addressing issues of diversity, fairness and equal opportunity at a state university that is continually striving to live up to its flagship status. And it is a conversation that sorely needs to be continued and expanded beyond UF's borders into its host community.

"Some people say there is too much talk about race and racism in the United States," Tatum wrote. "I say that there is not enough. ... We need to talk about it at home, at school, in our houses of worship, in our workplaces, in our community groups.

"But talk does not mean idle chatter," she cautioned. "It means meaningful, productive dialogue to raise consciousness and lead to effective action and social change."

The issues raised in Tatum's book seem relevant to current events here in Gainesville and Alachua County. So in the hope of promoting a "meaningful and productive dialogue" about race in our community, we might pose a few questions based on recent headlines in The Sun:

Why are so many black kids classified as learning disabled in our public school system?

Why are so few black kids classified as gifted?

Why are so many black kids being suspended?

In a recent Sun series about special education, it was reported that black children — who make up only 37 percent of the school population — account for 51 percent of students classified as learning disabled, but only 3 percent of those classified as gifted.

pals and teachers are having to react to larger problems that do not originate in the classroom.

Rather, their origins are in our homes, neighborhoods, workplaces and the streets of our community.

To a large extent, the children, black or white, who have learning or discipline problems begin to form those problems long before they ever entered a classroom.

They are disadvantages acquired from growing up in poverty, or from being raised by young single mothers, or perhaps from being bounced around from home to home.

They are children who simply do not enter school "ready to learn."

"They have no school supplies because their families can't afford them," Superintendent Dan Boyd said in a recent guest column in The Sun. "They don't recognize shapes or colors, let alone numbers or letters. They've never been exposed to books. They haven't learned how to interact appropriately with other children or adults."

That is why the United Way's "Success by Six" initiative is so critical to the future of this community. The best way to head off learning disability or discipline problems is by reaching out to troubled children before they get to school.

In that regard, Success by Six initiators hope to learn from the example set by communities like Hampton, Va., which managed to turn around its economic fortunes and improve its quality of life by focusing on early childhood welfare.

But as vital as Success by Six may be, it is only part and parcel of a larger and more extensive conversation about race, about social equity and economic opportunity, about poverty and disparities that ought to be taking place in this community.

And in a subsequent package of stories about the use of suspensions in public schools, it was revealed that black children account for fully two-thirds of those suspended.

Here's another question that is certainly relevant to the discussion:

Why are nearly four out of five black children in Alachua County on free or the reduced lunch program? Doesn't that tell us something about race, poverty and economic opportunity?

Our purpose in posing the above questions is not to point an accusatory finger at the school system. To the extent that black children are disproportionately being classified as learning disabled or receiving suspensions, we suspect it is because over-extended princi-

We don't really know the answers to the questions posed earlier in this editorial. But finding answers, let alone solutions, requires a broader conversation that deserves the active participation of political and civic leaders, educators and criminal justice officials, neighborhood associations, social workers and parents, business people and people of faith and many others.

"As a society, we pay a price for our silence," Tatum warns. "Unchallenged personal, cultural and institutional racism results in a loss of human potential, lowered productivity, and a rising tide of fear and violence in our society."

Perhaps it's time to break the silence and talk about race in Gainesville.

Breaking the silence

The Sun's May 25 editorial, "The price of silence," is the best writing on race that The Sun has published since Buddy Davis' 1971 Pulitzer Prize-winning editorials.

It goes beyond poverty as a major cause of student problems. It cites United Way's "Success by Six" proposal as critical in preventing those problems. More than that, it gets down to the basics. It asks why society remains silent about the facts and importance of racism in the educational and general community scene.

In the Seattle school system, they took a good look at the disparities in test scores of black and white students and the high numbers of black-student discipline cases. They said, "We have to talk about this. The whole community has to talk about it."

A series of "Courageous Conversations" involved all teachers and other school employees. It also extended as a communitywide effort. One of the administrators said, "We spent a lot of time talking about poverty and diversity before we got down to the nitty gritty of racism."

"The schools spent hundreds of thousands of dollars using an outside expert to manage the conversations," said Dr. Caprice Hollins, director of equity and race relations. Formerly a teacher in the system, she was hired last October to look at systemic training that includes a culturally relevant curriculum.

"We partner with the University of Washington on continued staff training," she said. "Professors of ethnic studies come in to present material on African-American, Native American,

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Asian and Hispanic cultures."

The schools lack statistics on changes that have taken place, but they feel improvements have been made. Some schools do better than others, "but we still have a long way to go," Hollins said.

As The Sun's editorial concluded, "Perhaps it's time to break the silence and talk about race in Gainesville."

Harriet Ludwig,
Gainesville

The Gainesville Sun

ESTABLISHED IN 1876

JAMES R. OSTEEN
Executive Editor

JAMES E. DOUGHTON
Publisher

RON CUNNINGHAM
Editorial Page Editor

JACALYN LEVINE
Managing Editor

A PART OF
The New York Times
Company

EDITORIALS

But here in Alachua County — home of Florida's "flagship" university, where education is our bread and butter — reduced

Great expectations

Rising state standards and changes in criteria are no excuse for lower school grades in Alachua County.

Alachua County schools did not fare particularly well in this year's round of state grading based on FCAT scores.

Only four of the district's 45 schools received better grades than last year. But 13 saw their grades go down.

School district officials seemed to shrug off those reductions as an anticipated result of higher state expectations and changes in the way Tallahassee calculates the grades.

"Overall, scores are what we expected," Sandy Hollinger, deputy superintendent for curriculum, told The Sun. "The state raised the bar significantly this year ... and this year we expected there might be more schools to go down because of the changed standards and grading criteria."

So lower grades were expected? In a community whose main "export" is education? Is that supposed to make parents feel better?

We would suggest, instead, that School Board members and administrators at Kirby-Smith ought to be raising their own expectations.

Coincidentally, Gov. Jeb Bush also talked about expectations as the state Department of Education announced this year's school grades.

"High expectations continue to yield rising student achievement," Bush said. "Each time we raise the bar in education, Florida's students and teachers surpass the

grades were "expected."

On the whole, schools got grade reductions because they did not see adequate progress among their lowest-performing students. District officials complained because this year the test scores of students with learning disabilities or limited English ability were included in the mix, which tended to lower overall school scores.

But in Tallahassee, Education Commissioner John Winn countered with: "We're not apologizing for placing additional emphasis on our most struggling students."

Nor should they. There's no question that this district does an outstanding job educating gifted and above-average students. But like many districts, it continues to struggle with low-performing students — those who tend to come from poorer families, who tend to live in racially segregated neighborhoods, and who are more likely to begin school not "ready to learn."

Last month, Newsweek ranked Eastside High School fourth in the nation among "America's Best High Schools."

This month, the state reduced Eastside's grade from a B to a C.

If you think Newsweek and Tallahassee were looking at two different high schools, you are right.

Newsweek's ranking is based on the number of high-achieving students who flock to Eastside's International Baccalaureate program — most of them from predominantly white neighborhoods

The Gainesville Sun

ESTABLISHED IN 1876

JAMES R. OSTEN
Executive Editor

JAMES E. DOUGHTON
Publisher

RON CUNNINGHAM
Editorial Page Editor

JACALYN LEVINE
Managing Editor



A PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING NEWSPAPER
1965, JACK HARRISON ♦ 1971, H.G. DAVIS

EDITORIALS

Reason and diversity

Training in cultural sensitivity will aid our city government officials in more effectively serving Gainesville's residents.

Perhaps now that the Gainesville City Commission elections are over, it will be possible to talk a bit more rationally about the issue of diversity awareness/cultural sensitivity training.

What is it about those phrases that incite so much heated rhetoric? Why should the mere act of placing the issue on the city agenda cause commissioners to allege that a sinister plot was afoot to sway the election?

Why are the words "cultural sensitivity" deemed so offensive that sworn police officers have vowed to boycott a public festival in protest?

Why should the idea that city employees undergo a few hours of diversity awareness training elicit so much anger and resistance?

Well, perhaps it is helpful to talk about what cultural sensitivity training isn't. It isn't a liberal plot to make conservatives look like racists and sexists. It isn't a blanket decree of immunity to keep police from enforcing the law. It isn't a device to force-feed the "gay agenda" to people whose religion teaches that homosexuality is

phrase.

Moreover, it is unfortunate the members of the Fraternal Order of Police so closely associate cultural sensitivity training with the events of last year's Fifth Avenue Arts Festival.

Yes, it was unfair that some Gainesville Police Department officers were criticized for doing their jobs and citing vendors of bootlegged CDs and videos. But that incident alone is not the justification for requiring diversity awareness training of all city employees.

Memories of the Fifth Avenue Arts Festival are still fresh. But we also remember a time, not too many years ago, when relations between GPD and the African-American community were so bad that the city appointed a special citizens committee, led by state Sen. Rod Smith, to try to mend fences.

Not unlike Coca-Cola, the city of Gainesville is, in effect, a corporation that serves a diverse customer base and has an interest in maintaining a diverse work force.

Why offer diversity awareness training in city government?

Diversity awareness training is, simply, an increasingly common form of management and human relations training that is being routinely embraced by government agencies, Fortune 500 corporations, colleges and universities, nonprofit agencies and, yes, even police and military organizations.

Coca-Cola uses diversity awareness training. So does the National Security Agency. So does the Veterans Administration. It is less a political movement than a tool that helps private companies and public agencies alike recognize that America's changing ethnic, religious and cultural diversity is a source of opportunity, not conflict.

As Emma Pollard, a research fellow with the Institute for Employment Studies, put it in a 2003 report: "Racism and diversity awareness is evolutionary. Organizations can't arrive in a day, nor stand still. It isn't a matter of training individuals in individual attitudes, it's more a case of achieving a culture that genuinely values difference and benefits from it."

Why should city employees be exposed to diversity awareness training? Why shouldn't they?

When Gainesville voters decided that their city would have the first charter-level Equal Opportunity Office in Florida, they surely expected that the office would institute policies and training to ensure that the words "equal opportunity" would amount to something more than an empty

phrase.

Because Gainesville's "customer base," its residents and taxpayers, are 49 percent male and 51 percent female.

Because whites constitute just 68 percent of the city's population, while African-Americans make up 23 percent and Hispanics 6 percent.

Because foreign languages are spoken in 13 percent of the city's households. And because the University of Florida draws students and faculty and employees to Gainesville from all over the world.

Because Gainesville is a city of many religious faiths. And, yes, it is a city with a large and growing gay population. It is a city of young people that is attracting more and more retirees.

Gainesville is, in fact, a city of diversity that is growing more diverse by the year. And it is not too much to ask that city government be an organization that not simply tolerates, but rather celebrates and encourages diversity.

Now that the heat of the election season has begun to dissipate, we hope commissioners, city employees and residents alike will drop the overblown rhetoric about "cultural sensitivity" and "diversity awareness."

Those are not pejorative terms. Rather, the phrases imply something profoundly positive about the nature of our community.

Instituting cultural sensitivity/diversity awareness training in city government is not brainwashing; it is making a commitment to professionalism in public service.

4/27/05

Diversity training is always welcomed

Because of the misinformation in The Gainesville Sun editorial (April 24), I felt it important to once again publicly state the Fraternal Order of Police position as it relates to diversity training.

The police union, like The Sun, and as far as I know the entire City Commission, fully and openly invites diversity training as a way for our officers to better understand the cultural differences among all the citizens we serve.



**JEFF
McADAMS**

It is inculcated in every Gainesville Police Department officer that our failure to properly communicate with our citizenry because of a lack of cultural knowledge could very easily lead to public distrust, civil unrest or worse.

Diversity training has been a requirement and an openly accepted part of GPD's law enforcement training for over 10 years. The training is certified by professionals from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and there is a reoccurring requirement for all sworn officers in the state of Florida.

Further, Chief Wayne Botsford, shortly after his arrival, adopted additional diversity training specifically related to Community Orientated Policing for all GPD personnel.

In fact, during the April 11 City

Commission meeting, the city's own equal opportunity charter officer said GPD was "ahead of the curve" on educating its officers on diversity when compared to the rest of the state.

So what's all the fuss? If you look beyond the smokescreen The Sun and some commissioners are putting up, it is very easy to see why the officers have objections to working the Fifth Avenue Arts Festival.

Our voluntary boycott of the festival first has more to do with the commission's failure to investigate the festival's director for documented allegations of racism while still receiving nearly \$60,000 annually in city tax revenue.

Yet, the commission has been quick to react to the festival director's complaint of GPD officers not being sensitive to the needs of patrons and law-breaking vendors of last year's event.

A review of last year's festival by Chief Botsford concluded there was no wrongdoing by the officers assigned and all officers used a great deal of discretion by not taking 11 out of 14 vendors charged with felonies to jail. Some commissioners, however, have continued to condemn the officers' actions.

At the April 11 commission meeting, diversity training was the last item discussed. During some intense discussion between the commissioners, the official meeting time expired

TALK on Page 9A

ued from 8A

at 11:15 p.m.

To my surprise, some members of the commission continued meeting and voted in favor of diversity training several minutes after the meeting time expired and without taking citizens' comments.

I waited for over 10 hours to speak on the subject, but was denied the opportunity to do so.

After reviewing a video of the meeting several times, it is blatantly clear a majority of the commission was not

interested in following its own rules nor were they interested in hearing from the public.

Like members on the commission, we are servants of the public, but unlike the commission, we are sworn with the indispensable duty of protecting all of our citizens from the evils of our community.

We will continue to ask the commission to give more than lip service and actively and openly support their law enforcement officers.

Jeff McAdams is president of Gator Lodge 67, Fraternal Order of Police.

My name is Gabe Kaimowitz. Citizens' Comments, Apr. 25, 2005.

Commissioners, Staffers, Members of the Public, and especially our Madame Mayor:

-I had hoped tonight to lobby again as I will continue to do for Barbara Lipscomb to be named Gainesville City Manager. However, I am holding off until I receive information I have requested about ~~her~~ and the process being used to fill the position permanently months after Wayne Bowers resigned and left the area. Meanwhile, Ms. Lipscomb remains on probation, at beck and call.

I am here tonight on a related task. I suggest that it is premature to begin cultural sensitivity training, until this City resolves whether such training is designed to move employees toward a vision of racial integration and harmony, or toward the education of whites about blacks, black history, and African-American history. Nkwanda Jah, who successfully advocated such training, openly believes she has the right at taxpayer expense to be an Afro-centrist, both in her public capacity at the Wilhelmina Johnson Center, and as director of what she has often called the annual African-American Arts Festival. Only whites apparently are uncomfortable with the Festival's race/ethnic identification.

Of course, the City's Equal Opportunity Charter Officer claims that he came up with the idea for such training more than a year, before Ms. Jah spoke out.. although he himself has been in his current capacity only since Feb. 12, 2004. Before that, he created EO chaos for the city. The night before his election, Mayor Hanrahan wrote to me: "Thanks, Gabe-Excellent ideas. I hope you will be able to be at City Hall for the Charter Officer meeting tonight. Your input needs to be aired. However, I personally just can't support Jimmy Williams. He is too much the candidate that Mike Kurtz, Marion Radson, and Wayne Bowers want, which is a fatal flaw."

The Mayor said it was not his fault, but quote “he has used this to his advantage. The hiring of staff defiantly when he should have waited, and the lack of discretion in complaints people have brought (not keeping confidentiality) are also serious problems. I realize that he is ‘the devil we know,’ so others may have even worse problems that we just don’t know of, but at least they will start with a clean slate. I could honestly live with any of the other five.” We got Mr. Williams.

More than a month after Mr. Williams became the EO Charter Officer, Mayor Hanrahan again e-mailed me about this diversity/affirmative action/equal opportunity/cultural sensitivity issue. She responded to my e-mail report of good progress in hiring and promotion of black male in City Hall/GRU employment. I then added that the progress existed “at least when compared to the sisters, black certainly, Hispanic, too, and in some ways—other than glass ceilings—even white females.” I particularly noted that at the time Gainesville didn’t have even one black female firefighter. That still is true today, although I learned last month, that an African American female had been a City firefighter, but apparently has moved on to a position at GRU.

Mayor Hanrahan responded: “Thanks, Gabe....Good points...two of three voters in the African-American community are women. We are actually doing a mailer featuring the photos and words of strong African American women. As a regular white guy, you won’t get mailed a copy but I can send one directly to you if you send me your address.” Less than two months later Jah, made herself visible again, though not as anyone seems to remember accurately. After the police confiscated more than 9,000 CD’s and 500 DVD’s of bootlegged materials, Nkwanda Jah was quoted as saying: “My problem was that they waited until 3 o’clock in the afternoon when there were thousands of people out here to shut us down.” WCJB-TV 20 News reported that GPD said there had been a problem the previous year, in 2003. Before that festival, Jah had been warned that police would be looking for bootleg material at the event.

The next day, on May 18, the Alligator reported Jah said she was told about the search plans before they took place. Ms. Jah said her problem was not with the operation but with its timing. "The police knew about this two weeks ago," she said. "Why couldn't they do it in the morning instead of making our vendors lose business in the middle of the day?"

The 25th annual Fifth Avenue Arts Festival was described by the Alligator as "celebrating African art and cultural cuisine." The Alligator quoted one resident, Tabitha Jenkins, as saying "This weekend gives culture to a community that otherwise has none."

The City needs to be reminded that this hardly was the first time that Ms. Jah bit the hand of the City that was funding her operations, of the police who were protecting them. Ms. Jah not only is funded by Gainesville to carry on her Cultural Arts Coalition, but the Coalition also operates and schedules event's at the City's Wilhelmina Johnson Resource Center, 321 N.W. 10th St. In 2003, the Alligator identified Ms. Jah, as director of community organizing at the Center, when she and others objected to a City plan to bus children to an existing summer program, because the community was planning one of its.

As for being an adversary of the police, on June 24, 1999, Ms. Jah publicly charged the police harassed three young black men she was accompanying to cut the grass along Fifth Avenue by questioning them. Later, Ms. Jah spoke out loud and clear at almost every meeting of a task force examining local black/police relations, according to retired journalist Harriet Ludwig. "We want police to deal with drugs and other crimes in our community. We do not want them harassing our young people or using bullhorns to call them drug dealers. We do not want to be followed by police when we are carrying out normal daily errands. Most of the police officers are good people, but about 10 officers are abusive. You should do something about them. At least don't assign them to work in areas where they hate people."

Ms. Jah has made it clear to anyone willing to read that she is a black power advocate, an Afro-centrist, who sees no reason to be culturally sensitive about white views of blacks or race relations. Advertising a position for the Cultural Arts Coalition at Santa Fe Community College, Ms. Jah stated: "Our mission is the promotion of art and culture in the community to increase awareness of the Africentric perspective." For World Citizenship Social Action Community Projects, Ms. Jah lists "Cultural Arts Coalition-promote Africentric perspective and culture-festivals, after-school program, etc.-Nkwanda Jah...."

The National Center for Community Policing at Michigan State University has recognized that the Africentric perspective creates controversy even for those who strongly support civil rights.

To quote: "As Joseph Darden of Michigan State University explains, both race and gender inspire a greater degree of prejudice and discrimination than other kinds of differences, because they are perceived as differences in kind, not just differences in degree. As he points out, the difference between rich and poor is a simple matter of degree-the measure is money and the poor person can become rich by acquiring more. But the differences between men and women and between whites and people of color are perceived as fundamental and immutable. This help to explain why the new Afro-centric movement, which focuses on the contributions that Africa has made to civilization, sparks such controversy. Proponents view Afro-centrist education as a way of redressing the past where history was filtered through European eyes and also as a means of instilling self-esteem in black youth. Yet many of those who agree with the Afro-centrists that schools, colleges and universities often erred in stressing the contributions of white, Anglo-Saxons, while downplaying their abuse of others, argue that Afro-centrism is as narrow, misguided, and misleading now as Euro-centrism was then, and that two wrongs can never make a right. Of concern as well is whether Afro-centrism fosters a 'victim' mentality, by unduly stressing or exaggerating the sins of whites as the 'oppressor.'"

Brown, Neomia B.

From: freijo@mercerfl.com
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2005 8:08 AM
To: citycomm
Subject: City Manager Position Profile



Position Profile -
Gainesville...

Mayor and Commissioners:

Attached is a draft of the City Manager Position Profile for your review prior to our meeting on Monday. At the meeting, we will discuss any needed revisions to the Position Profile, finalize the search schedule, and address a few other logistical matters.

I enjoyed our individual meetings earlier this week, and I look forward to our group meeting on Monday.

Tom

Tom D. Freijo, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President
The Mercer Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 9328
Winter Haven, FL 33883
TEL: (863) 299-3571
FAX: (863) 299-6737

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City Commission picks manager search firm

■ Local roots proved to be a decisive factor in the Gainesville City Commission's selection Monday night of The Mercer Group as its consultant in the search for a permanent city manager.

Though initially split between Mercer and another firm, the commission unanimously chose Tom Freijo, senior vice president of Mercer, for the \$23,000 contract at the urging of Commissioners Ed Braddy, Rick Bryant and Craig

05-23-05
Lowe.

The commissioners stressed Freijo's connection to the University of Florida, from which he has four degrees, and the proximity of his office in Winter Haven.

City Manager Wayne Bowers, who was brought to the Gainesville by The Mercer Group, left the city for a job in Greenville, N.C., in October. His assistant city manager, Barbara Lipscomb, has run the city in an interim capacity. Lipscomb has said she intends to

apply for the permanent position.

— Jeff Adelson

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE
FLORIDA**



INVITES YOUR INTEREST IN THE POSITION OF

CITY MANAGER

THE COMMUNITY

Gainesville is situated on the I-75 corridor, 85 miles south of the Georgia border, 50 miles east of the Gulf of Mexico, and 67 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean. Marking the northern border is the Santa Fe River, part of the freshwater system located in the area. Covering 54 square miles, Gainesville has 117,000 residents.

Gainesville is the largest city and is the county seat of Alachua County. Home of Florida's largest and oldest university, Gainesville is one of the state's centers of education, medicine, cultural events and athletics. The University of Florida and Shands Hospital at UF are the leading employers in Gainesville and provide jobs for many residents of surrounding counties. Known for its preservation of historic buildings and the beauty of its natural surroundings, Gainesville's numerous parks, museums, and lakes provide entertainment to thousands of visitors.

Gainesville is a beautiful and progressive city, a leader in promoting intelligent, sustainable growth. A dense canopy of trees justifies the description of Gainesville as a "city in a forest." For the 21st consecutive year, the National Arbor Day Foundation honored Gainesville as a "Tree City USA."

In addition to the University of Florida, the State's leading research institution, Gainesville is home to Santa Fe Community College, a provider of excellent professional and vocational education. Gainesville has one of the largest medical communities in the Southeastern U.S., and is a center for commerce, art, and culture in North Central Florida.

Gainesville continues to rank as one of the best places to live in the United States. Because of its beautiful landscape and urban "forest," Gainesville is one of the most attractive cities in Florida.

The City provides a full range of municipal services, including police and fire protec-

tion; comprehensive land use planning and zoning services; code enforcement and neighborhood improvement; streets and drainage construction and maintenance; traffic engineering services; refuse and recycling services through a franchised operator; recreation and parks; cultural and nature services; and necessary administrative services to support these activities. Additionally, the City owns a regional transit system, a municipal airport, a 72 par championship golf course, and a utility.

In September of 1995 the City was ranked by Money Magazine as the best place to live in America. For five consecutive years, it has been tapped as Florida's most livable city and has ranked among the leaders in the nation.



CITY GOVERNMENT

The City of Gainesville has a Council-Manager form of government. The City Commission is comprised of six Commissioners and the Mayor. Four Commissioners are elected from single-member districts. The Mayor and two Commissioners are elected City-wide. The City Charter prohibits consecutive service on the City Commission for more than two three-year terms. The City Commission adopts the City's budget, sets the millage rate, and adopts the ordinances and resolutions, which are local laws and policies.

The City Commission appoints the City's six charter officers – City Manager, City Attorney, Clerk of the Commission, City Auditor, Equal Opportunity Director, and General Manager for Utilities.

The City Manager is the administrative head of City government, responsible for the administration of all departments except for those under the direction of the other charter officers. The City Manager's office oversees all general government programs and services; is responsible for enforcing all City laws, ordinances and policies; acts as purchasing agent for the City; prepares the budget; and performs other duties as assigned by the City Commission.

The City Manager performs the duties of the position through the selection and supervision of the Assistant City Manager, Administrative Services Director, Police and Fire Chiefs, Public Works Director, Community Development Director, and Human Resources Director. There are 1,200 employees under the City Manager's span of control. The City employees have five unions and seven contracts.

Gainesville's current general fund budget is \$83 million, with a total budget of \$203 million. The City's millage rate is slightly under \$5 per thousand dollars of assessable value.

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND GOALS

A continuing challenge for the City of Gainesville is that over one half of the City's land area is used for institutional purposes, and not subject to property tax assessments. Dividends from the utility help to offset these "lost revenues."

Another challenge is to fully take advantage of the University of Florida's presence as an engine for economic development. It is perceived that the University's status as a major

research university has not been fully utilized in attracting businesses for which universities of this type often serve as a magnet. In addition, as the University of Florida enjoys escalating prestige as a first tier public university, the City is committed to continued development of the quality-of-life amenities that will make it a "great university city."



Greater economic diversity, an expanded and vibrant downtown, growth that is sensitive to quality of life and environmental issues, and redevelopment within its four Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) districts are all goals of the City Commission. As is common in growing communities across the state and nation, there is not unanimity about how this growth should proceed, either in the community or on the Commission.

Another issue relates to infrastructure funding, particularly as it concerns local road maintenance.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate has a deep understanding of economic development, community redevelopment and growth issues, finances, and "university town" culture; likes a challenge; and can relate effectively to various constituencies and guide them toward consensus.

Education ♦ The ideal candidate will have a Master's degree in Public Administration. The successful candidate will have at least a Bachelor's degree, preferably in Public Administration or a related area. Training in planning and finance would be a plus.

Work Experience ♦ Ideally, the candidate will have at least five year's experience in municipal or county government as the manager. However, applicants with extensive experience as a deputy or assistant manager or other high-level public sector experience will be given consideration, particularly if they bring strong skills in areas such as planning and finance. Florida experience would be helpful, and experience in university communities is important.

Desired Attributes

- Politically sensitive and results oriented
 - Strong, yet still able to follow the Commission's lead
 - Experience and skill with economic development
 - Experience with rapid growth
 - Experience with university communities
 - Excellent employee management skills
 - Creative and innovative
 - Strong focus on customer service
 - Commitment to diversity
 - Strong strategic planning skills
 - Knowledge of how to develop and motivate a good team
 - Willingness to become an active participant in the life of the community
 - Strong people skills and a diplomatic approach
- Sound knowledge of utilities
 - Ability to gain the trust of the Commission, the community, and staff
 - Experience with Community Redevelopment Agencies
 - A strong personality, but works well as a team player
 - Experience and strong skills in budgeting and financial oversight
 - Possesses a high energy level and seeks challenges
 - Relates effectively to diverse constituents
 - Communicates effectively with citizens and with the Commission
 - Ability to work effectively with the other City constitutional officers
 - Ability to negotiate effectively with other governmental agencies
 - Experience with unions

COMPENSATION

The starting salary range for the position is \$135,000 to \$175,000, depending on qualifications.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and salary history for initial screening by June 20, 2005 to: **Tom D. Freijo, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, The Mercer Group, Inc., Freijo@Mercerfl.com P.O. Box 9328, Winter Haven, Florida 33883. TEL: (863) 299-3571 FAX: (863) 299-6737.** The City of Gainesville is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Applicants should be aware that applications in Florida become a matter of public record upon receipt.

Defining the role of Gainesville's mayor



Sun file photos by DOUG FINGER

Pegeen Hanrahan thanks voters at the corner of University Avenue and Main Street on March 31, 2004, the day after being elected mayor of Gainesville.

COUNTY LINES & CITY LIMITS



CINDY SWIRKO

JEFF ADELSON

Hanrahan gets national kudos in magazine

Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan got some national exposure this week, with a shout-out in the June 20 issue of "The Nation," a liberal political magazine.

Hanrahan is one of eight city leaders profiled in a package on "progressive cities in a conservative sea" in the June 20 issue of "The Nation."

The profile, which lauds Hanrahan's advocacy for the environmental clean-up now part of the Depot Stormwater Park project, refers to the mayor as a "good-humored, self-deprecating populist," comparing her to the late Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone.

JUNE 13, 2005

What's a mayor to do?

2 or 29.05

■ In her first year, Pegeen Hanrahan tries to find a balance.

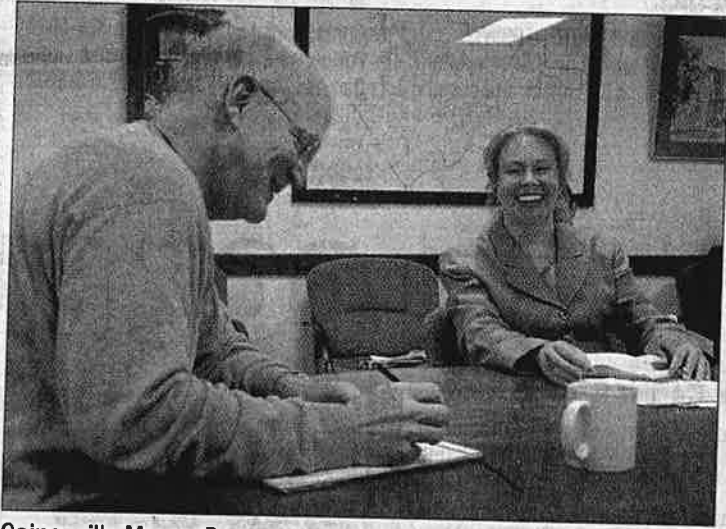
By JEFF ADELSON
Sun staff writer

Before deciding to give a "State of the City" speech earlier this year, Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan hesitated. She wasn't sure this was what Gainesville mayors did.

Sometimes it's difficult to determine just how far the powers of the most visible member of Gainesville's City Commission extend.

"It's a challenge in some ways to determine how much is too much in terms of the office," said Hanrahan, who finished her first year as mayor this month.

Politically prominent but no



Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan, then mayor-elect, shares a laugh with Gainesville City Commissioner Warren Nielsen on April 13, 2004, at City Hall.

more powerful than any other member of the commission, the mayor's position and the extent of power it holds have been a topic of debate since a

change in the city charter turned it into a directly elected position in 1998.

Both Hanrahan's supporters and detractors on the

commission have described her as taking a stronger role in the office than her predecessors. But they said it is difficult to pinpoint decisions or issues that have been specifically impacted by Hanrahan.

Hanrahan herself does not deny the increased prominence of the mayor's office or its potential use as a "bully pulpit," but said much of the past year's work has been determined by the makeup of the commission. Throughout much of the last year, the City Commission was made up of a slim majority of Hanrahan's allies, a majority that expanded when Commissioner Jack Donovan was sworn in May 19.

ANALYSIS

"We need to have a strong personality in the office of the HANRAHAN on Page 4A

HANRAHAN: Defining the mayor's role

Continued from 1A

mayor who can stand up and speak to our hopes and dreams," said City Commissioner Warren Nielsen, a long-time friend and ally of Hanrahan.

But Commissioner Ed Braddy, Hanrahan's only consistent opponent on the commission, worried that under Hanrahan's influence, the mayor's office was becoming too powerful and could be seen to be impacting the debate on issues before the commission.

"It's in how issues get presented and framed," Braddy said. "The feeling is that instead of (city staff) just taking direction from the commission, it's as if there's an extra element in there."

Hanrahan is the first of the new directly elected mayors to really set the office apart from that held by other commission



City of Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan, center, and volunteer Doris Edwards give a couple of box lunches to Cobble Gardens resident Chris Lenard on Sept. 10, 2004.

"I think it's been easier for me because I have strong relationships and more similar values to a larger number of my colleagues than either Paula or Tom were fortunate enough to have," she said.

In addition, Hanrahan said she also tries to make sure that in most cases, both supporters and opponents on the commission are given as much time as they need when debating commission issues.

Lobbying

Somewhere between the mayor's purely ceremonial and concrete duties lie her responsibilities as a representative of the city, particularly with regard to lobbying public and private entities. Though her position does not enable the mayor to negotiate for the city, the title does carry weight, she said.

An evolving office

Paula DeLaney, the first mayor elected under the new system and now an Alachua County Commissioner, tried to explore the potential of the office. But some politicians said the difficulties of transitioning to the new system and the lack of commission support for her platform prevented her from taking a strong leadership position.

On the other hand, Tom Bussing, DeLaney's successor, spoke of his office as largely being on equal footing with other members of the commission. The city's agenda should be set by its residents, rather than a single elected official, Bussing said while in office.

Planning 5-29-08

A process of visioning and planning began even before Hanrahan took office, with a series of one-on-one meetings between Hanrahan and other members of the commission and a daylong meeting of "transition committees" that produced goals for the city. Then last summer, a set of more specific recommendations were produced after the City Commission's fact-finding trips to Norfolk, Va., and New Haven, Conn.

These proposals, which have been the focal points of much of the commission's discussions about the city's future development, have largely been concerned with streamlining Gainesville's development processes, improving the city's public image and strengthening the city's economic development office.

Tied into all of these proposals has been an overriding goal of rejuvenating Gainesville's downtown and better tying the central city to other areas of the community.

This process has earned praise from some developers, a group that has been critical of city regulations and processes in the past.

The discussions that came from the goals and policies groups have helped to bring developer issues to the commission, and progress is being made, said John Fleming, a partner with Trimark Properties and chairman of a city subcommittee looking at the city's development-review process.

Viewing Gainesville's mayor as distinctly different from other members of the City Commission is a relatively new phenomenon; before 1998, commissioners elected a mayor-commissioner from their own ranks, usually for a one-year term, the way the County Commission elects its chair.

On paper, at least, changing the method of selecting a mayor did little to alter the actual power of the office.

The mayor now serves a three-year term, remains a member of the City Commission with few powers or responsibilities other than those afforded to the commissioners, and even these are largely ceremonial. Executive functions and the day-to-day operation of the city remain in the hands of the city manager and other charter officers appointed by the commission.

But the measure of a politician's power can't be found solely in a city charter, said Susan McManus, a professor of political science at the University of South Florida. The prestige of an office and the individual political power and personality of an individual can allow a politician to have more influence than is officially laid out, while still remaining within the scope of the powers delineated by regulations, McManus said.

"On paper, Florida's governor looks weak," she said. "But nobody would describe Jeb Bush as weak."

Some commissioners have said Hanrahan now should use her position as a "bully pulpit" to present a unifying vision for the city.

"I do think it's important that leadership be present in communities in individuals who can, on a day-to-day basis, provide direction and symbolism for the city," Nielsen said.

Without a unifying voice, politics on the seven-member city commission would be a "cacophony of voices and sounds and directions," he said.

Providing such a vision is important as Gainesville becomes a larger, more urban city, Nielsen said.

"It's really reflective of the fact that it's time for Gainesville to grow up," Nielsen said. "It's been fair to say that

Gainesville's been a sleepy college town in decades past. But it isn't any more."

The evolution of the mayor's office is typical of that seen in many growing Florida cities, McManus said.

As cities become larger, they tend to shift from the council-manager forms favored by small cities, including Gainesville, toward structures that provide more responsibility to a single politician, as found in the "strong mayor" systems of many large northern cities, McManus said.

These models not only afford the mayor a greater ability to set the city's agenda and long-range plans, but provide a greater degree of accountability because an individual, rather than a commission, is seen as responsible for the city, she said.

The mayor's role

But some current and former politicians have said publicly and privately they are not happy about what they see as too much expansion of the mayor's authority.

Braddy said he believes the mayor's influence has been too pervasive in city government, and encroaches on the city manager's power.

"I think because things appear to be more blurred now in terms of authority it makes staff more apprehensive," Braddy said.

But through actions like the transition committees and individual discussions with commissioners, Hanrahan said she has tried to bridge some of the divides on the commission. A commission that is more unified in its goals is less likely to cause confusion for staff, she said.

And though perhaps more empowered than other commissioners, Hanrahan said the mayor's position remains tenuously dependent on the agreement of the commission. Without the agreement of at least three other commissioners, the mayor cannot influence city policy.

"It's impossible for a mayor in this form of government to be headed in a direction by him- or herself," Hanrahan said. "You have to be taking a majority of the commission — or for that matter, the community — with you."

"They may or may not have knowledge of local government and know what 'commissioner means,' Hanrahan said. "But they know what 'mayor means.'"

A recent example of this responsibility was Hanrahan's effort to persuade Eclipse Aviation to build a maintenance facility at Gainesville Regional Airport, said Brent Christensen, president of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce.

The business, which will produce relatively inexpensive, lightweight private jets, and employ 16 people earning an average of \$49,000, decided to come to Gainesville after discussions with Hanrahan.

"She was a fantastic ambassador for the city," Christensen said. "She played a critical role in convincing Eclipse that our airport was right for them."

Projects

The most concrete signs of a year of commission activity are the projects that result from it. In this sense, Hanrahan's first year has seen a number of long-planned issues come to fruition and the beginnings of discussions of others.

Particularly important for some commissioners was the groundbreaking for the Depot Stormwater Park Project. The commission has also scored coups with the approval of University Corners, a three-block, eight-story, mixed-use development at the corner of NW 13th Street and W. University Avenue, and the beginning of construction of University Lofts at SW 6th Street and W. University Avenue.

Because many of these issues either have not been decided or were essentially decided before the last commission term, it is difficult to take the commission's temperature on developmental issues, Christensen said.

At the same time, a number of pivotal decisions for the city — including how to address future energy needs and the selection of a new city manager — remain on the horizon.

"It's not like in some ways it hasn't been in some ways a challenging and in some ways difficult year," Hanrahan said. "But I feel good about the city coming through it very well."

Jeff Adelson can be reached at 352-374-5098 or adelsoj@gvillesun.com.

ACCORDING TO JAKE

FULLER © 2005
THE GAINESVILLE SUN
ARTISTS.COM

IT'S A BIT PREMATURE
TO SAY THAT WE'RE
LOSING OUR GRIP
ON LOCAL POLITICS.
WE SIMPLY HAVE
TO COMMUNICATE
OUR POSITIONS
BETTER...



...AND HOPE THAT
NO ONE LISTENS.

A disagreement or politics?

As a voter and taxpayer, I was surprised to read about the disagreement between Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan, Commissioner Warren Nielsen, Commissioner Craig Lowe and Commissioner Tony Domenech, but not because there had been passionate debate regarding the city's contract with the Gainesville Police Department.

Rather, I was surprised to learn that Mayor Hanrahan and Commissioner Nielsen would decide that, during a heated discussion, the city was best served by their deserting the meeting.

When the commission is engaged in an extremely important negotiation with more than a million dollars worth of taxpayer impact, it behooves the citizens of Gainesville to have their representatives on the commission and their mayor present, particularly when issues are discussed that are important enough to arouse passions.

I am pleased to hear that Commissioners Lowe and Domenech care deeply enough about our city contracts to debate heatedly. But if they were able to resolve their differences without leaving the room, then two bystanders, like Hanrahan and Nielsen, should have done the same.

This story sounded to me like an attempt to discredit Commissioner Domenech on the eve of his reelection. I am offended to think that the mayor and one of our commissioners would ignore the importance of public safety and use these negotiations with the police union for political gain.

Maybe the police union can remind Hanrahan and Nielsen what it means to be a "public servant." After all, we can count on our police officers to understand the meaning of "protect and serve."

Jane Muir,
Gainesville

The mayor should keep her disdain under wraps

I cannot believe the mayor of Gainesville cannot sit through a heated meeting that has a huge impact on taxpayers and on the vital services performed by the Gainesville Police Department. This is an

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

inexcusable action by an elected official.

It is ironic that the mayor picked a meeting with the police union to show her disdain for Commissioner Tony Domenech. It appears that the mayor could use a little sensitivity training.

I know Tony. He is direct, to-the-point, sometimes even without a bit of the ever-tiring political correctness to which we are constantly exposed. I like that in my commissioners.

I do not like the idea that they can just leave a vital meeting and show their scorn at a time when my tax dollars are being considered for fairly substantial expenditures. We deserve better than this.

James Godwin,
Gainesville

LETTERS SORTED OVER A WEEK

Who really needs diversity training again?

The City Commission says the Gainesville Police Department needs cultural diversity training. The County Commission says the jail has a subculture. Anyone see a trend here? Who really needs the training?

Mayor Hanrahan obviously needs some diversity training so she can understand that the passion and energy displayed by Tony Domenech is part of his Cuban heritage. I guess Domenech could use a little assistance in how to properly address a spoiled, divisive prima donna.

Louise Grimm,
Gainesville

If you can't stand the heat...

I can't believe that Gainesville's mayor and one commissioner would walk out of a meeting when negotiations are going on that are very important to the taxpayers of Gainesville. I think that is the most important time to stay and do what is necessary and listen and work together well at the table.

This is not what we pay for when we want representation for the "people." If they can't do the job, they need to be removed from office. Commissioner Tony Domenech is continuing to work hard for all of us.

The closed meeting is usually where things are worked out, no matter what it takes. If you can't stand the heat, then you should leave the kitchen.

Darlene Pifalo,
Gainesville

INSIDE

Police blotter

A tally of crimes reported within the city limits of Gainesville for the period of April 18-25.

Page 3B

MAY 2, 2005

COUNTY LINES & CITY LIMITS



CINDY
SWIRKO

JEFF
ADELSON

Public access television plan inches closer

Public access television in Alachua County moved one step closer to reality in recent weeks, with approval from Gainesville and the county to seek proposals from groups interested in running the station.

Raquel Garcia, with Public Access Television of North Central Florida, one of the groups that has lobbied for a public channel, said her organization did not plan on providing a proposal. Instead it would monitor the process to ensure transparency and hold a pre-bid conference to help coordinate the efforts of groups interested in running the station, which will be provided as part of Cox Communications' franchise agreement with the city and the county.

"It's an incredible creative opportunity for the area," Garcia said. "I think ultimately it will provide the best product for the community."

Is America becoming a

By JANNY SCOTT
and DAVID LEONHARDT

The New York Times

There was a time when Americans thought they understood class. The upper crust vacationed in Europe and worshipped an Episcopal God. The middle class drove Ford Fairlanes, settled the San Fernando Valley and enlisted as company men. The working class belonged to unions, voted Democratic and did not take

Dividing lines appear blurred

Caribbean cruises.

Today, America has gone a long way toward an appearance of classlessness. Americans of all sorts are awash in luxuries that would have dazzled their grandparents. Social diversity has erased many of the old markers. It has become harder to read people's status in the clothes they wear, the cars they drive, the votes they

cast, the god they worship, or the color of their skin. The contours of class have blurred; some say they have disappeared.

But class is still a powerful force in American life. Over the past three decades, it has come to play a greater, not lesser, role in important ways. At a time when education matters more than ever, success in

classless society?

to some experts

school remains linked tightly to class. At a time when the country is increasingly integrated racially, the rich are isolating themselves more and more. At a time of extraordinary advances in medicine, class differences in health and lifespan are wide and appear to be widening.

And new research on mobility, the movement of families

up and down the economic ladder, shows there is far less of it than economists once thought and less than most people believe. In fact, mobility, which once buoyed the working lives of Americans as it rose in the decades after World War II, has lately flattened out or possibly even declined, many researchers say.

Mobility is the promise that lies at the heart of the American dream. It is supposed to

CLASS on Page 9A

CLASS: More self-made billionaires

Continued from 1A

take the sting out of the widening gulf between the haves and the have-nots. There are poor and rich in the United States, of course, the argument goes; but as long as one can become the other, as long as there is something close to equality of opportunity, the differences between them do not add up to class barriers.

Even as mobility seems to have stagnated, the ranks of the elite are opening. Today, anyone may have a shot at becoming a U.S. Supreme Court justice or a corporate CEO, and there are more and more self-made billionaires. Only 37 members of last year's Forbes 400, a list of the richest Americans, inherited their wealth, down from almost 200 in the mid-1980s.

So it appears that while it is easier for a few high achievers to scale the summits of wealth, for many others it has become harder to move up from one economic class to another. Americans are arguably more likely than they were 30 years ago to end up in the class into which they were born.

Merit has replaced the old system of inherited privilege, but merit is at least partly class-based. Parents with money, education and connections cultivate in their children the habits that the meritocracy rewards. When their children then succeed, that success is seen as earned.

The scramble to scoop up a house in the best school district, channel a child into the right preschool program or land the best medical specialist are all part of a quiet contest among social groups that the affluent and educated are winning in a rout.

"The old system of hereditary barriers and clubby barriers has pretty much vanished," said Dr. Eric Wanner, president of the Russell Sage Foundation, a social science research group in New York City that recently published a series of studies on the social effects of economic inequality. In place of the old system, Wanner said, have arisen "new ways of transmitting advantage that are beginning to assert themselves."

"Class awareness and the class language is receding at the very moment that class has reorganized American society."

More Americans than 20 years ago believe it possible to start out poor, work hard and become rich. Most say their standard of living is better than their parents' and imagine that their children will do better still.

But most do not see a level playing field. They say the very rich have too much power, and they favor the idea of class-based affirmative action to help those at the bottom.

A few sociologists say that social complexity has made the concept of class meaningless. Conventional big classes have become so diverse — in income, lifestyle, political views — that they have ceased to be classes at all, said Paul W. Kingston, a professor of sociology at the University of Virginia. To him, American society is a "ladder with lots and lots of rungs."

"There is not one decisive break saying that the people below this all have this common experience," Kingston said. "Each step is equal-sized. Sure, for the people higher up this ladder, their kids are more apt to get more education, better health insurance. But that doesn't mean there are classes."

Other researchers disagree. "Class awareness and the class language is receding at the very moment that class has reorganized American society," said Michael Hout, a professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. "I find these 'end of class' discussions naive and ironic, because we are at a time of booming inequality and this massive reorganization of where we live and how we feel, even in the dynamics of our politics. Yet people say, 'Well, the era of class is over.'"

In a 1987 speech, Gary S. Becker, a University of Chicago economist who would later win a Nobel Prize, summed up recent research by saying that mobility in the United States was so high that very little advantage was passed down from one generation to the next.

MICHAEL HOUT

Professor of sociology
University of California at Berkeley

But the initial mobility studies were flawed, economists now say. Some studies relied on children's fuzzy recollections of their parents' income. Others compared single years of income, which fluctuate considerably. Still others misread the normal progress people make as they advance in their careers, like from young lawyer to senior partner, as social mobility.

The new studies of mobility, which methodically track people's earnings over decades, have found far less movement. The economic advantage once believed to last only two or three generations is now believed to last closer to five. Mobility happens, just not as rapidly as was once thought. But such studies will probably not be conclusive for years.

Liberals say the findings are evidence of the need for better early education and antipoverty programs to try to redress an imbalance in opportunities. Conservatives tend to assert that mobility remains quite high, even if it has tailed off a little.

One surprising finding about mobility is that it is not higher in the United States than in Britain or France. It is lower here than in Canada and some Scandinavian countries but not as low as in developing countries like Brazil, where escape from poverty is so difficult that the lower class is all but frozen in place.

Those comparisons may seem hard to believe. Britain and France had hereditary nobilities; Britain still has a queen. The founding document of the United States proclaims all men to be created equal. The U.S. economy has also grown more quickly than Europe's in recent decades, leaving an impression of boundless opportunity.

Most Americans remain upbeat about their prospects for getting ahead. A recent New York Times poll on class found that 40 percent of Americans believed that the chance of moving up from one class to another had risen over the last 30 years, a period in which the new research shows that it has not. Thirty-five percent said it had not changed, and only 23 percent said it had dropped.

In fact, researchers seemed to agree that the grandchildren of privilege and of poverty would be on nearly equal footing.

If that had been the case, the rise in income inequality beginning in the mid-1970s should not have been all that worrisome. The wealthy might have looked as if they were pulling way ahead, but if families were moving in and out of poverty and prosperity all the time, how much did the gap between the top and bottom matter?

But the United States differs from Europe in ways that can gum up the mobility machine. Because income inequality is greater here, there is a wider disparity between what rich and poor parents can invest in their children.

Perhaps as a result, a child's economic background is a better predictor of school performance in the United States than in Denmark, the Netherlands or France, one recent study found.

"Being born in the elite in the U.S. gives you a constellation of privileges that very few people in the world have ever experienced," said Professor David I. Levine, a Berkeley economist and mobility researcher.

HOW WIDE IS THE INCOME DIVIDE?

RICH: Tax cuts

increase dividends
June 5, 2005

Continued from 1A

Ultra-rich carve out new level of wealth

■ America's top earners have even left behind people making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

By DAVID CAY JOHNSTON
The New York Times

When F. Scott Fitzgerald pronounced that the very rich "are different from you and me," Ernest Hemingway's famously dismissive response was: "Yes, they have more money." Today he might well add: much, much, much more money.

The people at the top of America's money pyramid have so prospered in recent years that they have pulled far ahead of the rest of the population, an analysis of tax records and other government data by The New York Times shows. They have even left behind people making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

Call them the hyper-rich.

They are not just a few Croesus-like rarities. Draw a line under the top 0.1 percent of income earners — the top one-thousandth. Above that line are about 145,000 taxpayers, each with at least \$1.6 million in income and often much more.

The average income for the top 0.1 percent was \$3 million in 2002, the latest year for which averages are available. That number is two and a half times the \$1.2 million, adjusted for inflation, that group made in 1980. No other income group

The rich get richer

AT A GLANCE

■ The average income for the top 0.1 percent was \$3 million in 2002.

■ That number is two and a half times the \$1.2 million, adjusted for inflation, that group made in 1980.

■ No other income group rose nearly as fast.

RICH on Page 5A

rose nearly as fast.

The share of the nation's income earned by those in this uppermost category has more than doubled since 1980, to 7.4 percent in 2002. The share of income earned by the rest of the top 10 percent rose far less, and the share earned by the bottom 90 percent fell.

Next, examine the net worth of American households. The group with homes, investments and other assets worth more than \$10 million comprised 338,400 households in 2001, the last year for which data are available. The number has grown more than 400 percent since 1980, after adjusting for inflation, while the total number of households has grown only 27 percent. The Bush administration tax cuts stand to widen the gap between the hyper-rich and the rest of America. The merely

■ Those earning more than \$10 million a year now pay a lesser share of their income in these taxes than those making \$100,000 to \$200,000.

■ The alternative minimum tax, created 36 years ago to make sure the very richest paid taxes, takes back a growing share of the tax cuts over time from the majority of families earning \$75,000 to \$1 million — thousands and even tens of thousands of dollars annually. Far fewer of the very wealthiest will be affected by this tax.

The Times analysis shows that by 2010 the tax will affect more than four-fifths of the people making \$100,000 to \$500,000 and will take away from them nearly one-half to more than two-thirds of the recent tax cuts. For example, the group making \$200,000 to \$500,000 a year will lose 70 percent of their tax cut to the alternative minimum tax in 2010, an average of \$9,177 for those affected.

But because of the way it is devised, the tax affects far fewer of the very richest: About a third of the taxpayers reporting more than \$1 million in income. One big reason is that dividends and investment gains, which go mostly to the richest, are not subject to the tax.

Another reason that the wealthiest will fare much better is that the tax cuts over the past decade have sharply lowered rates on income from investments.

While most economists recognize that the richest are pulling away, they disagree on what this means. Those who contend that the extraordinary accumulation of wealth is a good thing say that while the rich are indeed getting richer, so are most people who work hard and save. They say that the tax cuts encourage the investment and the innovation that will make everyone better

an IRS study found that the only taxpayers whose share of taxes declined in 2001 and 2002 were those in the top 0.1 percent.

But a Treasury spokesman, Taylor Griffin, said the tax system is more progressive if the measurement is the share borne by the top 40 percent of Americans rather than the top 0.1 percent.

The Times analysis also shows that over the next decade, the tax cuts Bush wants to extend indefinitely would shift the burden further from the richest Americans. With incomes of more than \$1 million or so, they would get the biggest share of the breaks, in total amounts and in the drop in their share of federal taxes paid.

One reason the merely rich will fare much less well than the very richest is the alternative minimum tax. This tax, the successor to one enacted in 1969 to make sure the wealthiest Americans could not use legal loopholes to live tax-free, has never been adjusted for inflation. As a result, it stings Americans whose incomes have crept above \$75,000.

TOWN
NEEDS
A
PLAN
FOR ALACHUA
GENERAL
HOSPITAL

Continued from 1G



DAVID
J. BLACK

I have been a member of the medical staff at Alachua General Hospital for over 20 years and am proud of it.

Having attended over 7,000 patient admissions, I have never had any qualms regarding the care provided to those who trust me.

I have been chief of medical operations, chairman of the credentialing committee, chairman of the quality assurance committee, chairman of the department of medicine, and have served over a decade on the medical operations committee.

I consider those volunteer endeavors to have been

worthwhile.

With five other physicians, I drafted the medical staff bylaws, which merged the Shands and AGH medical staff. I consider that to have been a beneficial exercise. I was a charter member of the conjoint medical operations committee for Shands, and AGH, and served for six years.

I missed many nights away from home, but felt we were developing a system that would serve our patients and community to a higher standard of medical care.

Over these years of practice, the facility has had three owners and multiple CEOs and hospital administrators. I couldn't even begin to name them all.

My long-term colleagues and I, with the care provided by an incredibly competent and

devoted nursing staff, have continued our work while transcending shifting institutional strategic plans or corporate philosophy.

We get up each morning and do the best we can for our patients, depending on each other to provide expertise in every given discipline.

In spite of speculative stories to the contrary, the facility works quite well. It is a full-service hospital offering primary, secondary and tertiary levels of care. There is a neonatal nursery to support both the labor and delivery unit, as well as the nursery at Shands.

The medical staff is composed of University of Florida faculty and private physicians who seamlessly work together.

Represented from both the private and UF faculty side are ophthalmology, general surgery, urology, plastic surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, radiology, radiation oncology, anesthesiology, pathology, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology and cardiology.

The Family Practice Residency Program is based at AGH, so its faculty practices out of the facility. There is also a faculty group of hospitalists.

Recruitment for new physicians comes from both the private and UF side. Within the past year, at least one new physician from cardiology, neurology, pulmonology, orthopedic surgery, urology and internal medicine has joined the staff from the private side.

Expansions have also occurred on the faculty side. We share equipment with Shands at UF, transporting patients between facilities when specialized needs arise. We also share information systems allowing as-needed, real-time subspecialty consultation.

The facility is filled to capacity with patients. Nurse staffing has, in part, limited further bed occupancy. A number of new graduates and experienced nurses have been recruited. AGH will soon have a nurse recruiter located in the facility to further expedite the process.

The present nursing staff is dedicated to providing excellent care to patients coming from a community they enjoy serving. Shands at UF is a

magnet program for nursing.

This program is to be expanded to AGH to make employment more desirable. We serve as a training site for the nursing program at the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College.

AGH is also a Planetree Affiliate Hospital. This international organization stresses humanistic care of hospitalized patients. Seminars are given for all employees about the program, and the expectations for patient care implicit in the membership. We are the only affiliate in the southeastern United States.

Medical students spend time with both the Family Practice Residency Program and private physicians, receiving their only exposure to a community hospital in the MD curriculum.

High school and university students can walk or take a bus to the centrally located AGH to volunteer and gain experience in the medical field.

AGH has been unfairly labeled as the community facility for indigent patients. We do serve east Gainesville, which does have its share of indigents; but that is not its primary source of patients. (North Florida serves the rural communities just west of town, which have their share of indigent citizens as well.)

Based on my two decades of practice experience in the facility, we serve the entire county. The stigma attached to east Gainesville is not deserved.

The vast majority of the citizens of east Gainesville are employed or retired individuals, and certainly not medically indigent. As in-town redevelopment continues, this population will grow and will include more students and young families.

AGH has traditionally, and continues to serve, as a regional hospital for communities located north to the Georgia line, past Starke and Keystone

Heights to the northeast, past Interlachen to the east, and Ocala to the south. Many of our patients also come from the western counties. The emergency room is the busiest in town.

It continues to amaze me that these assets have not simply led to unequivocal success and recognition. We have had

numerous conjoint medical staff conferences, spend hundreds of hours discussing how to proceed with the assets. Most of the plans have been left in drawers.

The source of our problem can be found in the Aesop Fable regarding the dog, the bone, and the reflection in the river. I would prefer another river analogy: rising water lifts all boats.

My simple proposal for success is outlined in a local petition.

Alachua General Hospital has served Gainesville for over 75 years as a full-service hospital. The purchase of the facility by Shands Healthcare introduces great potential to the future of the facility by encompassing the best of both the community and academic environment.

The location of the facility maintains its roots in Gainesville while continuing its role as a regional hospital for the communities located well beyond the boundaries of Alachua County.

Its proximity between downtown Gainesville and the University of Florida makes it a focus of in-town revitalization.

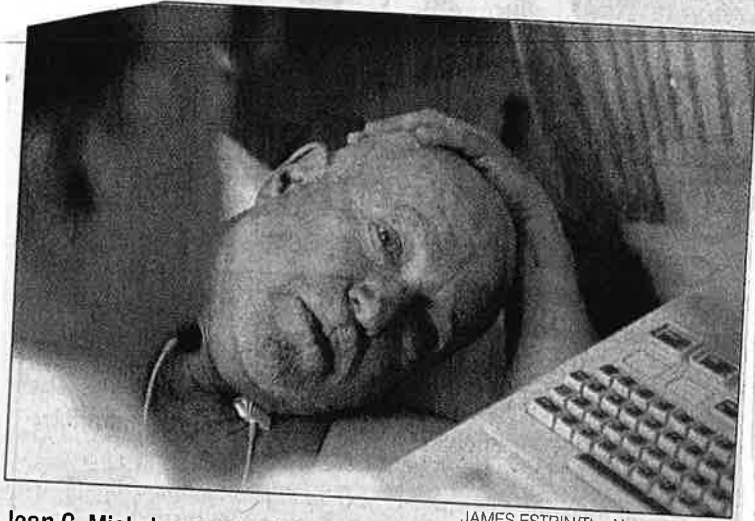
We strongly support collaboration between the University of Florida, the College of Medicine, Shands Healthcare, the city of Gainesville and our community physicians in bringing Alachua General Hospital an our local community to its next level of accomplishment.

This effort should begin in earnest. We have had many internal conferences, and know for a fact that the entire infrastructure is in place. It is time to move forward with a plan that inspires cooperation and ensures stability.

I hope never to see another speculative article in the paper that is spawned in a vacuum of information and direction.

The next article should be about three lines long describing this wonderful facility which is the model of cooperation between an esteemed medical center and its community hospital, demonstrating efficiency, competence and compassion in the delivery of cutting-edge medical care.

It is all here, and it is long past time to launch this rocket.



Jean G. Miele is examined during a doctor visit in New York on June 7, 2004. He suffered a heart attack in May 2004.

JAMES ESTRIN/The New York Times

Social class

By JANNY SCOTT

The New York Times

NEW YORK — Jean G. Miele's heart attack happened on a sidewalk in Midtown Manhattan last May. He was walking back to work with two colleagues after a several-hundred-dollar sushi lunch. There was the rumble of heartburn, the tingle of perspiration. Then Miele, an architect, collapsed in a cold sweat onto a concrete planter.

Will L. Wilson's heart attack

WEATHER

TODAY'S FORECAST

High 86, Low 61
Periods of sun
with a stray thunderstorm



TOMORROW

High 86, Low 61
Chance of rain

Complete weather.



PAGE 12B

CLASSIFIED

5

COMICS

7

COMMUNITIES

4

governs results in health care

3 New York stories illustrate statistics

came four days earlier in the bedroom of his brownstone in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. He had been regaling his fiancée with the details of an all-you-can-eat dinner. Wilson, a Consolidated Edison office worker, was feeling a little bloated. He flopped onto the bed. Then came a searing sensation, like a hot iron deep inside his chest.

Ewa Rynczak Gora's first

signs of trouble came in her rented room in the shadow of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway. It was the Fourth of July. Gora, a Polish-born housekeeper, was playing bridge. Suddenly she was sweating, stifling an urge to vomit. She told her husband not to call an ambulance; it would cost too much. She tried a home remedy: salt water, a double dose of hypertension pills and a glass of

vodka.

Architect, utility worker, maid: Heart attack is a great leveler, and in those first moments, three New Yorkers with little in common faced a common threat. But in the months that followed, their experiences diverged. Social class — that elusive combination of income, education, occupation and wealth — played a powerful role in Miele's, Wilson's and Gora's struggles to recover.

CLASS on Page 9A

Class informed everything from the circumstances of their heart attacks to the emergency care each received, the households they returned to and the jobs they hoped to resume. It shaped their understanding of their illness, the support they got from their families, their relationships with their doctors.

Class is a potent force in health and longevity in the United States. The more education and income people have, the less likely they are to have and die of heart disease, strokes, diabetes and many types of cancer. Upper-middle-class Americans live longer and in better health than middle-class Americans, who live longer and better than those at the bottom. And the gaps are widening.

The advances in medicine have disproportionately gone to people with education, money, good jobs and connections.

Heart attack is a window on the effects of class on health. The risk factors — smoking, poor diet, inactivity, obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol and stress — are all more common among the less educated and less affluent, the same group that research has shown is less likely to receive cardiopulmonary resuscitation, to get emergency room care or to change habits.

Miele's advantage began with the people he was with when the lining of his right coronary artery ruptured, cutting off the flow of blood to his 66-year-old heart. His two colleagues knew enough to dismiss his request for a taxi and call an ambulance.

And because he was in Midtown, there were major medical centers nearby, all licensed to do the latest in emergency cardiac care. The emergency medical technician in the ambulance offered Miele a choice. He picked Tisch Hospital, part of New York University, and passed up city-run Bellevue.

Within minutes, Miele was on a table in the cardiac catheterization laboratory, awaiting an angioplasty to unclog his artery — a procedure that many call the gold standard. When he developed a heart rhythm abnormality that can be fatal within minutes, the problem was quickly fixed.

Things went less flawlessly for Wilson, a 53-year-old transportation coordinator for Con Ed. He imagined fleetingly that he was having a bad case of indigestion, though he had had a heart attack before. His fiancée insisted on calling an ambulance. Again, the medic offered a choice of two hospitals — neither with state permission to do angioplasty.

Wilson chose the Brooklyn Hospital Center over Woodhull, the city-run hospital that serves three of Brooklyn's poorest areas. There, he was given a drug to break up the clot blocking an artery. It worked at first, said Dr. Narinder P. Bhalla, the hospital's chief of cardiology, but the clot re-formed.

So Bhalla had Wilson taken to New York-Presbyterian in Manhattan. There, Bhalla performed an angioplasty and implanted a stent. Asked later whether Wilson would have been better off if he had had his heart attack elsewhere, Bhalla said, "In his case, yes, he would have been better off had he been to a hospital that was doing angioplasty."

Wilson spent five days in the hospital before heading home on many of the same high-priced drugs that Miele would be taking and under similar instructions to change his diet and exercise regularly. After his first heart attack in 2000, he quit smoking; but once he was feeling better, he had stopped taking several medications, drifted back to red meat and fried foods and let his exercise program slip.

This time would be different, he vowed.

Gora's experience was the rockiest. She hesitated before allowing her husband to call an ambulance; she hoped her symptoms would go away. He finally insisted; but when the ambulance arrived, she resisted leaving. She was given no choices; she was taken to Woodhull, which Wilson had rejected.

Woodhull was busy when Gora arrived. A nurse found her stable and classified her as "high priority." Two hours later, a physician assistant and an attending doctor examined her again and found her complaining of chest pain, shortness of breath and heart palpitations. Over the next few hours, tests confirmed she was having a heart attack.

Then Dr. James N. Slater, a 54-year-old cardiologist who had done some 25,000 cardiac catheterizations, threaded a catheter through a small incision in Miele's thigh and steered it toward his heart. Less than two hours after the first symptoms, his artery was reopened and a stent was implanted to keep it that way.

The damage was minimal. Miele spent just two days in the hospital.

done.

By any definition, Miele is upper middle class, the son of an architect and an artist. After college, he joined his father's firm, where he built a practice as not only an architect but also an arbitrator and an expert witness, developing real estate on the side.

He bought a \$21,000 house in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn, sold it about 15 years later for \$285,000 and used the money to build his current house next door, worth over \$2 million. In Brookhaven, on

garden or the greengrocers in Park Slope.

He figured he had something else working in his favor: he was happy. He adored his second wife, Lori, 23 years younger, and their 6-year-old daughter, Emma. He lived within blocks of his two sisters and two of his three grown children from his first marriage. The house regularly overflowed with guests, including Miele's ex-wife and her husband.

An important link in the safety net that caught Miele was his wife. While he was in

She was given drugs to stop her blood from clotting and control her blood pressure. The heart attack passed. The next day, Gora was transferred to Bellevue, which Miele had rejected, for an angiogram.

But Gora, who was 59 then, contracted a fever, so the angiogram had to be canceled. She remained at Bellevue for two weeks. Finally, she was sent home. No angiogram was

Long Island, he took a derelict house on a single acre, annexed adjoining lots and created a four-acre, three-house compound.

He had figured out how to live like a millionaire, he likes to say, even before he became one. He had worked four-day weeks for the last 20 years spending long weekends with his family, sailing or iceboating on Bellport Bay.

He was also a passionate chef who put great store in the healthfulness of fresh ingredients from his family's vegetable

the hospital, she was on the Internet, Googling stents.

She prodded Miele, gently, to cut his weekly egg consumption to two, from seven. She found fresh whole wheat pasta and cooked it with turkey sausage and broccoli rabe. She knew her way around nutrition labels.

Lunches in Brookhaven were straight from garden to table: tomatoes with basil, eggplant, corn, zucchini flower tempura.

At the suggestion of his cardiologist, Dr. Richard M.

CLASS on Page 11

CLASS: Health depends on status

Continued from 9A

Hayes, Miele enrolled in a three-month monitored exercise program called cardiac rehab, shown to reduce the mortality rate among heart patients by 20 percent. Miele's insurance covered the cost. He even found a class 10 minutes from his country house.

His weight dropped to 189 pounds, from 211. He had doubled the intensity of his workouts. His blood pressure was lower than ever.

Will Wilson fits squarely in New York's middle class. His parents were sharecroppers who moved north and became a machinist and a nurse. He grew up in Bedford-Stuyvesant and had spent 34 years at Con Ed. He had an income of \$73,000, five weeks' vacation, health benefits, a house worth \$450,000 and plans to retire to North Carolina at 55.

Wilson, too, had imagined becoming an architect. But there had been no money for college, so he found a job as a utility worker. By age 22, he had two children. He considered going back to school but never found the time.

For years he was a high-voltage cable splicer, but an injury ended that career track. Instead of disc surgery, like Miele had, a doctor suggested that Wilson learn to live with the pain.

So Wilson became a laboratory technician, then a transportation coordinator, overseeing fuel deliveries.

Wilson's health was not bad, but far from perfect. He had quit drinking and smoking, but had high cholesterol, hypertension and diabetes. He was slim, 5-foot-9 and just under 170 pounds. He traced his first heart attack to his smoking, his diet and the stress from a grueling divorce.

By the time Bhalla encountered Wilson, there was damage to all three main areas of his heart.

"He has to behave himself," Bhalla said. "He needs to be more compliant with his medications. He has to really go on a diet, which is grains, no red

meat, no fat. No fat at all."

But Wilson's fiancée, Melvina Murrell Green, found it hard to find fresh produce and good fish. At Red Lobster after his second heart attack, Green would order chicken and Wilson would have salmon — plus a side of fried shrimp. "He's still having a problem with the fried seafood," Green said.

In August, Green's blood pressure shot up. The culprit turned out to be a turkey chili recipe that she and Wilson had discovered: every ingredient except the turkey came from a can. She was shocked when her doctor pointed out the salt content.

Bhalla had suggested that Wilson walk for exercise. There was little open space in the neighborhood, so Wilson and Green often drove just to go for a stroll. In mid-October he entered a cardiac rehab program like Miele's, only less convenient.

Gora is a member of the working class. A bus driver's daughter, she arrived in New York from Krakow in the early 1990s, leaving behind a grown son. She worked as a housekeeper in a residence for the elderly in Manhattan, making beds and cleaning toilets. Her annual income, she said, was \$21,000 to \$23,000 a year, with health insurance through her union.

For \$365 a month, she rented a room in a friend's Brooklyn apartment. She was in her seventh year on a waiting list for a subsidized apartment. In the meantime, she acquired a roommate: Edward Gora, an asbestos-removal worker newly arrived from Poland and 10 years her junior, whom she met and married in 2003.

"My doctor said, 'Ewa, be careful with cholesterol,'" recalled Gora, whose Old World sense of propriety had her dressed in heels and makeup for every visit to Bellevue. "When she said that, I think nothing; I don't care. Because I don't believe this touch me. Or I think she have to say like that because she doctor. Like cigarettes: She doctor, she always told me to stop. And when I got out of the

office, lights up." She had smoked for 30 years.

She grew up on her mother's fried pork chops, spare ribs and meatballs — all cooked with lard — and had become a pizza, hamburger and french fry enthusiast. Fast food was not only tasty but also affordable. "I eat terrible," she reported cheerily from her bed at Bellevue. "I like grease food and fast food. And cigarettes."

Her husband smoked, her friends all smoked. Everyone she knew seemed to love tobacco and steak.

Her life was physically demanding. She would rise at 6 a.m. to catch a bus to the subway, change trains three times and arrive at work by 8 a.m. She would make 25 to 30 beds, vacuum, cart out trash. Yet she says she loved her life. "Here, I don't have a lot of, but I live normal."

The nature of Gora's illness was far from clear to her even after two weeks in Bellevue.

By February, Miele's heart attack, remarkably, had left him better off. He had lost 34 pounds and was exercising three times a week and taking subway stairs two at a time. He had retired on the terms he wanted. He was working from home, billing \$225 an hour. His blood pressure and cholesterol were low.

Wilson's heart attack had been a setback. His heart function remained impaired, though improved since May. He still enjoyed fried shrimp on occasion but he took his medications diligently. He graduated from cardiac rehab and was looking forward to retirement.

Gora's life and health were increasingly complex. She returned to work in November and moved into the subsidized apartment, which gave her a kitchen and a bathroom for the first time in seven years. But she began receiving menacing phone calls from a collection agency about an old bill her health insurance had not covered. Her husband, with double pneumonia, was out of work.

Her weight hit 200 pounds. Her blood pressure and cholesterol remained ominously high. She had been warned that she was now borderline diabetic

5.12.08

COMMISSIONER PLANS TO SEEK VOTE TODAY

Group offering advice to city on GRU plant debate

By JEFF ADELSON
Sun staff writer

A group of about 10 local business and environmental leaders issued recommendations Wednesday to the Gainesville City Commission on its debates over a Gainesville Regional Utilities proposal to build a new, primarily coal-fired power plant.

The recommendations from the group, which does not have a name, do not directly address whether GRU should build the plant, expected to cost about \$535 million and generate 220 megawatts of electricity, but rather they list questions and assumptions that should be used in a review of the proposal.

"The thing that struck me through the process is that this is an exceedingly complicated issue and there probably isn't any one right or wrong answer to it," said Chic Holden, one of the group's organizers and former chairman of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce.

The commission will meet at 6 p.m. today in the GRU Administration building, 301 SE 4th Ave., to discuss the focus and makeup of an independent panel that some commissioners have requested to review the utility's plan.

The commission is also expected to approve a proposal to upgrade equipment at GRU's existing coal-fired plant, Deerhaven II, to bring it into compliance with newly approved federal emissions regulations.

One commissioner said he plans to ask the commission to vote today on the power plant proposal itself.

Commissioner Ed Braddy said Wednesday he would ask



Braddy



Hanrahan

for a vote to allow GRU to start looking for a firm to design the new coal-fired plant.

"Taking action (Thursday) doesn't mean it's a done deal; it just means we're taking the first step of many steps," Braddy said.

GRU officials have said designing and developing the plant would be a multi-year process, during which time the commission could alter the plans.

Braddy said since the commission has been debating the topic for two years — and may face higher costs because of the length of the process — it should be ready to make a decision.

The group of residents issuing the recommendations Wednesday includes members from an array of groups including the Chamber of Commerce, Women for Wise Growth, the Builder's Association of North Central Florida, the Sierra Club and the League of Women Voters. None of these organizations, however, participated in drafting or approved the recommendations, Holden said.

Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan, who had not yet seen the recommendations Wednesday, commended the group for its work, but noted that the commission would not be bound by its recommendations.

The group's recommendations ask that the independent panel review various methods proposed by environmentalists to reduce the city's electrical usage through conservation, review programs to lower demand and review changes to the utility's rate structure that would eliminate lower rates for higher energy consumers. But it also asks that this be done in a framework that acknowledges a need to maintain rates similar to other area utilities.



CITY COMMISSION ON THE AGENDA

■ The commission will meet at 6 p.m. today in the GRU Administration building, 301 SE 4th Ave., to discuss the focus and makeup of an independent panel that some commissioners have requested to review the utility's plan.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2005

Loca

Section B: Obituaries 5B ♦ Weather 6B

HEADQUARTERS TO ADD BUILDING

Cramped for space, GPD is set to expand

■ Officials said a furniture store near GPD headquarters will be converted into office space for the department.

By JEFF ADELSON
Sun staff writer

The Gainesville Police Department is poised to expand onto Furniture Avenue in an attempt to relieve the cramped confines of its current headquarters.

On Monday, the City Commission is expected to approve the purchase of the Walker Furniture store at 413 NW 8th Ave., adjacent to GPD's main building. The 14,000-square-foot building will be converted from a Laz-E-Boy storefront into what city and police officials have said is much-needed office space for the department.

"It's a very cost-efficient way of meeting the Police Department's needs while also being good for that neighborhood and that part of town," Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan said.



CITY COMMISSION

It will cost the city about \$925,000 to purchase the furniture building, but city officials say this is a fraction of the \$20 million or more it would cost to build the department a new headquarters from the ground up.

Concerns that GPD headquarters, 721 NW 6th St., is too small to house the department have been long-standing in city government. In recent years, GPD — which employs more people than any city department outside of Gainesville Regional Utilities — has tried to deal with the overcrowding by rearranging the offices and headquarters and constructing a new evidence storage facility behind the main building.

"I think this is a pretty exciting moment because anyone who's been following local government will know that the Police Department personnel outgrew that building more than a

GPD on Page 4R

Continued from 1B



Braddy

decade ago," said Gainesville City Commissioner Ed Braddy. "They've had to divide and subdivide and divide again."

City officials estimate the new building will accommodate GPD's growth for about 10 years.

But Hanrahan said advances in the technology police use, such as laptops GPD uses to wireless connect to law enforcement databases from police cars, could reduce the department's dependence on office space.

Walker Furniture had been planning on moving out of the building the city will buy as part



Hanrahan

of a "shuffling" of its facilities in the downtown area, owner Benny L. Walker said. The family-owned company, which has been in Gainesville since the

1940s, will begin a \$100,000 renovation of its store on the corner of N. Main Street and NW 8th Avenue on Monday Walker said.

GPD officials declined to comment on the expansion or what divisions would be moved into the new building since the plan had not yet been approved by the commission.

"It would be inappropriate for us to comment on any major action prior to Gainesville City Commission debate," GPD spokesman Sgt. Keith Kameg said.

Jeff Adelson can be reached at 352-374-5095 or adelsoj@gvillesun.com

County traffic signals

Continued from 1A

By JEFF ADELSON
Sun staff writer

It would cost \$12 million to minimize

For many drivers, the problem driving around Alachua County isn't the area's 222 traffic lights.

It's that they never seem to be working together.

"Everybody's had that experience," Gainesville Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan said. "Where you're sitting at a light and wondering, 'Why

here with no one else around me?'"

But a report released by a national organization Wednesday suggests that while the city's traffic signals aren't doing well, neither are the traffic lights in most of the rest of the country.

Gainesville, which operates traffic lights throughout the

county, received a failing grade of 57.9 out of 100 on the National Traffic Signal Report Card. The nationwide average for cities was 62, according to the report, which was produced by the National Transportation Operations Coalition.

Based on responses to questionnaires from 378 agencies nationwide responsible for

talled in 1987, and is able to network or provide shared database, Gainesville Interim Public Information Officer Bob Woods wrote in a news release.

"In order for the traffic signal system to be operated in an efficient and effective manner to minimize travel delays through the urban area, the current system must be updated to a Windows platform at a cost of approximately \$12 million," the release stated.

Gainesville City Commissioner Ed Braddy said during his recent, successful reelection campaign that problems with congestion and the timing of traffic signals were frequently brought up by residents. Attention from the report and the city's low score could ensure that traffic congestion remains a priority for the commission, Braddy said.

While the cost of upgrading the county's signals is high, Braddy said it could be possible to reduce that cost by, for example, outsourcing some of the work to private contractors.

Both Hanrahan and Braddy said the traffic signals were in need of an upgrade, but suggested different ways of finding the money.

Hanrahan said that since traffic signals have a high impact on the overall transportation system, the city should consider putting it on its list of federal legislative priorities. The upgrade could replace less-vital projects such as the purchase of Hull Road on the University of Florida's campus.

Braddy said money could come from a city bond issue on a City Commission proposal to start charging for streetlights and fire hydrants in Gainesville Regional Utility customers' bills.

Currently, money for streetlights and hydrants is secured from the city's general fund.

"If we are able to bond out and free up some money for projects, this would be one we would want to add to the list," Braddy said.

unk survey

traffic delays

traffic signals, the report rated five aspects of traffic signal policies important for maintaining properly timed and efficient traffic flow: proactive management, coordinated systems, individual intersections, detection and management:

Low scores in these areas mean less efficient traffic flow, the report stated, which was

sponsored in part by the Federal Highway Administration.

Were systems nationwide brought up to "A" status, traffic delays could be reduced by 15 percent to 40 percent, fuel consumption could be reduced by as much as 10 percent and harmful emissions could be reduced by as much as 22 percent, according to the report.

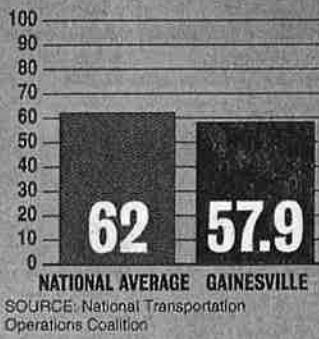
Equipment used in Gainesville's traffic system was first

SIGNALS on Page 4A

4-21-05

A failing grade

A national study which graded cities on their traffic signal systems, including maintenance and synchronization, gave a D minus nationally, and the city of Gainesville an F.



ROB MACK/The Gainesville Sun

Apr 25, 05

PRISON: Population rising fast

Continued from 1A

for repeat offenders, and "truth-in-sentencing" laws that restrict early releases.

"As a whole most of these policies remain in place," she said. "These policies were a reaction to the rise in crime in the '80s and early '90s."

Added Malcolm Young, executive director of the Sentencing Project, which promotes alternatives to prison: "We're working under the burden of laws and practices that have developed over 30 years that have focused on punishment and prison as our primary response to crime."

He said many of those incarcerated are not serious or violent offenders, but are low-level drug offenders.

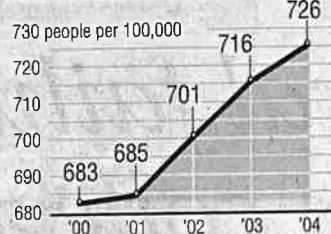
Young said one way to help lower the number is to introduce effective drug treatment programs.

According to the Justice Policy Institute, which advocates a more lenient system of punishment, the United States has a higher rate of incarceration than any other country, followed by Britain, China, France, Japan and Nigeria.

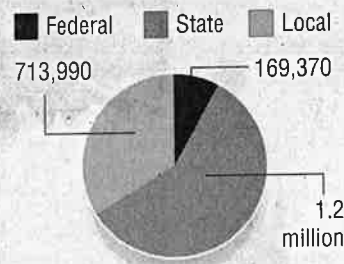
Prisoner rates rise

The rate of people incarcerated in the U.S. has steadily increased since 2000. Federal prisoners increased in population by 6.3 percent in 2004.

Total incarceration rate



Prisoners in custody, 2004



Percent change, 2003-04



SOURCE: Department of Justice AP

There were 726 inmates for every 100,000 U.S. residents by June 30, 2004, compared with

716 a year earlier, according to the report by the Justice Department agency. In 2004, one in every 138 U.S. residents was in prison or jail; the previous year it was one in every 140.

In 2004, 61 percent of prison and jail inmates were of racial or ethnic minorities, the government said. An estimated 12.6 percent of all black men in their late 20s were in jails or prisons, as were 3.6 percent of Hispanic men and 1.7 percent of white men in that age group, the report said.

Other findings include:

■ State prisons held about 2,500 youths under 18 in 2004. That compares with a peak, in 1995, of about 5,300. Local jails held about 7,000 youths, down from 7,800 in 1995.

■ In the year ending last June 30, 13 states reported an increase of at least 5 percent in the federal system, led by Minnesota, at about 13 percent; Montana at 10.5 percent; Arkansas at 9 percent.

Among the 12 states that reported a decline in the inmate population were Alabama, 7 percent; Connecticut, 2.5 percent; and Ohio, 2 percent.

The C
accordance
amended b
public hea

A copy of
public a
during r
Florid
Aver