

What's in Season?  
EVERYTHING!

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## Porter Announces Run for Fourth Term as Mayor

By Larry Diehl

Former Homestead Mayor Jeff Porter filed paperwork on June 4 to run for a fourth term as mayor.

Porter, 59, ran for Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, a cabinet-level office but was defeated in the primary.

A state law known as the "resign-to-run" rule required him to leave office effective January 9, 2019. Vice Mayor Stephen Shelley became Homestead's interim mayor at that time.

"There are projects I'd like to see finished," said Porter by phone. "The major issue now is the Cybrary that needs funding and other downtown projects. Losner Park is another big issue that's just starting. I'd like to see something done with the old City Hall site."

Asked to speculate on other candidates for the two year mayoral term, Porter demurred. "It's early and people pick up packets all the time (for office) and don't go through with it," he said.

Current Council seats up for election in 2019 are those currently held by Councilmembers Roth, Fairclough and Burgess. Councilmember Jon Burgess is prevented by term limits from running again for that seat.

Mayor Shelley must decide to return to a final two years of his Council term or to run for his own term as mayor, requiring an election for the underlying Council seat.

"The election would then be four



Mayor Jeff Porter discusses his enthusiasm for returning to the mayor's seat in Homestead.

Photo: SDNL

Council seats plus the mayor's office," said Porter, "but that's all speculative." The deadline to qualify as a candidate is August 26; the primary election is October 1, 2019.

Instructions on how to run for office are on the City's website under the Chief Clerk's office listed as Election Information.

Porter was asked about issues raised by Council candidates. "City infrastructure is so broad and has too much that's out of our control. Like Homestead's snarling traffic concerns, we have little input."

"The focus has to be step by step," Porter said. "The upgrade to the sewage

system is an example. The contractor finalizing the project is in violation of the time line of the contract and it's time for us to pursue that."

"The free trade zone in eastern Homestead could have been huge but hasn't been productive," he said. "We had an agreement between the County and the Air Force for general aviation to come through the base but that's stuck at the Pentagon. We'll have to rely on goods being driven here and not flown in."

Asked about the ULTRA festival at the Speedway, Porter was thoughtful. "The City did what was needed to help

See PORTER 2A

## Council Finalizes General Fund Transfer to Cybrary Fund

By Larry Diehl

A six-member Homestead City Council moved quickly through its 21 item agenda without discussion at its meeting on Wednesday May 29.

The proposed Cybrary project amendment to the City budget was approved on second reading. The 2019 budget reflects a \$15,010,873 change to revenues and expenditures.

The amount was accounted for by appropriating \$6,952,598 from the City's General Fund to transfer to the Cybrary Fund. The City's annual budget then reflected an \$8,058,275 appropriation to the Cybrary Fund consisting of that General Fund amount plus a \$1 million contribution from Library Systems & Services and another \$105,677 from "downtown project surpluses", according to the staff memo.

Staff was asked to further clarify the source of the funds. Council was told the money came from various sources, primarily general fund reserves, plus a Community Development Block grant (CDBG) of \$300,000, future anticipated grants, and monies from downtown projects generating savings.

An included CRA grant of \$100,000 was taken from 2020 funds.

In total, funding of \$1.721 million was deemed advances of funds to be reimbursed from future funding sources including the CDBG, the Neighborhood Stabilization program and "other grant opportunities", according to the staff memo. Another \$1.789 million was made available from downtown project surpluses.

Staff reminded council the fund already had \$3.8 million from a HUD loan repayable in twenty years from the CDBG fund, as well as monies from the

See CYBRARY 2A



## Gun Buyback - No Questions Asked



The Homestead Police Department, along with event sponsor Miami Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc, will hold a gun buyback.

No questions asked.

The event will be this Saturday, June 8, from 10 am to 2 pm at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge, 675 N. Homestead Blvd., Homestead, FL 33030.

(Directly south of the Harris Field Pavilion at the corner of Campbell Dr. and U.S.1.)

Turn in your guns to receive cash gift card(s)

Please bring firearm(s) unloaded and secured in the trunk of your vehicle.

For information call Veronica Williams or email veronica williams28@att.net



## Man arrested after Keys motorcycle chase

MCSO

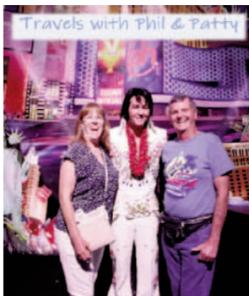
A 20-year-old Miami man who fled from Upper Keys Deputies on a motorcycle before getting lost and stopping in front of the Ocean Reef gate was arrested Sunday.

Sebastian Ezequiel Gonzalez was charged with three counts of fleeing in eluding.

Upper Keys Capt. Corey Bryan radioed a be-on-the-lookout alert at 11:37 a.m. regarding several motorcycles driving recklessly in north Islamorada. One bike was fleeing northbound. The description: Driver was

See CHASE 2A

## Enjoying the Beauty of California



By Phil Marraccini

This time it was off to California before the whole area becomes the first "Safe State." Started with a visit to our son Philip, in Santa Clare, a.k.a. Silicon Valley where we stayed several nights. Wow, his two bedroom, two bath unit, with almost the exact layout as his former apartment in Orlando but cost 2 1/2 times more.

Made a day trip to Palo Alto, where we visited Stanford University and the colorful town of Stanford. Lots to see and do if you have deep pockets.

As the weekend came, the three of us headed to Sacramento which was the most western point of the Transcontinental Railroad that was completed with a golden spike in 1869. Caught a train ride in celebration of the 150th anniversary

of its completion.

This was followed with an interesting visit to the railroad museum. From Sacramento we drove to several old towns. Placerville was nice with the old buildings restored. It was on to the town of Colma which maintains an old section that included a Catholic Church that was used till

See TRAVELS 2A

Shamrocks decorate the streets of Murphy, California.

Photo: PMarraccini



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