

# OPINION

## Council mix good for progress

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**PUBLISHER/EDITOR**

Thomas Curtis

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Bill Daley

**COPY EDITOR**

Alain Poupart

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Bob Mezyk

**ADVERTISING**

**Display**

Bill Daley  
Brad Curtis

**Classified**

Maria Estevez

**PRODUCTION**

Arnando Mato

**CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS**

3000 SW 146th Ave., Suite 112

Miramar, FL 33027

Phone: 305-594-0508

Fax: 305-477-1346

**MAILING ADDRESS**

P.O. Box 526600

Miami, FL 33152-6600

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305-623-7788

Sitting through virtually every Miami Springs council meeting over the last decade could be characterized as cruel and unusual pun-

**TOM CURTIS**  
PUBLISHER

ishment. But I have learned a lot about local politics and the workings of the council.

It's amazing the changes that take place with each election and how each council is very different, even though several members always remain the same. I relate it to a poker game, when only one or two players replace regulars, the game changes remarkably.

Daniel Espino, George Lob and Jennifer Ator have brought changes to the "game" that "regu-

lars" Billy Bain and Bob Best cannot avoid. The "dealer" is City Manager Jim Borgmann and he has to be acutely aware of how each councilperson "plays."

A much more progressive attitude and a get-things-done-now approach has proved beneficial in getting the community center done and putting revitalization back on the front burner.

Espino and Lob play point on forward thinking while Best and Bain try to slow them down. Ator is the fence-sitter whose reasoning and legal background has offered the rationale the others lack. And Borgmann tries to make them all happy.

Bain has learned quickly about his new council and has used its progressive attitude for his pet pro-

jects. The skateboard park is the perfect example. He got the council to approve \$250,000 in the budget for a skate park and has unanimous support in getting one built, despite many detractors.

Whether Bain can find a workable site and get a skate park built by the time he is out of office in April 2011 is questionable, as the circus of "not in my neighborhood" continued at last Monday's regular meeting.

Seldom does this council argue amongst themselves; in fact, they go out of their way to patronize each other. There was an exception at Monday's meeting when Ator accused Espino of "backpedaling" on a skate park vote and her young colleague did not take kindly to her characterization.

The frustrations of not getting things done quickly are apparent with this council and it is usually a legal issue that gets in the way. An example is the \$72,000, 24-passenger bus for seniors transportation that the Rotary Club has been trying to donate, through a grant, to the city for more than a year. But legal obstacles continue to get in the way of what appears to be a "no-brainer."

From my viewpoint in the front row of the council chambers at every meeting, this council works very hard at their job and has the best interests of the residents at heart. They are not concerned, yet, about getting re-elected but I am sure that will happen, as the April 2011 election approaches.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Police department or police state

Dear Editor:

Is it me? Am I the only one upset by the constant harassment of our police department (Miami Springs, Virginia Gardens)? How is it that we have allowed ourselves to be constantly monitored by radar, binoculars, police hiding behind trees, inside private driveways? Is this all being done in the name of safety or

most are hiding behind trees, on sidewalks on Westward Drive, in private driveways in Virginia Gardens. That, I believe, is shameful and shows a lack of respect for the community.

I could be wrong. Or am I?

Guillermo Lopez  
Miami Springs

**City needs to think outside the box**

beauty salons, real estate offices, bank, exercise place, doctor's office, city hall, pet supply place, laundry mat, historical museum, attorney's office, and on and on, will benefit from turning two lanes on Westward Drive to one.

Let's think about killing two birds with one stone. Take this generous amount of money that you are willing to spend on this Westward Drive project and redirect it to a phenomenal skateboard park where