

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2014, 8:00 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	F 13	M 13	A 13	M 13	J 13	J 13	A 13	S 13	O 13	N 13	D 13	J 14	F 14	APPOINTED BY:
Sally Baumgartner	P	-	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	E	*	P	James C. Cason
Patricia Sowers	-	-	*	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	Patricia Keon
William Beckham	P	P	*	-	-	-	E	E	P	P	P	*	P	Vince Lago
Bonnie Blaire	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Richard Whittington	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	Frank C. Quesada

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

Lorena Garrido, Central Division Supervisor
Sonia Succar, Environmental Specialist/Administrative Analyst

GUESTS:

Jorge Casuso, Economic Sustainability

CITIZEN ADVISORS: None.

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Blaire called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

MEETING ABSENCE: None.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

- **December 4, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Beckham moved to approve the December 4, 2013 meeting minutes. Mrs. Sowers second the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Ms. Garrido reported there are many projects coming up and updates will be provided to the Board as they progress.

BOARD-RELATED COMMISSION ITEMS: None.

CITY UPDATE: None.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

Dr. Whittington added special congratulations to the Board's Chair, Mrs. Blaire, for all her hard work in coordinating a series of (4) programs which ended in December's meeting. He stated that each of the programs were excellent and very informative. Mrs. Blaire thanked Dr. Whittington and stated he too deserved credit since he assisted with one of the programs.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mrs. Blaire asked to discuss how the Board should use what was learned in these (4) programs along with the information provided by Citizen Advisors. A set of (3) of the (4) meeting's DVDs were available for Board members. The newest Board member, Mrs. Baumgartner will view them first in order to catch-up and then pass them to the other Board members.

Dr. Whittington suggested that these DVDs should become part of the City's files for reference. They could be edited and provided to businesses for their use pertaining to accessibility. He also suggested these could be edited and placed in the City's website for information and Board members concurred.

Mrs. Blaire welcomed Mr. Jorge Casuso, Economic Sustainability Department. Mrs. Blaire distributed information regarding the Board's mission, contact information for members and citizen advisors and City department's contacts. The Economic Sustainability Department handles cultural programs and cultural growth, attracts businesses, administers City leases, does marketing and collaborates with the City's E-News. This department is an essential component in reaching the public.

Mrs. Blaire called attention to the Board's Mission Statement and *Focus Items*. The Board's Mission Statement and *Focus Items* are attached and part of these minutes.

With this in mind, Mrs. Blaire mentioned Virginia Jacko's comment of having an audible pedestrian crossing installed (Polaris System) on Miracle Mile. According to information given by Miami-Dade County (MDC), this system costs approximately \$5,500.00. (MDC) stated this system is difficult and costly to maintain. However, if there are requests by visual impaired individuals that use a particular intersection daily, they will evaluate the area for possible

installation. Mrs. Blaire stated this is an example *Focus Items*: “Identify Existing Barriers” in the City. This Board should recommend to the City that it address such barriers within our downtown business district.

Sonia Succar, advised the Board about the current status of the City’s Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan.

“Education and Inspiration” is the *Focus Item* that led the Board to hold its recent 4-topic meetings: 1- Vision; 2- Speech & Hearing; 3-Cognitive/Developmental; and 4-Mobility. The program series brought new Citizens Advisors to the Board including:

1. Virginia Jacko, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind
2. Kathleen Vergara & Staff, Debbie Institute
3. Dr. Jennifer Durocher, UM CARD
4. Stephanie Woodward, Disability Independence Group
5. Davie Pike, Crystal Academy
6. Matt Dietz, Disability Independence Group

Mrs. Blaire shared articles/information which apply to the “Education and Inspiration” *Focus Item*. The articles are: (1) A Special Summer Camp in Goulds, Florida for disabled kids; (2) Lee and Marie’s Cakery, a Miami business dedicated to hiring adults with autism; (3) Service Dog Rules lawsuit in Broward Public Schools; (4) Police use of a liquid known as SmartWater CSI , used to permanently mark valuables (and for a short time, the burglary suspects who touch them). Coral Gables Police Department has this capability. Copies are attached to the minutes.

Another *Focus Item*, is “Evaluate Community Infrastructure Services.” Economic Sustainability Department may be of assistance by helping in identifying problems. Mr. Casuso elaborated: First, inform the business community that according to US Census data, there are more than 10,000 disabled persons in our community. Second, Mr. Casuso suggested meeting with the Business Improvement District and the Chamber of Commerce to begin the proper marketing to this population because it is good for business. Third, his department could assist in providing information through the E-News and CBS4, which is circulated to Coral Gables residents.

At our March meeting, members will present individual reports.

Mrs. Sowers mentioned a topic of interest, “employment for the disabled” and how the Board should approach this. This would be specific to disabled adults. She will research resources and contact Citizen Advisor, Kelly Greene with the Center for Independent Living (CIL).

Mr. Beckham Recommended Vocational Rehab service which provides analysis of jobs suited to a person’s disability – emphasis on what a person can do.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 a.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, March 5, 2014, 8:00 am to be held at the *Coral Gables Youth Center's 2nd Floor Conference Room.*

CITY OF CORAL GABLES BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS

The Board mission:

- a. To act as an advocacy group in Coral Gables for issues affecting persons with disabilities, thereby developing an advocacy program to positively impact the quality of life for citizens with disabilities in the community.**
- b. To undertake responsibility to facilitate and promote City-Community partnership in projects and research affecting persons with disabilities.**
- c. To identify City resources --- as well as State and County resources--- that can be tapped and channeled toward providing opportunities for a better quality of life for persons with disabilities.**

DISABILITY AFFAIRS BOARD FOCUS ITEMS

1. ***DEMOGRAPHIC AWARENESS:*** *Develop knowledge base about the numbers of people and types of disabilities prevalent among those who live, learn, work and seek recreation in the Coral Gables, community.*

2. ***IDENTIFY EXISTING BARRIERS:*** *Identify methods by which the City evaluates and addresses existing barriers, potential issues in capital improvement projects, and expansion of opportunities for input in the process.*

3. ***EVALUATE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES:*** *Target categories of services such as transportation, accessible communication, housing initiative; compile a combined public/private resource list to address and assist in solving challenges for citizens with disabilities and to promote their greater participation in community life.*

4. ***EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:*** *Develop outreach programs for self-selecting special needs citizens.*

5. ***EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION:*** *Affirmatively embrace a positive public attitude toward special needs persons in the commercial, business arena and in social settings, through reward and incentive programs, and in enhanced public relations opportunities.*

GOULDS



MARICE COHN BAND/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

FUN AT CAMP: Kevin Sheldon, left, recreation leader at Goulds Park, gets a hug from Roy Hall, 18, center, as Robert Castillo watches.

CAMP A PLACE TO SHINE

A SPECIAL SUMMER CAMP IS DOING WONDERS FOR DISABLED KIDS — AND THEIR PARENTS.

BY JON SILMAN
jsilman@miamiherald.com

Inside a large gymnasium, a little ladies' man in a red shirt and jeans is in his element.

In the midst of a bustling group of 50 kids bouncing balls and playing catch, Keon Smith, 9, with sunglasses on his head, sits in front of some girls and smiles, eyes wide.

They circle and fawn. Ask him who's his favorite and he'll say, "all of them."

Keon, who wants to be a

"shark diver" when he grows up, is one of around 25 disabled kids at the Disability Services Camp at Goulds Park.

The kids' ages range from 7 to 18, and the disabilities range from autism to Downs syndrome to Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita, Keon's affliction. The disorder causes joint contractures and restricts movement. He has had surgery for it — "I was asleep" he says — and wears leg braces that have airplanes on them.

He's a bright light. His mom, Tameka, is a single mother between jobs, and the free camp provides her with the kind of care that would be expensive and difficult to find elsewhere.

"If they didn't have this program, I don't know what I'd do," Tameka Smith said. "I was forced to resign from my last job because they wouldn't give me the time I needed to take care of Keon."

• TURN TO CAMP, 2B

GOULDS

Kids making progress at summer camp

• CAMP, FROM 1B

There are seven camps for disabled kids in Miami-Dade County, said Lucy Binhack, disability services manager for Miami-Dade.

"We teach the kids social skills and community skills," she said, "how to eat in a restaurant or be in a library. We have the ability to take some time with them that families with other kids might not. The child gets individual attention that they might not get to do otherwise."

The programs have been in place since the early 90's, when the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed. It is partially funded by The Children's Trust, an advocacy group that sets aside a portion of property taxes specifically for these types of programs. The money helps kids like Keon and Jeanette Salinas, 12, whose arms are short and point inward.

She has been in the camp for six years, and has had 15 surgeries, but she can paint inside the lines, sharp and

focused, better than anyone in the class.

She proves this after play time in the gym, when the kids head into a classroom for arts and crafts.

Jody Cox, a recreation therapist who supervises the children, passes out white bats for the kids to paint on, in a big bright room with tables covered with plastic.

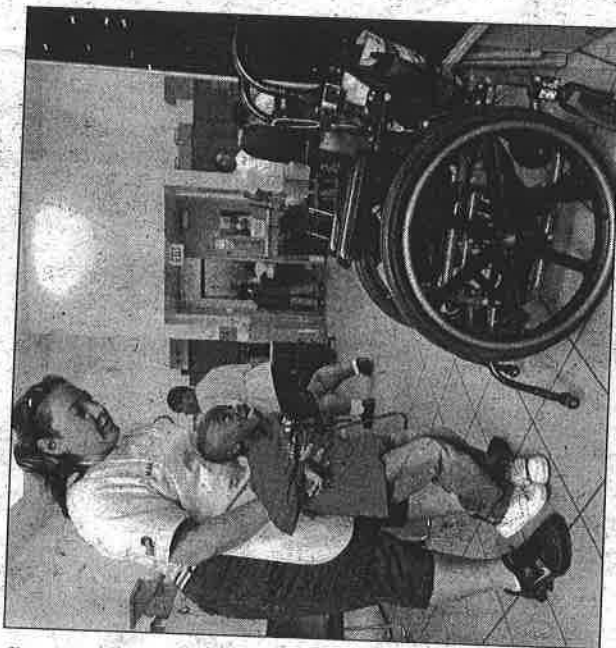
"How do you make the Heat symbol?" Keon asks his helper, Kevin Sheldon, 20, a camp recreation leader.

"You draw a basketball on fire," he said.

Keon grabs a marker and slowly places it between two hands, looks up at the ceiling like he's praying, and with his tongue out, he groans. The marker top pops off. He concentrates and draws the flames around the basketball with two colors, with Sheldon's help.

After he draws a 2011 on the other side, he's tired.

"If it wasn't for the program, a lot of these parents wouldn't be able to afford care for their kids," Cox said.



ASSISTANCE: Jody Cox, a recreation specialist, helps Keon Smith, 9, walk to his wheelchair.

A fire alarm goes off and a bottle of paint hits the floor. The kids line up and Robert Castillo, 8, pushes Keon's wheelchair out the door.

It's a false alarm, and Robert, who has taken on the role of Keon's caretaker, pushes his charge back inside.

Keon is tired of sitting in his wheelchair. "I want to walk," he says. "He wants to sit and be like everyone else," Cox says.

She puts her arms around him and puts him on the ground, holding him up. He sticks out his tongue again, on his upper lip, in concen-

tration as takes little hop steps that tap on the floor. "Put one foot in front of the other Keon, don't hop," Cox says.

It's about seven steps to the chair and his feet are pointed inward and he's struggling, but she walks with him.

Step. Wait.

His face is scrunched and he's watching his feet like they're a Disney movie. Step. Stop.

He takes a breath. Then his hands are on the chair and he's smiling. Castillo gives him a hug. A few months ago, Keon couldn't even stand without help. Cox said.

After they finish the hats, it's time to go outside and play. Keon is back in the chair. Robert is ready to push.

The kids line up and the day marches on. Outside in the sun, they play a target game with a Frisbee and hula hoops on the tennis court, and you can't help but notice the laughter. And if you were just passing by, you would only see the smiles.

THE DIGNITY OF WO

The owners of Lee and Marie's Cakery go out of their way to hire people with autism-spectrum disorders.

BY MARGAUX HERRERA
mherrera@miamiherald.com

Lee and Marie's Cakery in South Pointe is one of the few places in the neighborhood to get a cup of coffee, and is one of even fewer businesses in the Miami area that is dedicated to hiring adults with autism.

Owner Andrea "Andy" Travaglia wants to help break the stigma that surrounds people with disabilities.

"They're undervalued and overlooked," Travaglia said.

Travaglia, 57, took an interest in autism when she befriended a single mother whose son was autistic. Through meeting others, she began to realize the daily struggles parents of autistic children face.

"They would say to me, 'Our biggest fear is what's going to happen for our child when I die,'" Travaglia said.

Most programs for people with disabilities work with people only until they're 21. And although there are a growing number of programs for adults, many age out of the system at 21.

Travaglia wanted to establish a business to help the adults. She saw the bakery as the perfect way of doing so. The shop is named after her daughters' grandmother and great grandmother.

"The whole concept is for neurotypical people to get to know what autism is all about," she said. "The bakery is perfect."

Travaglia also hires people on the autism spectrum to work at her real estate office, Exclusive Miami Rentals, but loves that the bakery gives customers the opportunity to interact with the employees. Four of the 10 employees at the South Beach bakery have disabilities, and one person with disabilities works at the prep kitchen in Wynwood.

Travaglia partnered with the University of Miami's Center for Autism and Related Disabilities to learn more about working with autism spectrum adults, and to look for job candidates. The center's manager of transition and adult services, Deborah Chin, works directly with the bakery to provide support and

information.

Chin has seen a growing interest in hiring people with disabilities over the last couple years.

"We've definitely seen an interest from employers in wanting to hire people with autism," Chin said. "More business owners are having a positive experience ... and wanting to bring people in to the fold."

The center has over 2,000 people of employment age in its system. The center offers free training to both businesses and people on the autism spectrum to help them with job placement.

The group also works directly with employers to help match people to their perfect position. Chin explained that they take factors into consideration that might affect job performance. For instance, some people with disabilities are easily distracted so they may need to work in a quiet office.

Chin suggested a few practices to make the hiring process go more smoothly. Role playing potential interview questions with friends or family members is important for people with disabilities.

"We really encourage role playing ... and giving feedback about how they answer their questions," she said.

She also suggests that if an employer is able to give potential questions in advance, it could be a huge help for the interviewees.

Chin also stressed the importance of exposing youths and adults to a variety of life and work skills. She said that many parents believe their children with disabilities cannot hold a job, but many have never been exposed to basic skills. She said that even chores around the house will give people a better understanding of what they like.

"Everything is a learning experience," Chin said. "There's just no way to know what they'll be good at."

The bakery is a small shop with pastries like coconut cakes, croissants and chocolate chip cookies, and now a breakfast and lunch menu. Travaglia had no experience running a bakery, but was



PROFESSIONAL IMAGE: Lazaro Quintana Jr., 25, poses for a photo in a Lee and Marie's Cakery uniform. Quintana, who always wears a button-down under his shirt, likes maintaining a professional image. 'A clean work place,' he said.

initially working with a business partner who had experience in the field. Together, they opened bakeries in Miami and in New York. She had to shut down the New York shop, but kept open the South Beach location.

Her mission statement is posted across an entire front window to make sure that people see it all day, every day. The employees do everything from run the cash register, to baking, to sweeping and waiting tables.

She focuses on finding the right spot for each employee, even finding ways to use their disabilities as an advantage.

When Gaby Cruces, 20, was hired, she had been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, which is characterized by difficulty in social interactions and repetitive behavior. Cruces is a cashier, and stays focused by staying organized, writing everything down before the shop opens, and keeping up with her to-do list throughout her shift. Her organizational abilities have helped the shop stay orga-

IF YOU G

Lee and Marie's Cakery
40 South Pointe
305-672-5167
leeandmaries.com

nized as well.

According to Cruces, her diagnosis has since helped her because her communication has improved so much. "I learned how to be a person, I wouldn't be shy," she said.

She has also been able to get comfortable with her work, and she works with, and struggles with in the shop. "I think I found n

WORK

hire people with



MAX REED/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD
Jr., 25, poses for a recent photo.
in-down under his work shirt, said he
ge. 'A clean work place is a happy

IF YOU GO

Lee and Marie's Cakery
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leeandmaries.com

nized as well.

According to Cruces, her Asperger's diagnosis has since been changed to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder because her communication skills have improved so much. She says she owes that, in part, to her job at Lee and Marie's.

"I learned how to communicate with others," Cruces said. "I was a very shy person, I wouldn't talk to anyone."

She has also been able to make friends and get comfortable around the people she works with, something she has struggled with in the past.

"I think I found not only a job, but a

home as well," Cruces said.

Before being hired in April, Cruces had been turned down from several jobs. Travaglia said frequent rejection is common for Autism spectrum adults, and she is glad she has been able to change that for a few people.

"How would it change your life if you'd repeatedly been rejected for a job?" she said.

She has been the most surprised by the strong work ethic she has seen among her Autism-spectrum employees.

"The fact that they also have this opportunity, they're so wonderfully appreciative. ... This is their bakery," she said.

Travaglia created an environment that has helped people do their best work. Lazaro Quintana Jr., 25, works at both her real estate office and is on call for the bakery. He is on the autism spectrum, loves helping people and interacting with customers, and said his ideal job would be a manager to help the offices run smoothly.

"I would prefer to have a manager po-

sition," Quintana said. "I'm a servant, but making it calm."

For the other employees with autism-spectrum learning curve, but Liza Rodriguez, 33, with people with disabilities, said she did not expect, but soon realized she enjoyed it.

"When we're busy they have to do what they've very ded

A JOB, AND A HOME: Gaby Cruces, 20, an employee of Lee & Marie's Cakery, walks the outdoor and supporting adults with autism spectrum disorders, providing them with opportunities f





MAX REED/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

walks the outdoor cafe area. Cruces works for Andrea 'Andy' Travaglia who has a unique mission of employing with opportunities for growth once they 'age out of the system.'

sition," Quintana said. "Not just to be observant, but making sure that everyone is calm."

For the other employees, working with autism-spectrum adults has been a learning curve, but they're happy for it. Liza Rodriguez, 33, had never worked with people with disabilities. The manager said she did not know what to expect, but soon realized how much she enjoyed it.

"When we're busy, they know what they have to do," Rodriguez said. "They've very dedicated and they're al-

ways attentive."

Travaglia has found support from the community, who she said has embraced what the shop stands for. She told the story about a man who complained about how slow the line was moving, only to be met by people defending the bakery, telling him to pay attention to "what the bakery was about."

"There were about six tables outside who defended me," she said. "They didn't even know each other."

For Travaglia, creating a loving and open atmosphere was most important

"I have a different culture here," she said. "I'm building a business that is a culture of caring."

She is also expanding this to her restaurant next door, Bar Crudo, which features a raw seafood menu.

She hopes her bakery will inspire others to begin hiring people on the autism spectrum, and to realize how valuable they can be as employees.

"I want my business to serve as a prototype," she said. "The variety of talents they have is just as good as you or I have."

BROWARD SCHOOLS

Mother sues district over service-dog rules

BY KAREN YI
Sun Sentinel

A Sunrise mother has filed a federal lawsuit against the Broward School Board, alleging the district discriminated against her disabled 6-year-old son by imposing too many barriers to bringing a service dog on campus.

Anthony Marchante has cerebral palsy and is highly prone to seizures. His medium-sized terrier service dog, Stevie, alerts others to oncoming convulsions and helps calm the boy by licking his face.

Anthony's mother, Monica Alboniga, said the district at first denied Stevie access to Nob Hill Elementary in Sunrise this year, asking her to provide liability insurance for the dog and additional vaccinations that did not exist. It

later waived those requirements but asked Alboniga to provide a handler for the dog.

Alboniga's suit, filed this month, claims the district is inflicting extreme hardship on her and violating the Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act by implementing excessive procedural hurdles. She's asking the district to amend its policies and pay her legal fees.

District officials declined to comment, citing pending litigation. However, they said the School Board plans to discuss implementing a new service-animal policy on Tuesday. It would still require the child's guardian to provide a handler and include insurance requirements.

"There's not a lot of [school]

districts that have a policy," said compliance director Dildra Martin-Ogburn. "Service animals have been around for a long time but it's just coming on board where they are coming to schools."

So far, Stevie is the only service animal in the district. Most children rely on pharmaceutical or mechanical cures and those that are visually impaired tend to use walking canes, said Matthew Dietz, a disability rights lawyer representing Alboniga. But the use of service animals is gaining popularity as a form of alternative medicine, experts say.

Alboniga said she goes to school every day just to care for Stevie, but isn't allowed to help her son with any other activities.

"I have to be in complete silence

all the time just looking at the dog. You always feel uncomfortable," said Alboniga, 36. She says the 42-pound dog does not eat or drink at the school and rarely needs to go to the bathroom.

In Palm Beach County, the district recently adopted its service animal policy. It, too, requires a student's parent to provide a handler should the child be incapable of taking care of the dog. However, it does not require insurance.

Dietz said districts should train classroom aides to handle the dogs. "When you are dealing with a seriously disabled child like Anthony, you're feeding, you're toileting, you're doing all these personal services," he said. "It would be no problem for that to be an additional duty."

Police are adding SmartWater CSI to crime-fighting tools

BY LINDA TRISCHITTA
Sun Sentinel

The Miramar Police Department is the latest South Florida law enforcement agency to announce it is trying out the liquid known as SmartWater CSI, used to permanently mark valuables and, for a short time, the burglary suspects who touch them.

The agency said it will offer the product free to 300 residents of the area bordered by South University Drive, County Line Road, Florida's Turnpike and Pembroke Road.

In 2013, homeowners there experienced 238 residential burglaries, or 25 percent of the city's 961 break-ins.

Like police in Fort Lauderdale, Boynton Beach, the Oakland Park district of the Broward Sheriff's Office and soon, Wilton Manors, Miramar Police Chief Ray Black said he wants to see whether SmartWater signs and use will deter burglars and help investigators recover property from pawn shops, flea markets and scrap metal yards.

The liquid is invisible until a black light is shined on it. It leaves behind minuscule numbered dots that match a user's registration with SmartWater, enabling stolen goods to be traced, the company says.

Broward Crime Stoppers is paying for the kits, which will be distributed on a date to be announced.

"It's already been proven that a targeted law enforcement effort will decrease crime, but once they're gone, it may return," said Ralph Page, Broward Crime Stoppers' executive director. "SmartWater will still be around, and we're hoping results will be sustained and

it will prevent future burglaries."

Crime Stoppers is also pairing with Wilton Manors police in a SmartWater program this month and with other agencies later this year, Page said.

He also wants to see whether SmartWater contributes to decreased burglary rates and increased arrests and returns of property.

In January 2013, Fort Lauderdale police gave 500 SmartWater kits to residents of the South Middle River Terrace Civic Association.

Police say residential burglaries fell slightly there, from 237 in 2012 to 231 last year. But vehicle burglaries rose 37 percent, from 81 in 2012 to 111 in 2013.

"It is not possible to confirm if the use of the actual product or the signs posted throughout the neighborhood are responsible for the drop in residential burglaries," Fort Lauderdale Detective DeAnna Greenlaw said. "There are too many possible factors to pinpoint one identified variable responsible for the decrease in crime."

Fort Lauderdale police and Miramar's Black want to see how SmartWater performs as evidence in court before any expansion of its use.

Court hearings in two arrests by Fort Lauderdale police that involved SmartWater are scheduled for February and March.

"This new scientific process has not been challenged in court and is untested," Broward Chief Assistant Public Defender Gordon Weekes Jr. said. "Whether it's going to hold up to legal scrutiny is another question."