

The Seventeenth

The Online Newsletter of the State Attorney's Office, 17th Judicial Circuit

SUMMER 2008

Expert: Plan for retirement now, not later

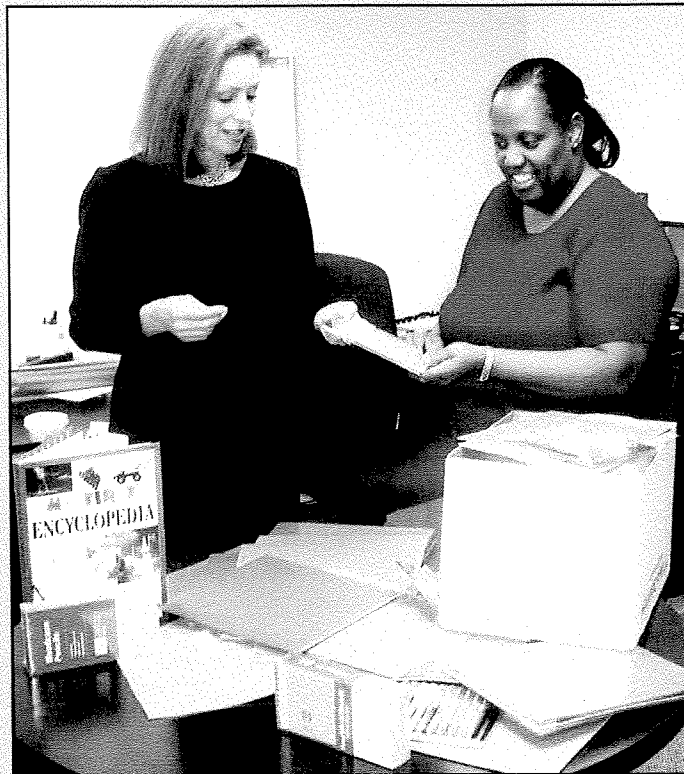
The message from Art Adams to the two dozen SAO staffers gathered in front of him:

Plan your retirement when you are young, not when you are nearing retirement age.

Adams, appearing on behalf of the Capital Insurance Agency, lead the group of anxious employees through the maze of details that combine to make up the Florida Retirement System.

"Start as early as you can to plan for your retirement," the retired state official from Tallahassee said. "If you do it half way right...just half-way right...you won't have to go around the

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Pack To School

Homicide's Debby Zimet and ECU's Marcia Williams look over the first supplies donated for back-to-school backpacks for H.A.N.D.Y. foster care children. SAO staffers wanting to donate more supplies or money should contact Marcia.

Takin' the bus, Gus

Astronomical gasoline prices have many SAO staffers turning to mass transit. And ASA Mike Horowitz has just learned what CCU's Barbara Blenkle has known for years — SAO employees can get monthly bus passes for \$20 — 50 percent off the regular pass price.

To get your discounted pass, clip the application on page 4, fill it out and send a check to the address noted. SAO employees, while eligible for the discount, cannot have the monthly fee deducted from their paycheck

CAUGHT!

Quick thinking during a lunchtime stroll for SAO investigator Bob Gerlach and his wife Beatrice ended up a good life-lesson for courthouse employees --- and jail time for a burglar.

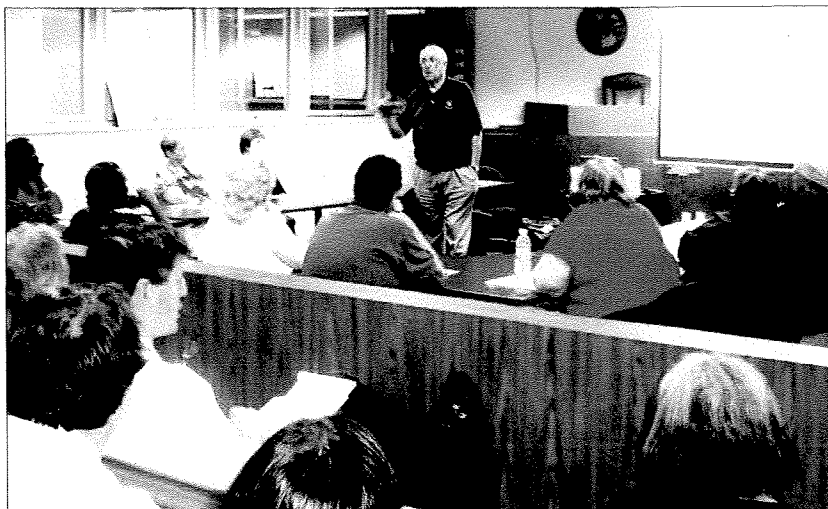
Gerlach and wife were walking along the ground-floor of the West Parking Garage next to the Main

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New laws in 2008 — see page 7

Retirement Options:

*So many rules,
so little time*



Retirement advisor Art Adams reminded SAO employees to plan early.

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state doing these seminars after you retire.”

Adams, a former personnel official with several state agencies as well as Florida State University and Florida A & M University, said all eligible employees should immediately get into the Deferred Compensation program that is offered by the state.

“Everyone should be doing this,” he said.

For every \$100 put into each employee’s Deferred Compensation account, only \$75 actually comes out of the employee’s paycheck. But you the employee “take it with you when you leave.”

As for the state retirement

Specific retirement information is available online at www.rol.frs.state.fl.us/ or from Capital Retirement Services agent Keith Bagdasarian at (954) 341-8705.

options, a regular eligible employee who works 30 years will receive upon retirement roughly 48 percent of an average of their five-best salaries. Employees in the risk or senior-management class get a slightly higher percentage. A 3 percent cost of living is added on each year in retirement for all categories.

Eligible employees still working will have to decide from one of four retirement benefit options the state offers

before they retire. The choices involve whether or not the retired employee wants benefits after their death to continue to be received by relatives and/or other designees.

“It’s a tough decision because once you cash or deposit your first retirement check, you can’t change the option,” he said.

Adams also warned potential retirees that, at the same time they are deciding what to do with their state funds, they should also monitor changing rules of federal Social Security. While federal rules used to allow retirement at 62 and 65 years of age, the federal retirement age is progressively increasing to 64 and 67 years of age.



A fond adieu

Nicole Smith had mixed feelings at her going away plaquing. The secretary in Domestic Violence, who started as SAO receptionist 15 years ago, is going to work for a private law firm.

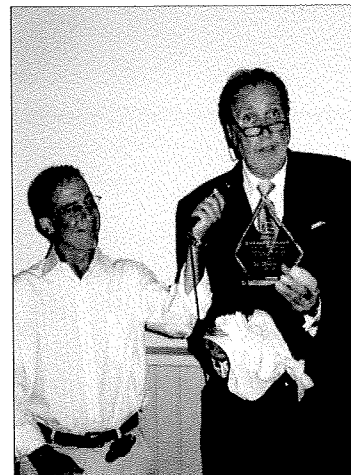


The SEVENTEENTH is the online newsletter of the State Attorney’s Office, 17th Judicial Circuit. Employees and the public may request a printed copy of the newsletter by contacting Kim Fontana in ADM1. To offer story ideas, please contact editor Ron Ishoy or Kim at ext. 7910.

A farewell from friends



Friends and colleagues, including the ever-towering Homicide's Brian Cavanagh, right, gathered last month to honor ASA Howard Scheinberg. After xx years here, Howard is going into private practice.



Come Sail Away

There's still time to purchase your tickets for the annual "Up the River" Cruise to benefit the American Cancer Society hosted by SAO.

The three-hour cruise along the Intracoastal Waterway will be from **6:30 to 9:30 p.m.**, Thursday evening, **July 17th**.

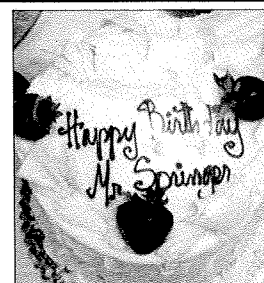
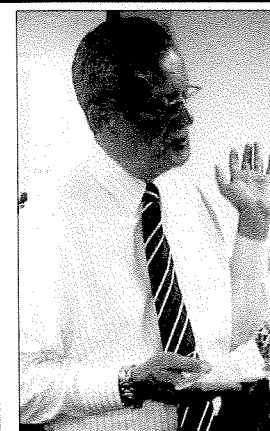
The master of ceremonies will be Paul Castronovo from WBGG-FM's morning radio show "The Paul and Young Ron Show."

The yacht, provided by **Sun Dream Yacht Charters Inc.** (sundreamyachts.com), will depart from the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel at 2670 East Sunrise Boulevard on the west side of the Intracoastal Waterway. Tickets are \$75 for SAO employees. The price includes tasty *hors d'oeuvres* and an open bar.

This is always a great time to relax and a unique chance to see Fort Lauderdale from the water while helping raise funds for the cancer society's "Jail and Bail" fundraiser. For tickets contact Sarahnell Murphy at ext. 7962.



More than two dozen Police Explorers spent a day last month getting a first-hand look at the criminal justice system. SAO staffers, including State Attorney Mike Satz, explained how our part of the system works.



SAO's much-beloved ASA Mark Springer celebrated yet-another birthday last month.

**Broward County Employee Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program
31-DAY BUS PASS ONLY - \$20.00
Employee Authorization Form**

Sign and return this form to secure you bus pass
PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____ EMPLOYEE NUMBER _____
 DIVISION _____ WORK PHONE _____
 HOME ADDRESS _____ HOME PHONE _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 ARE YOU A NEW BUS PASS USER? YES NO
 SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Attach a photocopy of your State Attorney's Office Identification Card

RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO:

Office of Transportation
 Attention: Bus Pass Coordinator Terry Wilbar
 3201 West Copans Road
 Pompano Beach, FL 33069

Investigator's lunchtime stroll with wife nets car burglar

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Courthouse when he spotted a suspicious person behind some employees cars along the west wall of the garage.

"It just caught my eye. He was wearing shorts and a tank top and he had a backpack... he just looked out of place," Gerlach recalls. He told his wife, "We need to keep an eye on him."

They walked a bit more and as they were on the far west side of the garage, they spotted the guy sitting in a black Jeep. Gerlach approached the Jeep just as the man got out and was slipping around behind it.

"I asked him if that was his

car... He said "No," Gerlach recalled.

Asked for identification, the man started to reach into his backpack. Gerlach told him to put the backpack on the ground.

"I'm on parole does this mean I go back to jail," the man blurted out.

Gerlach asked a passing deputy to call for backup and soon a courthouse deputy came and hauled the gentleman off to jail across the street.

In his possession were two pairs of gloves and a screwdriver. He admitted he took a tool kit from the Jeep.

BSO charged the man, 45-year-old Steven Ray Bohannon,

with burglary and petit theft.

Convicted of forgery and burglary, Bohannon had been released from prison and put on parole in May.

Terry Gardner, SAO's chief investigator, said employees should remember that where we work doesn't mean we're safer than anywhere else. He recalled an employee being mugged and hurt many years ago going to her car in the east parking lot.

"You have to be just as careful here as you would anywhere," Gardner said. That includes locking your car and keeping valuables out of sight.



Net Providers to Block Sites With Child Sex

Sprint and Time Warner Cable have agreed to block access to Internet bulletin boards and Web sites nationwide that disseminate child pornography.

The move is part of a groundbreaking agreement with the New York Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo that is being hailed as a significant step by leading companies to curtail access to child pornography.

Many in the industry have previously resisted similar efforts, saying they could not be responsible for content online, given the decentralized and largely unmonitored nature of the Internet. The agreements will affect customers not just in New York but throughout the country. Verizon and Time Warner Cable are two of the nation's five largest service providers, with roughly 16 million customers between them. — NEW YORK TIMES

After Wild Party, Justice Is Metered Out

After more than two dozen young people trashed a former residence of poet Robert Frost during a drinking party, the dilemma was how to punish them. A jail term might be too harsh, community service too easy. So a prosecutor decided on some poetic justice instead, sending them back to school for training about the celebrated New England bard.

"I guess I was thinking that if these teens had a better understanding of who Robert Frost was, and his contribution to our society, that they would be more respectful of other people's property in the future and would also learn something from the experience," said Addison State's Attorney John Quinn. — BOSTON GLOBE

Court Says Search Legal, Drug Conviction Stands

A dog's sniff is different from a police officer's search and does not require probable cause, the state Court of Appeals said Wednesday in affirming the drug conviction of a Virginia woman caught with 400 pounds of marijuana during a traffic stop in Crawford County.

The court noted that a canine sniff is not the same as a police search and does not require reasonable suspicion of criminal activity. In a concurring opinion, Judge Robert Gladwin wrote the fact that Avery's driver's license had expired was cause enough for the trooper to detain her. — ARK. NEWS

California Cell Phone Law May Be More Costly Than the \$20 Fine

The threat of a \$20 fine may not sway every California driver from using a hand-held cellphone when a state ban takes effect July 1, but a motorist who ignores the law and causes an accident could face huge civil judgments or even jail if fatalities result.

"If you cause a fatal accident and you are running a stop sign, speeding or crossing a double line, any additional violation would add to the possibility a manslaughter charge could be filed," said W. Scott Thorpe, chief executive of the California District Attorneys Assn. "It all goes to state of mind and your recklessness."

The cellphone law is moving the state into uncharted territory. Though other states have enacted such laws, experts say it is still too soon to measure the effects. — LA TIMES

New Street Crime: Thieves Lift Manhole Covers

Cities and counties are battling manhole-cover thefts, a crime spree that police tie to the weak economy. Hundreds of 200 pound covers have disappeared in three months in California, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Georgia as scrap metal prices pop up.

"It's a sign of the times," says Sgt. Jay Baker of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office in Georgia, where 28 covers disappeared in April and May. "When the economy gets bad, people start stealing iron." — USA TODAY

