

# Deerfield Forum

ALSO SERVING LIGHTHOUSE POINT

THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2012

VOL. 24 No. 52

WWW.SUNSENTINEL.COM/DEERFIELD

## Canal project to wipe out docks along shoreline

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Were she not the wife of a pastor, Boca Raton resident Eleanor Nicholas might be less resigned to the reconstruction of her backyard.

She can live with having to water her lawn with a hose until she can rebuild her sprinkler system.

She is resigned to the flattening of the bank separating her property from the Hillsboro Canal.

Even her new dock can be replaced, she said, albeit at a cost that is thousands more than the \$5,000 she spent six years ago.

"It's not bombs dropping out of the air ... but it's my dock," Nicholas said.

As Deerfield Beach Commissioner Bill Ganz explained at a meeting earlier this year, Nicholas' dock is

one of many sacrificed as the South Florida Water Management District examines the Hillsboro Canal from the ocean to the Everglades.

The district's goal is to rectify 50 years of encroachment by both foliage and property owners. To do that, it will clear more than seven miles of the canal's shoreline from about Military Trail to 441.

More specifically, the district will dredge the waterway, grade the canal bank and remove brush, trees and some residents' docks.

When residents like Nicholas learned of the plan, she went door-to-door in her neighborhood, rallying other affected residents to attend

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a public meeting last week.

About a dozen turned out, only to learn that while the project cropped up suddenly, it had been long in the planning.

Randy Smith, a South Florida Water Management District spokesman, said that the area's 2,000 miles of canals are on a schedule to be maintained so they can continue to protect the area from flooding by moving water to the sea.

To that end, the district in some cases has even adjusted the right of way.

Nicholas said when district personnel stopped by with news of the \$20 million project, she started asking questions: Who will manage the easement? What happens to her dock?

The news, she said, was not encouraging.

"I'm not a happy camper," she said. "I'm going to lose a beautiful big dock. ... And if you want to replace it, you have to get in line and go through the whole process to get a permit."

# ON THE SPOT

**Today is the last day of school. What are your plans for the summer?**



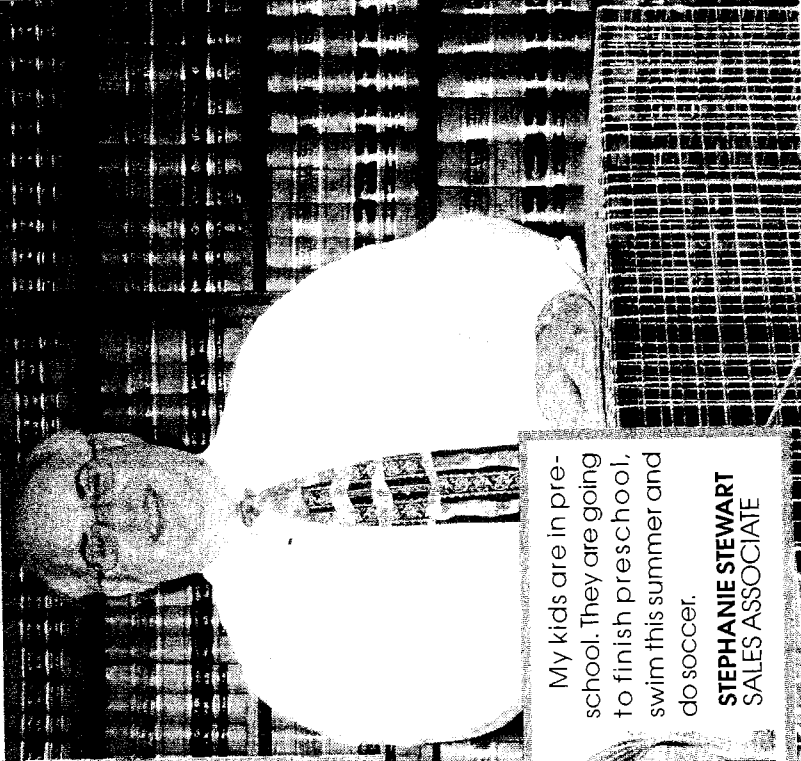
This summer I will do more time in both of my jobs — and save my money and get my own place.

**LAKRISHNA MOORE**  
CASHIER/SERVER



**MARY WARE**  
SCHOOL VOLUNTEER

My plan is to have a good time being with my grandkids, and encourage them to read and stay on focus with what they want to be.



**STEVEN WAGNER**  
COMMUNITY PRESIDENT,  
THE HARBORS AT RIVERGLEN

At a recent informational session regarding the Hillsboro Canal bank project, nearby Boca Raton residents were concerned about wildlife displaced by the widening of the canal. How do you know their concerns are valid? We have a new Labrador shepherd mix and I (recently) let her out at 2 a.m. and noticed she was going in. There was a possum in our back yard.

Were you surprised possums live so close? I prefer not to find things, but I grew up in upstate New York and we had deer and raccoons. Here you have more exotic things like iguanas. If it's not one thing, it's another.

How did you handle the possum? I called a friend of mine to get a live trap. I baited it with raw chicken and caught the possum the first night.

What did you do with it after that? My eight-year-old wanted to feed it, but after we had breakfast we put it in the back of the car and drove to Lovell Hatchee and released it.

My kids are in preschool. They are going to finish preschool, swim this summer and do soccer.

**STEPHANIE STEWART**  
SALES ASSOCIATE

