



**State of Florida Honored Gasparilla for the  
2010 Gasparilla Respect and Responsibility  
Educational Initiative**

**Seminole Hard Rock  
Gasparilla Pirate Fest**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Honorees pictured in the photograph from left to right (back): Bruce Grant, Director, Florida Office of Drug Control; Assistant Chief Marc Hamlin, Tampa Police Department; Keith Hamilton, Tampa Office Lt., Division of Alcohol Beverages and Tobacco; Kevin Plummer, Head of School, Tampa Preparatory School; Bill Giesecking, Director of Marketing, Pepin Distributing Company; Darrell Stefany, President, EventFest, Inc.; (Front): Ellen Snelling, Tampa Alcohol Coalition; Gina Firth, Associate Dean of Students, University of Tampa; Dr. Judith Rainone, Director of Administration, Hillsborough County Public Schools; Santiago Corrada, Administrator of Neighborhood Services, City of Tampa; Jim Robbins, Captain, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla; Jim Tarbet, Executive Officer, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla

**TAMPA, FL** – The Florida Office of Drug Control Director, Bruce Grant, will presented Gasparilla organizers and their partners with appreciation certificates for their efforts in developing and communicating the 2010 Gasparilla Respect and Responsibility Educational Initiative to the Tampa Bay Community.

The ceremony took place in the Brevard Community Room at the University of Tampa on February 26, 2010 at 10 am.

“We know that by increasing enforcement around underage drinking and excessive adult drinking behaviors we reduce property crime, violent crime, alcohol related boating and other vehicle crashes,” said Grant. “This makes us all safer and reduces negative economic impacts. Underage drinking costs Florida \$3.1 billion every year. In addition, adult heavy drinking costs Floridians \$12.3 billion every year.”

“I am proud of the work that has gone into making this a safer festival for everyone,” said Bruce Grant, Director of the Florida Office of Drug Control. “It is critical that we send clear messages to our youth that underage drinking is illegal. And it is vital that adults understand that they also have a role to play. It is my pleasure to recognize some of those who stepped up and made a difference at this year’s Gasparilla Festival,” Grant continued.

In January, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla (YMKG) and EventFest joined the Honorable Pam Iorio, Mayor of the City of Tampa, MaryEllen Elia, Superintendent of Hillsborough County Schools, Deputy Chief Marc Hamlin, Tampa Police Department and Bill Giesecking, Pepin Distributing Company in announcing plans for a comprehensive communication program and educational initiative designed for encouraging responsible behavior and respect at Tampa’s treasured Gasparilla celebration.

Gasparilla – Tampa’s historic community celebration since 1904, has been presented by Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla for over one-hundred years, and has grown into one of the most unique and colorful community celebrations in the country, with an annual economic impact of over 46 million dollars to Hillsborough County (2007 Report). A treasured event for generations in Tampa, the 2009 event witnessed irresponsible behavior by a few that have led to an unprecedented partnership between event organizers, the City of Tampa, public and independent schools, law enforcement and event sponsors to communicate the importance of responsible behavior and respect for others while attending Gasparilla in 2010.

“Gasparilla is a Community tradition that our membership has hosted proudly for generations here in Tampa” said Jim Robbins, Captain of Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla. “We want everyone to enjoy Gasparilla each year, whether they attend the event or simply live nearby,” said Robbins.

Gasparilla has received support with their responsibility communication campaign from event sponsors like Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino – Tampa, Anheuser Busch, Inc. / Pepin Distributing Company, Clear Channel Radio, Diageo and the City Of Tampa. Seminole Hard Rock Casino and Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla named former Tampa Bay Buccaneer Mike Alstott as the 2010 Grand Marshal of the Gasparilla Parade of the Pirates, saluting a legendary Buccaneer and further recognizing the importance of responsibility....both on and off the field.

Part of the program included presentations by the Tampa Police Department to Tampa area schools – sponsored in part by Pepin Distributing Company, with leadership and program coordination for public, independent and collegiate institutions in the Bay area being led by

MaryEllen Elia, Superintendent of Hillsborough County Schools, Kevin Plummer, Head of School – Tampa Preparatory School and Gina Firth, Associate Dean of Students at the University of Tampa, respectively. Program highlights included reinforcement of the Responsibility and Respect messages – messages that are applicable throughout the year, as well as underscored the zero tolerance for irresponsible behavior at Tampa's Gasparilla celebration in 2010.

Additional support of the initiative came from Public Service Announcements (PSA's) that were created and developed for Gasparilla by EventFest with event sponsors Anheuser Busch/Pepin Distributing and Clear Channel Radio of Tampa Bay. Over 1,400 PSA's were aired utilizing all the Clear Channel stations in the Tampa Bay market during the three weeks leading up to the event, reminding listeners that Responsibility is the Key to a safe and enjoyable experience for all. The City of Tampa cable television additionally ran similar PSA's in support of the program.

Anheuser Busch and Pepin Distributing Company have been a proud sponsor of Gasparilla Pirate Fest since 2007. From the beginning of the partnership, Anheuser Busch and Pepin have implemented elements of their responsibility matters campaign. Programs like *We I'D, Alert Cab, Zingo, TIPS Training* and *Prevent Don't Provide Alcohol to Minors* have all been a part of the event. This year, Anheuser Busch (Budweiser) & Pepin have created the *Responsibility is the Key* retail program. "The objective of the *Responsibility is the Key* program is to communicate to our community in a positive manner and at the point of purchase that this year, disruptive behavior and violations of city ordinances will not be tolerated by law enforcement" said Bill Giesecking, Director of Marketing for Pepin Distributing Company, Tampa's Anheuser Busch distributor. "We care about our community and feel that Gasparilla is a very important event for our community" said Giesecking. Encouraging everyone to use good judgment and take personal responsibility by making people aware that there is a real change in how law enforcement will patrol the neighborhood and parade route is a key objective of the *Responsibility is the Key* program. Posters, case cards and window signs were in all retail locations that sell Budweiser. Pepin Distributing included a text messaging program for Gasparilla in 2010 that encouraged those 21 and older to text "pirate" to 333222 and receive specific messages outlining the "Winds of Change" at Gasparilla this year and provided a url link for the more detailed information on this year's festivities.

In addition to the retail program, Pepin also sponsored high school and college auditorium presentations that the Tampa Police Department presented to over 20 schools in Tampa. "We are very pleased to partner with TPD on this initiative to communicate to the young people in our community that underage drinking is not ok and will not be overlooked by officers" Giesecking said. To communicate with this demographic, Pepin implemented an additional text program so young people can spread the word to their friends. Young people (under 21) were encouraged to text the key word "change" at 333222 to get specific and targeted responsibility messages for our young folks, with a link to more detailed information for Gasparilla festivities. Bill Giesecking can be reached at Pepin Distributing in Tampa (813-626-6176 x 258).

Tampa's Gasparilla events, including the Children's Gasparilla Extravaganza, Gasparilla Pirate Fest and the Gasparilla Outbound Voyage are marketed, managed and produced annually by EventFest, Inc. of Tampa.

Detailed event information can be found at [www.GasparillaPirateFest.com](http://www.GasparillaPirateFest.com)

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