

## OLD FLORIDA POLITICS

# Ron Bergeron 'Man of Year'

Bergeron has been lauded for his philanthropic works. He steps forward and dedicates time to community service and has donated thousands of dollars to such charitable organizations as (EASE) Foundation and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Broward County.

This South Florida, very in the NOW Ron Bergeron always gives back to the community. In 1995 he donated \$150,000 to the town of Davie to help buy property adjacent to the Davie Rodeo Arena for arena parking. In 1988, his company contributed rocks that were used to build bicycle paths along Southwest 130th and 136th Avenue. The First Baptist Church of Davie/Cooper City sits on 10 acres donated by his company.

During this columnist's interview, I was struck by Ron Bergeron's concern for his family.

He eloquently articulated that, "Success is your family, your health, your happiness and then your financial achievement."

Ron, a Stranahan High School alumnus got his first job at a gas station. His pay was fifty cents an hour.

In the early sixties he spent \$235 dollars on a 20-year-old tractor. He started working pasture land and soon he parlayed that into five tractors and a hand full of employees. They baled hay and fertilized farmland all over Broward.

Bergeron knew that wealth lay in land ownership, particularly if you had lots of it. He also realized that people were moving to West Broward.

Progress would not be held back. Too many people wanted the opportunity to be a part of the American dream. Home ownership was the surest way for families to acquire investment and a quality of life for their children.

Bergeron traded in his tractors for bulldozers and front-end loaders and started digging up the farmland that he planted and fertilized. He worked with land-owners to dig fill on their property, which gave him building materials and the landowner's lakes

for prime waterfront lots.

By the mid-1980s when West Broward's road and home-building boom was in full bloom, he had 500 employees and one of the best-known and most respected construction businesses in Florida.

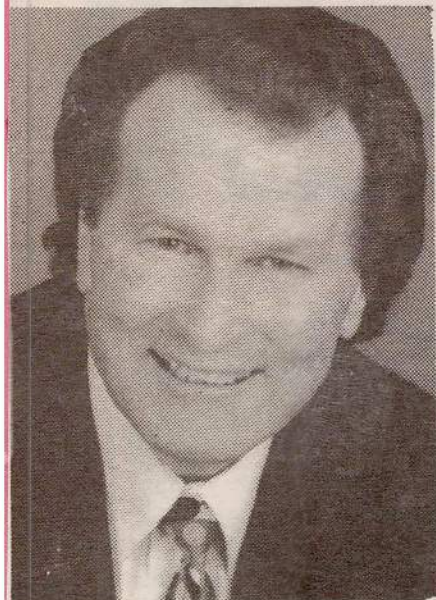
Bergeron is a dashing cowboy who still rides the rodeo and he personifies the essence of that image in his western wear, and spirit for what is right. He stays close to his wife Cindy Lou, and their two daughters Diamond Rose and Sierra Starr. He has four other children from previous marriages — Lisa, Debbie, Ronnie and Lonnie. Besides rodeo roping, he enjoys air-boating and hunting.

This cowboy Ronnie Bergeron has a real love for the land, and the Everglades. During Governor Bob Graham's administration Bergeron served on a state committee that worked for the restoration of the

Everglades. "Thousands of deer have drowned in the Everglades because of water flooding." He speaks with conviction and concern about the natural balance in the Everglades.

While Bergeron is considered by politicians and the residents in Broward as a "good guy," he is without doubt the most popular developer. When asked if he might consider a future career in politics he responded, "I can contribute more as a private citizen toward the improvement of the quality of life for today's families, and in that way future generations will also have the same opportunity I have experienced in realizing the American dream."

Ron Bergeron is a "happening story." He expresses strong beliefs in our culture, family and traditional values. Broward County is better off because of Ron Bergeron...he is truly a great man.



by Wayne Arnold, Central Broward  
Water Control Commissioner

From the cow paths and woods in Davie some 53 years ago came a boy who would realize the American dream. Ron Bergeron, this fifth generation Floridian.

Now one of the richest and most powerful men in Broward and Florida, he started as a member of a pioneering Broward family. His mother Dorothy and his father Percy Bergeron instilled in Ron and his brothers, Lonnie T. and Donnie N., traits of love, honesty and good character.

Last year EASE (Emergency Assistance Service Effort) Foundation presented this dynamically successful businessman with its Humanitarian Award.

The South Broward Democratic Club, chartered in 1953, has named Ron Bergeron 1997 "Democratic Man of the Year." Club members glowingly spoke and commended Ron Bergeron for his generous support over the years for the Democratic Party with all manner of fundraising events and activities for such notables as United States Senator Robert Graham, Gov. Lawton Chiles and dozens of county and local officials.



Developer, cowboy, philanthropist Ron Bergeron being congratulated by South Broward Democratic Club Dinner Chairman Wayne Arnold as "Man the Year"