

MIAMI TODAY

WEEK OF THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2014

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Notable Miami attorneys play vital roles in the civic arena

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

For attorneys, it's high praise when you're recognized for your skills and professionalism by a lawyer who has worked against you on the other side of the aisle.

Miami has plenty of notable attorneys who play traditional legal roles in the civil arena, from wrestling complex development issues to maritime law to tax matters and beyond. Some stand out for their work.

John Shubin is one of those, and has been selected for Best of Miami as a legal leader, an individual who's earned respect from many in the collective legal community.

Mr. Shubin, a founding partner of the firm Shubin & Bass P.A., represents companies, individuals and government entities in litigation and administrative proceedings related to real property and its entitlement.

Mr. Shubin has practiced throughout Florida and possesses a combination of experience as both a trial lawyer in state and federal courts and as a representative of client interests in quasi-judicial proceedings.

Mr. Shubin was nominated by Iris Escarrá, an attorney with the firm of Greenberg Traurig. She specializes in land use and zoning matters in Miami-Dade County and its municipalities.

Fairness is a key component in Mr. Shubin's legal work.

"He is an excellent attorney who is highly skilled in working through complex cases and finding solutions that are fair for all parties involved," said Ms. Escarrá.

"John and I have been co-counsel representing the same client and adversaries representing different sides, and in each case it has been a pleasure to work with him," she said.

"No matter what level of difficulty or degree of stress we are experiencing at the moment, he brings a sense of reason and calm to the issue at hand. I think he is a legal leader in our community who deserves this recognition," Ms. Escarrá said.

For Mr. Shubin, working to solve problems is intriguing.

"I enjoy working through difficult issues with clients and with co-counsel and other professionals, such as architects and engineers," Mr. Shubin said.

"When you add business and



Photo by Maxine Usdan

John Shubin was hailed as "highly skilled in working through complex cases and finding solutions..."



Thomas Eagan's skills helped to save an iconic Miami landmark.

political variables into the equation, the process of problem solving becomes even more interesting," he said. "This is what drives my enthusiasm to go to work."

Challenges from adversaries make the process even more valuable for Mr. Shubin.

"If necessary, I also don't mind engaging in the adversarial side of the practice, especially when I am testing my theories against skilled adversaries and great judges," he said. "I have a child-like enthusiasm for ideas and knowledge, and practicing law, especially when presented with complex challenges, has been a great outlet for my energy."

Mr. Shubin has advised clients on strategies that promote local support for complex development applications. He also coordinates the firm's representation of its clients in complex commercial litigation and

appellate matters, and has served as an expert witness and mediator in matters concerning zoning and land use.

Mr. Shubin attended Harvard College (A.B., cum laude, 1983), and St. John's College, Oxford University, Oxford, England (B.A., with high honors, 1985). He earned his law degree from the University of Miami School of Law in 1988.

Locally, his work has included public service. He served as a trustee on the board of Ransom-Everglades School, including two years as vice president, and as a member on the Miami Light Project and the Dade County Charter Review Advisory Board.

Mr. Shubin also had a brief stint as a legal commentator for NBC/MSNBC several years ago.

Another Miami attorney earning praise is **T. Spencer Crowley III**. Mr. Crowley is often in the thick of things as a legal representative for some of the biggest players in the growth and development of the community.

"Spencer Crowley is an incredible legal leader, as he professionally practices Environmental and Land Use Law with Akerman and then backs it up with extensive successful pro bono endeavors," said Brett Bibeau, managing director of the Miami River Commission.

"Mr. Crowley is appointed to serve as Miami-Dade's Governing Board Member on the



State legislator Jose Felix Diaz is cited for going above and beyond.

Florida Inland Navigation District, which provides significant grant funding to cities and counties statewide to improve public access along waterfronts, including riverwalks, baywalks, parks, floating docks, dredging and more," he said.

In addition, Mr. Crowley is the volunteer chairman of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's New World Center Committee, which is a strong advocate for an improved public waterfront, including Miami's Riverwalk, Baywalk, waterfront parks, recreational boat access, waterborne transportation and more.

Mr. Crowley's practice focuses on large-scale land use and environmental permitting, including zoning, growth management, urban development, transportation, sovereignty submerged lands, coastal regulation, marina permitting, wetlands and water resources.

He has worked with the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida, the South Florida Water Management District, and Duke University's Wetlands Center in the Florida Everglades.

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LEGAL LEADERS

He has assisted in the land use permitting of major projects such as the Babcock Ranch, Midtown Miami, Village at Gulfstream Park, Miami Worldcenter and Brickell City Centre.

Attorney **Thomas Eagan** was also tapped for the Best of Miami as a legal leader.

He's a serious man with a great sense of humor, and "he's a great lawyer," said John Blazejack, who owns and operates a commercial real estate appraisal and consulting business.

In an extremely complicated case that involved aspects of historical preservation and the transfer of development rights, Mr. Eagan was instrumental in reaching a successful conclusion, said Mr. Blazejack.

In the end, the unique Bacardi Tower in midtown Miami, the former headquarters of Bacardi USA, was saved. In October 2012, the National YoungArts Foundation acquired the iconic landmark Bacardi Tower and Museum buildings and is converting them into the organization's first national headquarters.

With Mr. Eagan's legal knowledge and skills, a very special older structure was saved and given renewed purpose, Mr. Blazejack said.

"It could have been the loss of an historic building, if not doing something like this (bringing in the foundation). He was the guiding light on the legal side of it," said Mr. Blazejack.

"He's a very unique person," said Craig Werley, a business acquaintance of Mr. Eagan's for about 20 years.

"He's phenomenally sharp and extremely credible," Mr. Werley said.

In addition to his legal practice, Mr. Eagan works on behalf of institutions that benefit youths.

Also nominated by Mr. Bibeau for Best of Miami as a legal leader was **Jose Felix Diaz**, an attorney and a state lawmaker. Mr. Diaz goes above and beyond in his work for South Florida, Mr. Bibeau said.

Mr. Diaz professionally practices Land Use and Local Government Law with the Akerman firm, is a champion for public waterfront issues, and volunteers for the CHARLEE Houses, which provide free permanent homes for abandoned, neglected and abused children.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

T. Spencer Crowley III represents some of the biggest players in the growth and development arenas.

Welcome to the Best of Miami

This special supplement to Miami Today focuses on individuals, companies and organizations that make special strides and efforts to improve the community they work in and serve. We collectively label them the Best of Miami – as we have for

nearly three decades.

In a community as large and as diverse as Greater Miami there is no way to select scientifically. These selections represent a cross-section of highly qualified nominees who are among the best in the community.

Officials star in arts, solid waste, parks, public works, managing

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

More and more, arts and culture are seen as key elements in a city's bidding to be a world-class destination.

Ensuring our area has a rich tapestry of art and culture available to folks from all walks of life is **Michael Spring**, director of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs.

Mr. Spring was nominated for the Best of Miami as one of the hundreds of people who work tirelessly in the local government rank-and-file who make a difference. He was nominated as a star of government by Monty Trainer, a restaurateur and champion of the local arts scene.

"Michael is really fantastic," Mr. Trainer said. "He's such a careful negotiator... He's got the patience of Job – it's absolutely unreal."

"The biggest thing is, Michael has tremendous knowledge of the arts... he remembers everything about ev-

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STARS IN GOVERNMENT

ery art group," he said.

Mr. Trainer is a vice chair of the New World School of the Arts, and also serves on the executive board of the Coconut Grove Chamber of Commerce, the Coconut Grove Business Improvement District and the Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs Council.

Mr. Spring works with the cultural affairs council, which among its many duties oversees hundreds of not-for-profit agencies in the county, including the Actors' Playhouse in Coral Gables, dance studios and dance groups, New World School of the Arts, and many more.

The council also runs a summer arts program for children.

As far as county government goes, "because of him, they in-

vented the cultural affairs department," Mr. Trainer said about Mr. Spring.

"He's very stealth on this, he doesn't seek out publicity," even though he's responsible for a multi-million dollar agency, said Mr. Trainer, who has known Mr. Spring more than 20 years.

Mr. Spring supervises a public arts agency with an annual budget of more than \$30 million and a staff of 60. He represents the department on numerous cultural and civic committees, including service as secretary of the board of directors of Americans for the Arts, considered the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts.

Mr. Spring has been responsible for establishing policies and programs that have helped build the organizational growth and facilities development of the county's cultural community into a \$922 million annual industry, comprised of more than 1,000 non-profit cultural groups and thousands of individual artists.

He has worked on legislative issues at the local, state and federal levels and was successful in leading the initiative in 1993 to secure \$7.3 million from the state's Hurricane Andrew Recovery and Rebuilding Trust Fund for the recovery of Miami-Dade's cultural community.

In 2004, he helped lead the work to pass a referendum for the Building Better Communities bond program, dedicating more than \$450 million for building the next generation of Miami-Dade's cultural facilities, ranging from major new art and science museums to theaters and neighborhood arts centers.

In 2007, Mr. Spring assumed the additional responsibility of leading Miami-Dade County's Art in Public Places program.

"He found art stored in maintenance yards – 600 pieces," said Mr. Trainer.

"Every meeting we vote on different art and the public places program," he said of the council. The program has been so successful that it's become a model for art in public places around the country, Mr. Trainer said.

"Michael is so good, as far as staff is concerned, his staff is well-trained and focused... Whenever I serve as chairman of a panel, they make me look good," Mr. Trainer said.

Mr. Spring was valedictorian of the class of 1970 at Miami Edison Senior High School. He is a graduate of the University of Miami with B.A. degree, magna cum laude, in the arts and a minor in literature.

Also recognized as a non-elected government doer of note is **Keith Carswell**, director of the City of Miami's Solid Waste Department. He was nominated for the Best of Miami by community leader and businessman Horacio Stuart Aguirre.

"One of the most important roles in government, from an environmental and aesthetic perspective, is the massive amount of solid waste disposal. City of Miami Solid Waste Director Keith Carswell, and his entire



Michael Spring was cited as a patient and careful county negotiator.

incredible department including Cindy Baez and Robert Williams, provide excellent timely service, and new innovations such as the easy to use rolling recycling containers," said Mr. Aguirre.

Another government official whose work for the public good stands out is **Kevin Asher**, special projects manager for the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department. He was nominated as a star of government by John Blazejack, who runs a real estate appraisal company in Miami.

"Kevin Asher is very thoughtful in how he handles his assignments," said Mr. Blazejack.

Mr. Asker works tirelessly for the county, negotiating the best deals he can when hammering out lease agreements for public spaces, Mr. Blazejack said.

This work included leasing spaces for restaurants at the county's popular Haulover Park, at 10800 Collins Ave. The county manages this area near Bal Harbour for park and recreational uses.

"He really knew all the facts," Mr. Blazejack said. "He asked all the hard questions."

Mr. Asher handled complicated lease contracts with ease.

"He was all over it," making sure it was the very best use of public land, said Mr. Blazejack.

The City of Miami Public Works Department has an assortment of duties and responsibilities that basically deal with

the look of the city.

Recognized as a star in government for the Best of Miami is **Nzeribe Ihekwa**, public works director. He was nominated by Miami River Commission Managing Director Brett Bibeau.



Nzeribe Ihekwa

"Nzeribe Ihekwa is a star director of the City of Miami's fantastic Public Works Department. With strong support from wonderful staff such as Lee Wilkins and Elyrosa Estevez, Director Ihekwa's hard-working Public Works Department keeps our city beautiful and running smoothly," said Mr. Bibeau.

"The City of Miami's Public Works Department is always there to help with maintaining the public realm and keeping our waterways clean, via the Scavenger 2000 Water Decontamination Vessel, servicing storm water drainage systems, landscaping, picking up litter, and much more," he said.

Also nominated as a star in local government was **Alice Bravo**, deputy city manager in Miami. She is a leader, engineer, mother, wife and an advocate for the City of Miami's future. Ms. Bravo was recognized in this category in last year's Best of Miami edition.



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Alice Bravo, the deputy city manager of Miami, was nominated again.

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Gallogly, Moss credited for broadened trade perspectives

BY LIDIA DINKOVA

South Florida's trade ties no longer extend only to South America and the Caribbean as Miami-Dade's commerce has diversified to reach Europe and Asia.

About \$3.5 billion has been generated in reported sales since the 1980s, when the region relied on one-way commerce, mainly from international trade shows, about 75% of that staying in the US, according to a nonprofit that organizes such trade shows, World Trade Center Miami.

That growth is largely credited to **Charlotte Gallogly**, World Trade Center Miami president and co-founder.

"She has brought more international business people together than probably anyone in South Florida and very possibly the United States," said Lenny Feldman, managing member of Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg P.A.'s Miami office, who nominated Ms. Gallogly for her work linking Miami-Dade to international



Charlotte Gallogly talks with county commission Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, left, and Gov. Rick Scott during World Trade Week Miami event.

Photo by Maxine Usdan

markets. "She has devoted her life to this and has been extremely successful, and we should feel honored to have her in the community."

Mr. Feldman is World Trade Center Miami board chair, a position selected by former board chairpersons.

"She has the food and beverage show, so you get business executives who come from around the world to Miami to do

business here," he said.

The upcoming 18th annual Americas Food and Beverage Show & Conference will host about 500 domestic and international companies Oct. 27 and 28.

"This is the largest and most important show in the Western Hemisphere to increase trade," Ms. Gallogly told Miami Today.

Despite the rise of online shopping, trade shows remain a vital part of international commerce.

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"If you really want to know what are the new products in the industry, what are the prices, what are the latest customs regulations, you are going to go to a trade show," Ms. Gallogly said. "It's the most effective platform for buying and selling."

Last year's food and beverage trade show generated \$205 million in actual and projected sales and hosted nearly 11,000 buyers, 24% of them international, according to World Trade Center Miami.

Air Cargo Americas International Congress and Exhibition, now in its 22nd year, is a products-marketing opportunity as well as a forum to exchange ideas and strategies to grow the air-cargo industry; and SeaCargo Americas Conference, now in its



Commissioner Dennis Moss was cited for work to build Africa ties. seventh year, is an ideas-exchange forum on how to grow the maritime and logistics industry.

World Trade Center Miami owns and organizes the Americas Food and Beverage Show & Conference as well as the air cargo and sea cargo events. Another conference on the horizon will bring together traders and regulators to shed light on the latest trade regulations.

"We will focus on the people who are intermediaries in the trade industry," said Ms. Gallogly, who is a board member of the World Trade Centers Association, the umbrella nonprofit organization representing domestic and international world trade centers.

A World Trade Center, she said, "is like a rifle. It's a very targeted business development approach."

Licensed in the 1980s, when trade with South America was down, World Trade Center Miami's ultimate goal is to grow Miami-Dade as a trade-logistics hub and to diversify the region's trade to reach Europe and Asia.

A more recent push has called for South Florida to reach a largely untapped market: Africa.

"West Africa, it's about 400 million people," said Anthony Okonmah, executive director of The Foundation for Democracy in Africa, a nonprofit. "That's a consuming market we can't ignore."

Mr. Okonmah nominated County Commissioner **Dennis Moss** for his efforts to foster trade between South Florida and Africa.

"It took time to start to sensitize people to look at the potential of Africa," Mr. Okonmah said. "There was lack of interest because Africa is far, and people didn't see the potential that Africa can offer."

But Commissioner Moss did see that potential.

"We positioned ourselves to become the gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean," he said. "And the same opportunity now exists with Africa."

The Foundation for Democracy in Africa hosted the fourth U.S. Africa Air Transportation Summit/Expo in Miami-Dade in late May hosting delegations representing the public and private sectors from Senegal, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, South Africa and other countries, with the ultimate goal of increasing tourism and trade between South Florida and Africa.

"We are one of the very few communities in the US that are hosting these kinds of events in trying to basically create a spark that would open up those opportunities," Commissioner Moss told Miami Today. "We feel good about our pursuit of this opportunity. We just need to stick with it."

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While Leyna Gonzalez (pictured) was still in her mother's womb, in a high-risk procedure, Dr. Rubén Quintero, Dr. Eftichia Kontopoulos, and a specialized team from the Jackson Fetal Therapy Institute saved her life by removing a large tumor growing from her mouth, through a minimally invasive surgery.



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Million Orchid Project set to bloom all over Miami-Dade

By NINA LINCOFF

There are around 50 species of orchids native to South Florida, but spotting even one of those 50 outside of a home, nursery or botanic garden today is difficult.

That was not the case more than a century ago, when orchids were plentiful, clinging to almost every oak and mahogany tree along Biscayne Bay. But development in the late 1800s ripped orchids from their homes and the result is that now, orchid populations have dwindled.

The **Million Orchid Project** at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic is hoping to change that, starting with four species native to Miami-Dade County.

Over a five-year period, Fairchild staff and local volunteers at the Fairchild's new Micropropagation Laboratory will cultivate four target orchid species – the Florida butterfly orchid, cowhorn orchid, dollar orchid and cockleshell orchid – for reintroduction to the urban environment.

The goal is that in five years, these four orchid varieties which have been carefully nursed and grown at the Fairchild lab will be able to propagate and flower on street trees, in neighborhoods and around schools in Miami-Dade County. Orchids are remarkably resilient, but to blanket the streets of Miami-Dade, there need to be enough flowering and seed-producing orchids to grab hold.

An individual orchid seed pod contains millions of light, delicate seeds that in nature are distributed far and wide by the wind. Best case scenario is that one of those millions takes a hold of an oak or mahogany tree and produces seeds of its own.

Right now, there simply aren't enough orchids in Miami-Dade to tip the seed scales in the flowers' favor. And that's where the Fairchild's Million Orchid project comes in, creating an environment where South Florida's natural orchid species can flourish in a post-development landscape.

It's for these efforts that Coral Gables Vice Mayor Bill Kerdyk Jr. nominated the Million Orchid project and Fairchild Director **Carl Lewis** for best at environmental advancement, turning green.

"The Million Orchid Project is special. The only other one that I know about is in Singapore, which is not as ambitious a program as the one that the Fairchild is embarking on," Mr. Kerdyk said.

Part of the success of the project hinges upon outreach to the community and getting residents of all of Miami-Dade invested in seeing orchids line the streets.

"Fairchild, even though it sits in the city of Coral Gables, within its borders, is part of this whole community and Fairchild has done an extremely great job of reaching out to the entire community," Mr. Kerdyk said.

The project began about a year ago, so if it is successful,



Dr. Carl Lewis, the director of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden who heads the Million Orchid Project, discusses orchids with Pan American Orchid Society members in the micropropagation lab on Friday.

Photo by Maxine Usdan

by 2018 or 2019 seeing an orchid on a tree in the street should be a common sight. Two of the four species being cultivated at the Micropropagation Lab are only found on Fairchild's grounds, while the other two are found in Miami-Dade. Eventually, the program hopes to add additional orchid species.

"Right now in the lab we're working with four different target species. There are about 50 species of orchids native to South Florida, and we have many others we could choose from," Mr. Lewis said. "But we're starting with four, and we plan to add more."

It should be no surprise to anyone that Miami-Dade has changed over the past century, or really even over the past decade. For residents, that change has allowed for greater development and an urban living environment. What the Million Orchid project is attempting to see is whether native orchid species can adapt to that changed environment. And the Fairchild thinks it can, with a little help.

"We are planting these orchids in urban environments, not in areas that are being managed as natural areas like the Everglades National Park," Mr. Lewis said. "We're putting them in street trees, around schools, and trying to get them in places that people will see them."

"It's an experiment. We don't know in exactly what kinds of situations will be optimal for these orchids because the environment has changed so much. Originally, when there was a forest here the orchids would have had a really extensive habitat," he said. "Since the trees were cut and orchids were specifically taken, pulled from trees, we're starting from pretty much zero."

While the condo buildings and city centers going up around town may seem to imply otherwise, now is as good a time as any in the past century to try an orchid reintroduction project. Since Hurricane Andrew, there has been a concerted effort to plant more trees around the county and now there are more available habitats for these orchids to take hold, Mr. Lewis said. "It's all about tipping the numbers in our favor."

The Million Orchid project largely depends on different layers of community involvement, whether it's the retired scientists volunteering in the lab or

the student volunteers working alongside them.

Later in the project, orchids that have begun their lives in the lab in small glass bottles will be

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given to middle and high schools around Miami-Dade County for students to continue to cultivate and eventually reintroduce the plants to the trees around their schools.

"Orchids are among the most beautiful plants on Earth, but orchids also have a story, they will always share a story," Mr. Lewis said. "Orchids are unusual in all of the interrelationships they have with other organisms. That's what makes them delicate and rare, the fact that they depend on other organisms."

The successful introduction of orchids into an urban environment like in Singapore, where a similar project was started in 1995, gives the Fairchild hope that these South Florida orchids will prove just as hearty.



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Rising leaders building support scaffolding for tech growth

By NINA LINCOFF

On the heels of Miami's first annual eMerge Techweek, which wrapped up in early May, there's no denying that the technology industry in Greater Miami is going through Renaissance.

But supporting that boom and helping to ensure that it doesn't go the way of the late-'90s tech trend are local players from across all industries. By providing the legal, financial and civic scaffolding for Miami's tech sector, these local leaders are showing that the area's current tech boom is being built to last.

Jaret Davis, co-managing shareholder of Greenberg Traurig Miami, has been involved with the tech scene in South Florida for over two decades, which is astonishing considering that he was still in college at the University of Miami in the late '90s. But Mr. Davis got his start in tech like so many others in the industry — early.

At the University of Miami, where Mr. Davis completed his undergraduate and law degrees, business was his primary discipline, but he always maintained an interest (and a minor) in computers.

"Part of it was for the geek factor. I enjoyed doing code, enjoyed being able to solve problems and I enjoyed everything about computers," Mr. Davis said. "But the other part of it was that although it was the late '90s... the web was just coming out, and seeing it develop was exciting."

While Mr. Davis now advises tech startups and entrepreneurs, often starting with a two-hour sit-down where he goes over business plans and so forth with



Photos by Maxine Usdan

Attorney Jaret Davis has been active in the tech scene since his days as a University of Miami student.

his clients, he can claim tech cred. At one point, his Star Wars website was one of the top ranked sites on the internet, he said.

Now, his clients are from primarily two different industries. "My clients right now are life sciences and biotech or IT. It's right there about at 70%. 70% of my client base is comprised of those companies and that's my practice right there," Mr. Davis said.

A tech endeavor can start with a great idea, but business and legal support are necessary to take that great idea and develop it into a company with longevity. That's where Mr. Davis comes in, and why Xavier Gonzalez, executive director of eMerge Americas, nominated him.

For Mr. Davis, now is the time for tech to take hold in Miami, and events like eMerge just serve to bring the bubbling

tech sector in the area to a boil.

"It's analogous with Art Basel. There was always a strong arts community in Miami, and Art Basel acted as a catalyst to explode the value," Mr. Davis said. "Now, there's always been pockets of tech innovation in Miami, and the key was to bring them all together."

Following eMerge, where those pockets did get a chance to coalesce along with many others from around Latin and North America, there is a need to capitalize on the momentum created in those first weeks of this May.

"What I am seeing in South Florida is incredible in terms of tech innovation. It goes across multiple sectors. We're seeing pioneers in infrastructure, cyber security and certainly social media," Mr. Davis said. "The entrepreneurship is there, the innovation is there. What we need now is the capital."

Where Mr. Davis can help provide business and legal support, **Susan Amat**, founder of **Venture Hive**, can help provide a home and a competitive environment where startups from around the world can grow and learn from one another in a Miami-based startup accelerator and incubator.

"Susan Amat comes to mind immediately," said Melissa Medina, vice president of strategic engagement for the Technology Foundation of the Americas and president of the Medina Family Foundation. "She is at the forefront of the tech movement in Miami. She runs Venture Hive and she just announced that Microsoft will have their first ever Innovation Center in the US based out of her offices," Ms. Medina said.

Venture Hive, however, didn't come about without institutional support. The startup accelerator is able to provide an environment for different ideas, entrepreneurs and innovations because it itself received support from different organizations.

The incubator wouldn't be where it is today — providing tech education in places as far flung as Nairobi and being included in tech leadership with organizations like the World Bank and US State Department — without the help of local gov-

ernment. Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez, City of Miami Commissioner Marc Sarnoff, the Miami Downtown Development Authority and the Miami World Center were all instrumental to Venture Hive's success, Ms. Amat said.

"When the World Bank and the US State Department and USAID are flying in startups from different parts of the world to Miami for training and mentorship, that speaks volumes and has been really amazing for us," Ms. Amat said. "Miami is a place, not just a place you go for fun. Going and having a week here is the equivalent of being in [Silicon] Valley. It's been very exciting, getting to meet awesome entrepreneurs all over the world."

"The fact that the Miami DDA and Mayor Gimenez thought that this would be a worthwhile thing to start, there are very few

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places in the country where they're like, 'you know what, let's try it.' That speaks to innovation of this place," Ms. Amat said. "Every day in Venture Hive is exciting, because we have awesome people taking on big world challenges, and when they get investment, when they get offers to purchased... It's amazing."

Getting into the Venture Hive family is the hard part. Though one of the main rules to stay is simple. "Don't be a jerk," Ms. Amat said.

While the spirit of innovation is going around the Greater Miami area, moving forward and maturing as an industry takes leaders who show up when they say they will, deliver what they say they will and behave professionally and ethically. One of the biggest faults of a startup can be promising something too big and falling short, Ms. Amat said.

As Miami's tech sector continues to develop, growing past those faults will be the sign of a mature, world-class industry. Companies like SnapScore, RawShorts, Soccer Without Limits (SWOL), Ciphertext and Hair Construction are all leading the charge, Ms. Amat said.

For those that follow, they've got the advantage of institutional support, whether it's from business and law, accelerator and incubator programs or local government. With that foundation, reaching skywards should be all the easier.

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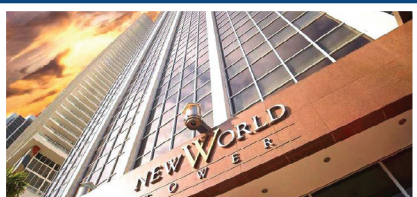
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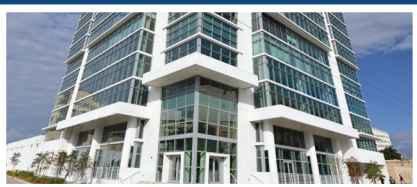
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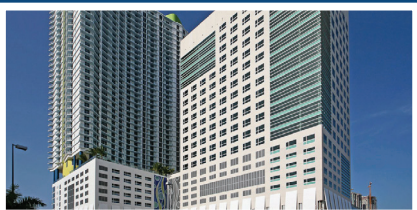
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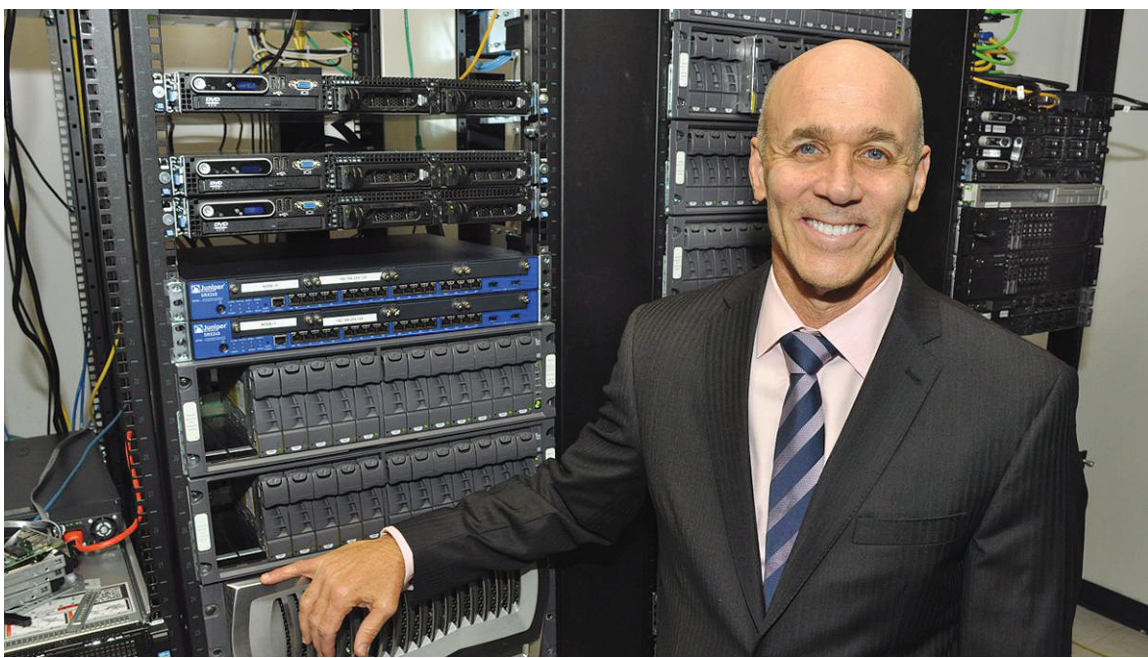


Photo by Maxine Usdan

Jack Karabees of 2-year-old firm itopia has worn many hats in his career, most of them in the tech field.

Top entrepreneurs embrace change

BY SCOTT BLAKE

Ask people in Miami's business circles about local entrepreneurs and **Manual "Manny" Medina** is usually among the first, if not the first, mentioned.

If you measure entrepreneurs by those who aren't afraid of change in developing a viable business enterprise, he's in the upper echelon in Miami.

That's why Mr. Medina has been named to Best of Miami for forging a career as one of South Florida's most successful entrepreneurs. He was nominated by Bob Fittz, president of the Gold Coast Venture Capital Association.

By now, Mr. Medina's story is familiar: Born in Cuba; came to Miami as a boy with his parents; earned an accounting degree; worked as an accountant. Then he broke away, started a consulting firm, and later founded another company — Terremark Worldwide — in 1980. And the rest is business folklore.

Terremark was a commercial real estate company that constructed office buildings and did infrastructure projects. Under his leadership, the firm didn't shy from change, transitioning some 15 years later to the tech sector.

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During the "dot-com" era, Terremark morphed into an information technology company, including the NAP (Network Access Point) of the Americas, a big box-like building downtown that houses a large data center and Internet exchange point, handling online traffic for much of the world.

"In the mid '90s, I started building the infrastructure of telecommunication companies," Mr. Medina recalled in a 2009 interview, explaining the transition to tech.

"We built a building, and then we rented out the space to telecommunication companies. I started building more of those in the late '90s and that is when the company's focus started shifting to the telecommunications and Internet side of the business."

By 2011, with Terremark's stock publicly trading on the NASDAQ stock exchange and Mr. Medina running the business as founder, chairman of the board, and CEO, the company had caught the eye of telecom-

munications giant Verizon Communications.

Verizon bought the company that year in a deal valued at \$1.4 billion. Mr. Medina exited the company, reportedly receiving \$83 million from the acquisition.

Like any good entrepreneur, Mr. Medina didn't stop there. He founded Medina Capital, a growth equity investment firm that specializes in helping information technology companies.

Based on Brickell Key, the firm's management team and advisory board is loaded with former Terremark executives.

"We invest between \$10 million to \$20 million in each our portfolio companies," the firm's website states. "We hold a majority equity interest in our target companies or, alternatively, a significant minority interest in target companies."

One of Mr. Medina's latest efforts is eMerge Americas, an annual tech conference in Miami that drew more than 5,000 people last month. The event featured speakers talking about everything from international entrepreneurship to emerging medical technologies.

Mr. Medina wants to boost the profile of Miami's startup scene and position it as a place for Latin American firms seeking to get a foothold in the U.S.

"If you're a Latin American company and you go to Boston or New York, there's a prejudice," he told the conference. "In Miami you feel more at home. You have the same culture."

Another veteran of South Florida's entrepreneurial scene is **Jack Karabees**. His career hasn't been as high profile as Mr. Medina's, but he's wore

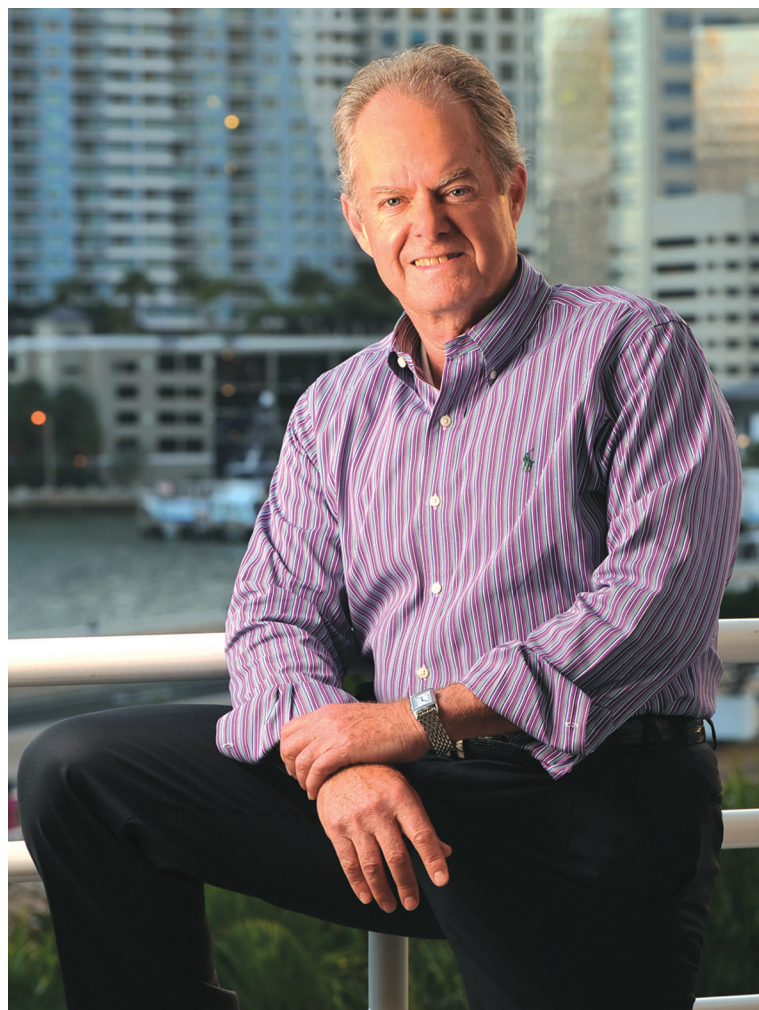


Photo by Parente-Ramirez Photography

Manny Medina spearheaded the eMerge Americas tech conference.

many hats and worn them well — mostly in the tech field.

For his record of managing, marketing, raising money and making sales for a variety of innovative businesses through the years, he was nominated by Mr. Fittz.

Today, Mr. Karabees is executive vice president of sales and marketing for itopia, an information technology management and services firm based downtown and founded in 2012 by Jonathan Lieberman, the firm's president and CEO.

Mr. Karabees was recruited to join itopia last year — the latest stop in a colorful career that began in South Florida in 1979 and later led him to Southern California and back.

"If there's a tread through everything I've done, it is disruptive technology," he explained. "By disruptive technology, I mean it's something that fundamentally changes the way people do something."

Early in his career, Mr. Karabees was vice president of sales and marketing at Data Net in Miramar, where he worked for 12 years.

In 1999, he joined eLabor, a workforce management services company in Los Angeles, where he also had the title of senior vice president of sales and marketing.

Later, Mr. Karabees joined Hudson Capital, a \$1 billion-plus investment and development firm in Miami, where he was execu-

tive vice president.

Beginning in 2008, when he returned full-time to South Florida, he had a stint in the investment banking arena as principal and managing director of corporate finance for CP Capital Securities, a technology and health care-oriented investment banking firm with an office in the Brickell financial district.

"I was raising money for entrepreneurial startup companies," he said.

In 2011, he joined Consult A Doctor, a health care technology and services company in South Florida specializing in "telemedicine," which uses telecommunications and information technology to provide clinical health care from a distance.

He started as the company's vice president of sales and marketing and became president and CEO before departing for itopia.

The key to selling a product or service to another business, Mr. Karabees said, is simple — it should make functioning easier or more profitable.

"It must be something that works," he explained. "It must be something that's real."

Reflecting on his success, he modestly added: "It's been a living."

What keeps him going onto new projects and challenges is something a bit more intriguing.

"It's the energy of it," he said, "the day-to-day excitement."

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A Singular Voice in an Evolving City

Role models guided tourism growth, built artistic offerings

By Lidia Dinkova

After years of being a tourism destination and now claiming its spot in the global scene as a home to art and culture, Miami-Dade's success in these realms is largely owed to community role models who pushed for tourism growth and built up the area's artistic offerings.

About 40 years ago, **Arthur Hertz**, now chairman and chief executive officer of Wometco Enterprises Inc., was among those who pushed for the private sector to have a hand in growing state tourism. And about two years ago, **Lourdes Lopez** came back to South Florida to lead Miami City Ballet as artistic director, not only bringing her 40 years of experience to the company but also introducing premier performances that challenge audiences and dancers alike.

"We talk a lot about the talent drain in Miami, so she is a great example of someone who was super talented, left Miami, had an amazing career and now is back investing her time, her passion, her energy in this community," said Stephanie Ansin, Miami Theater Center founder and artistic director, who nominated Ms. Lopez.

Under Ms. Lopez's direction during the 2013-14 season, Miami City Ballet premiered four performances: Ballet dancer and choreographer Nacho Duato's "Jardi Tancat," which barefoot ballet dancers performed to Spanish music; contemporary ballet choreographer Christopher Wheeldon's "Polyphonia;" Jerome Robbins' "West Side Story Suite;" and George Balanchine's "Episodes," Ms. Lopez said.

"It has several intentions," Ms. Lopez told Miami Today regarding why she introduced new pieces. "One was to really challenge the audience.... It's also to challenge the dancers, because once you challenge the dancers, you are really going to create better performances....



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Arthur Hertz pushed for the private sector to play a major role in building up Florida's tourism industry.

Once we get them [the audience] into the seats and the curtain goes up, I am so convinced that the art form can relate to so many people."

After retiring as soloist and principal dancer at the New York City Ballet, Ms. Lopez was a cultural arts reporter for New York's WNBC-TV, a full-time senior faculty member at New York's Ballet Academy East and served on the dance faculty at Barnard College. She is also co-founder of New York-based dance company Morphoses, which fosters collaboration between dance and other art forms. She is the first artist elected to The Ford Foundation's board of trustees.

Mr. Hertz, too, is a pioneer, but in different aspects.

"Art Hertz was pushing, 'We've got to increase tourism,'" said José K. Fuentes, senior government relations consultant at Becker & Poliakoff and chairman of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's

Government Affairs Group, who nominated Mr. Hertz. "There was always a pushback, because Miami wanted to be this quiet little place."

But, Mr. Fuentes added, it was through the vision of people like Mr. Hertz that Miami-Dade became a tourism destination as

well as a place where diversity is integrated.

"When the Cuban community came to this area, he embraced them getting involved in the business community," Mr. Fuentes said. "I could say, 'Oh, I like this politician.' But you know what? Not one of these



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Lourdes Lopez returned to Miami, introduced premier performances.

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ROLE MODELS

politicians would be here if it wasn't for people like Art Hertz who changed the scene of Miami, making it more inclusive.... Twenty or 30 years from now, I want to be someone like Art Hertz, who has made a difference in this community."

Mr. Hertz is co-founder, past chairman and member emeritus of The Florida Commission on Tourism, a public-private organization that deals with tourism.

When Mr. Hertz got involved, tourism growth was handled by public entities, he said. Today, tourism is a vital state industry that, Mr. Hertz said, has kept Florida from introducing an income tax.

"The sales tax that tourism generates is sufficient to keep us from having an income tax," he said.

Mr. Hertz's civic involvement is vast. Among his titles: chairman of the University of Miami Hospital board of governors, member of the University of Miami board of trustees, member of the Miami Parking Authority and Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce trustee.

His company, Wometco Enterprises, owned Marine Exhibition Corp., the Miami Seaquarium owner and operator that this year sold all of its stock to a Spanish-based company.

Other leadres were also cited. Washington Economic Group Founder and Principal J. Antonio Villamil nominated former Florida International University president Dr. **Modesto Maidique**. Beacon Council President and Chief Executive Officer Larry Williams nominated both **Ron Shuffield**, president and CEO of Esslinger, Wooten, Maxwell Inc. Realtors, and **Jaret L. Davis**, co-managing shareholder of Greenberg Taurig's Miami office.

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Developer, retired university president, mayor stuck with it

BY LIDIA DINKOVA

As Miami-Dade's landscape shifts to multi-story luxury condominiums, the developers who restore the existing landscape — such as two-story Little Havana buildings — are people who have shaped the community over the years.

Miami Dade College history professor Paul George calls **Bill Fuller**, co-founder and co-managing partner of Barlington Group, a “developer with a conscience.”

“He has a real streak of idealism in him,” Mr. George said. “He has a vision, and his vision is he wants to bring back areas that are the oldest neighborhoods in Miami.... He has a love affair with Miami and really wants to enhance it.”

Instead of developing condominiums on land where older structures used to be, Mr. Fuller buys and restores the older structures — and infuses the neighborhood's history into the businesses that set up shop.

What's now an 8,000-square-foot building housing 15 artists' studios and artwork retail space used to be a hardware company's showroom developed in 1939, Mr. Fuller told Miami Today. The building's new name — Futurama — pays homage to the Capo family-owned Futurama furniture store that used to serve customers at 15th Avenue and Calle Ocho, he said.

The case is similar with the Ball & Chain bar, soon to open in the same Calle Ocho building, where between 1935 and 1957 a bar by that name hosted the likes of jazz singer Billie Holiday, Mr. Fuller said. Then there's Mansini's Pizza House at Southwest Fifth Street and 12th Avenue. The name was inspired by a former restaurant, Mansene's, that once served hot spaghetti in a nearby Little Havana building.

A couple of blocks from Mansini's is the Tower Hotel. Now an apartment building, it will soon return to its original use as a hotel complete with a



Photos by Maxine Usdan

Bill Fuller, who “has a real streak of idealism in him,” in front of one current renovation, the Ball & Chain.

pool, Mr. Fuller said.

“We painstakingly try to preserve every aspect of a property,” Mr. Fuller said, referring to the buildings' architecture. “Even though a property is not deemed historic, we still put ourselves through the rigor to make sure that we will adhere to the historical remodeling.”

For Mr. Fuller it's not just

about remodeling the buildings, it's about remodeling the neighborhood.

“He is bringing in the neighborhoods that traditionally haven't had this variety of businesses, he has brought in other types of businesses,” Mr. George said.

The Tower Hotel will give the about 3 million visitors who

come to Little Havana annually a place to stay overnight, Mr. Fuller said.

“In the case of the pizza house, we developed the concept,” he said. “There are just certain types of businesses that we think have long-term impacts.... We don't have a great pizza restaurant in the neighborhood. We are the owners of



Mayor Tomás Regalado “has personally gotten involved in zoning and permitting” to keep them moving.

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STICKING WITH IT

it, and we created the concept of it, and people work for us and carry out our vision.”

Part of the building that houses the pizza place is rented out to a cake shop and a dance studio.

“We like to focus on drawing in the... entrepreneurs,” Mr. Fuller said.

Two tattoo parlors have set up shop in Little Havana, one on Southwest Sixth Street and 12th Avenue and another on Southwest 26th Avenue and Eighth Street, he said.

“I love their presence in the neighborhood. We want to be a neighborhood that has something for everyone,” Mr. Fuller said, adding that his firm's work in Little Havana started in 2002. “Ultimately, it's about creating a great community.”

The Barlington Group's development also stretches to Brickell and downtown, Mr. Fuller said.

Aside from developers, education and political leaders have also helped shape Miami-Dade through the years.

Virginia Jacko, president and CEO of the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, said former Barry University president of 23 years Sister **Jeanne O'Laughlin** and Miami Mayor **Tomás Regalado** have shaped the community.

Mayor Regalado not only reaches out to everyone, “whether they are blind, whether they are rich, whether they are poor, whether they are disabled,” but he also pushes projects that sometimes get bogged down in permitting, Ms. Jacko said.

“He is proactive,” Ms. Jacko said. “He has personally gotten involved in zoning and permitting to see that the process doesn't get bogged down.”

Sister O'Laughlin, too, is proactive.

When the Detroit native assumed the university presidency, she earned the nickname “nun on the run” for her fundraising work, according to Barry's website. Under her leadership, Barry University purchased and accredited its Orlando School of Law and initiated the Schools of Professional and Career Education, Computer Science, Biological and Biomedical Science, and Podiatric Medicine.

Now, she holds the title of Barry University president emeritus.

“She began as a high-school math and science teacher. Women back then, they usually weren't math and science teachers,” Ms. Jacko said. “She grew and progressed and ultimately became a faculty member and president and chancellor of Barry University.... She turned Barry University from a very small entity with a few thousand students to many thousand students.”



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Gables museum preserving culture

By NINA LINCOFF

Although it's a relatively new institution having just opened its doors in 2011, the **Coral Gables Museum** is taking a look back on the history of the city and the Greater Miami area.

By highlighting the play between historic and new architecture, working with schools throughout the county, partnering with sister cities around the world and featuring exhibits that play off of current events, the museum at 285 Aragon Ave. is a new addition to a historic place, and is this year's nominee for Best of Miami in preserving and promoting culture and history.

But exhibiting and highlighting the culture and history of Greater Miami within the walls of the museum isn't the only reason for its nomination. The Coral Gables Museum and its staff do a great job of reaching out to the community through weekly walking tours and quarterly bicycle rides, as well as coordinating museum visits with Miami-Dade County schools.

"I've been working the many museums through the Miami Museum Magnet program, and I've been working with the Coral Gables Museum since 2006, when they were still formulating the museum," said nominator Rosemarie Wolfson, lead teacher for Museum Magnet programs at Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Through partnering with the



museum, Miami-Dade County public school children get great exposure to the history of Coral Gables and learn how to read the different sorts of architectural symbols available to them through the city. The museum itself is housed in an old police and fire station, so a visit to the museum is like taking tour back through time, Ms. Wolfson said.

One reason the museum is so effective is its director, Christine Rupp, whose attention to detail and dedication to promoting the history of the area is part of the reason for the museum's success, Ms. Wolfson said. "When I talk about the Coral Gables Museum, I'm really talking about Chris."

"I've been taking groups of kids there for three or four years, and I think it's very beneficial because it enables the students to visit a historical building and focus on the historic site of an early fire station," said Gerry Slattery, a first grade teacher at W.J. Bryan Elementary School. "They get to see the architectural elements of the building and they get a better understanding of what came before. That helps them to grasp the present day technological advances that they have today,"

Ms. Slattery said.

The idea for a Coral Gables Museum developed in the early 2000s, when the private non-profit organization the Museum Corp. was founded. The museum itself leases its building from the City of Coral Gables. Ms. Rupp was hired as the first employee a few years later.

"The Coral Gables Museum, by presenting these exhibits that focus on much more than Coral Gables and by creating programs around those exhibitions, we're able to explain what we're about and our place in the world," Ms. Rupp said. "Our mission is to focus on architecture, urban design and planning, and preservation, both architectural and environmental," she said.

The focus of the museum is particularly interesting to children because of the building's history, Ms. Rupp said. The museum leases in a city-owned space, taking advantage of its history. The museum is in the original police and fire station for the city, and remnants of the building's previous use linger.

There are old jail cells to visit, old grates that have been repurposed, as well as ornamental sculpture that provides a history of place. When kids come to the museum, they learn how to read architectural symbols.

They also get to meet today's firemen and policemen, and are sometimes shown the new stations. That contrast between old



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Christine Rupp, now the director, was the museum's first employee.

and new is invaluable.

"We engage the kids in a building, which gives them a sense as to why it's important to preserve historic buildings," Ms. Rupp said.

"It's very important in today's education community, especially with public schools, that you have this kind of support," Ms. Wolfson said.

"The thing that is so unique about Chris is that she'll find people in the community or organizations in the community that have a passion for historic buildings, and she'll find ways to fund and make trips around them happen," Ms. Wolfson said.

However, the museum doesn't just cater to school children. Saturday walking tours invite any and all to walk around the city and highlight historic and new architectural gems. Each bicycle tour is centered on a certain theme like local flora. Bicycle tours range from 40 to 150 people depending on the weather, and while they aren't for those looking to get a

workout, they are a great family activity, Ms. Rupp said.

A few challenges, however, face the fledgling museum. At the moment, the museum gets around \$100,000 in grants from the city and its operating budget is closer to \$600,000. Typically, a museum is almost 50% funded by local government, Ms. Rupp said.

"Coral Gables is always thought of as a very affluent community, but that is incorrect," she said. Moving forward, getting more robust funding will be a priority.

After just three years, however, people already think of the museum as being part of the city's landscape.

"There is nothing that makes me feel happier than when we hear that people cannot imagine the city without the museum. And that just makes us smile, because that's what we're all about," Ms. Rupp said. "It's part and parcel of the community, and our job is to make sure that they're proud of the museum."

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School board member for 18 years, now board chairman...

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

Our future rests in the hands of those bright young boys and girls chit-chatting in today's classrooms.

Education is a key that unlocks so many doors, and those men and women who devote

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THOUGHT LEADERS

their lives to providing a quality education ought to be heralded

for passing the torch.

Perla Tabares Hantman, longtime member and current chair of the School Board of Miami-Dade County is one of those thought leaders whose academic endeavors and service to our youth deserves special recognition.

Ms. Hantman was nominated for this year's Best of Miami by Dr. Elaine Liftin, president and executive director of the Council for Educational Change.

"She has worked tirelessly for 18 years on the Miami-Dade County School Board, and has been chairperson for seven

years," said Ms. Liftin.

Ms. Hantman's years of public service have helped to advance the area's public schools, keeping them competitive and successful.

"Her creative policy efforts have been instrumental in moving the school district forward," said Ms. Liftin.

To Ms. Hantman, knowledge is a gift.

"Public education has always been a passion of mine because I believe it is the single most important element in empowering a person to create their own destiny," said Ms. Hantman. "Once given, knowledge is a gift that can never be taken away."

The success of a city or town can be gauged, in part, by the how its schools function.

"The quality of life and economic viability of a community is inextricably linked to the quality of education provided in the public schools," Ms. Hantman said. "That is why I have committed the better part of my professional life to working for high quality schools for Florida and for Miami-Dade.

"I am humbled to be recognized for this work," she said.

Ms. Hantman saw the value of an education early in her own life, and stuck to the books.

Born in Havana, she completed high school there and attended the University of Havana. Due to political circumstances, she was forced to emigrate to the US but she continued her education at Barry University in Miami. Ms. Hantman's career in public service began with the Cuban Refugee Program of the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Later, she joined the US Foreign Service, assigned by the Department of State to the American Embassy in Mexico City.

Her vast experience was gained from years of service on prominent state boards. These included service from 1987-90 on the Florida Board of Medicine, and from 1990-96 on the Florida Board of Regents, the governing board of Florida's 10 state universities.

She was the first Hispanic woman in the US to hold the position of Regent.

Ms. Hantman is an honorary life member of the National PTA and served on the board of the South Florida Annenberg Challenge. She's also served as a trustee and member of the Executive Committee of the Florida International University Foundation Board.

It's not all been schools in Ms. Hantman's public service career. In 1999, Florida's governor appointed her to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and she is currently in her fourth term on that regional government body. She was unanimously elected vice chair in 2009 for a two-year term.

Ms. Hantman was first elected to the Miami-Dade County School Board in November 1996, representing District 4, and in 1998 and 2002 was re-elected to four-year terms without opposition.

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...cited as thought leader along with River Art Fair’s chair

She was re-elected in 2006 and in 2010 and is currently serving her fifth term. In November of 2010, 2011, 2012 and again in 2013, Ms. Hantman was elected board chair.

What’s best for the students remains at the forefront of her work.

Ms. Hantman has successfully brought numerous initiatives before the school board on student safety and well-being. Children in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 now receive more complete vision and hearing screening, the nutrition education curriculum has been strengthened, and her efforts to implement the Safe Routes to School program have been very helpful in securing more than \$9 million in federal funding for infrastructure projects.

She also helps run the Blue Ribbon Campaign to prevent child abuse and neglect, observed in Miami-Dade County Public Schools every spring.

In such a diverse area as Miami-Dade, bilingual education is vital and Ms. Hantman has been a strong supporter. Her work has helped expand these programs, which have resulted in more opportunities for students to become bilingual and biliterate.

It’s no surprise that Ms. Hantman has been honored for her public service. Over the years she has been recognized for leadership in all areas of education, and for strong advocacy for the rights of women, students and minorities.

She has even had a day named in her honor. The Town of Miami Lakes honored Ms. Hantman’s commitment to education in a resolution designating June 7, 2005, as “Perla Tabares Hantman Day.”

Another community member recognized for creative ideas and drive is **Nina Torres**, who is director of the annual Miami River Art Fair.

“Miami is fortunate to have a creative cultural thought leader in Nina Torres,” said Brett Bibeau, managing director of the Miami River Commission, who nominated her for the distinction.

In 2014, the third annual Miami River Art Fair will return to downtown’s James L. Knight Center during Art Basel week and feature more permanent art installations along the public riverwalk.

Ms. Torres is the main force behind this event that helps elevate the community. In addition, Ms. Torres frequently leads art walks along the public riverwalk, bringing continued attention to one of the city’s refreshing locales.

“Art and culture are engines for community enhancement, and thankfully Ms. Torres strongly supports the improvements being implemented by the public and private sectors along the Miami River District,” said Mr. Bibeau.

For more than 20 years, Ms. Torres has been participating in the international art market, specializing in Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art.



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Perla Tabares Hantman talks with a student at Goleman Senior High.

She has curated and overseen more than 200 exhibitions at international museums, galleries and biennials.

The Miami River Art Fair has at its core the revitalization efforts of the Lower Miami River. This event brings the boom of



Nina Torres is the main force behind the annual Miami River Art Fair.

tourism during Miami’s peak winter art fair season to downtown and Brickell, and prominently features the Miami River

as the focus of its programming and events.

This year’s Miami River Art Fair is set for Dec. 4-7.

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Doctors hailed for improving the health of poor, uninsured

BY SCOTT BLAKE

The work that Dr. **Nilda Soto** and Dr. **Tina Carroll-Scott** do serving the poor and uninsured is far removed from the complicated, big-money world of health care and health care insurance, but their efforts haven't gone unnoticed.

As medical director and CEO of the Open Door Health Center in Homestead, Dr. Soto and her small staff typically see 40 to 50 patients a day, including farm workers.

Their mission statement is decidedly uncomplicated: "Open Door Health Center is a primary healthcare center dedicated to serving the uninsured poor of South Dade at no cost to them."

Dr. Carroll-Scott has a very similar mission. As medical director of the South Miami Children's Clinic, she and her staff provide health care and health education to South Miami's uninsured children and young people.

The clinic sums up its mission with a quote from Winston Churchill: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

Dr. Soto and Dr. Carroll-Scott have been named to this year's "Best of Miami" for their leadership and dedication to expanding and improving health and medicine. They were nominated by Baptist Health South Florida President and CEO Brian Keeley, who had this to say:

"I commend (Dr. Soto and Dr. Carroll-Scott) for their work in the South Florida community that provides quality care to the underserved," Mr. Keeley said.

"Their timeless devotion to caring for individuals, children and families in times of need – and in keeping them well – makes a real difference in our community."

Both the health center and the



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Dr. Nilda Soto takes the blood pressure of patient Medina McCardoe as Florida State University College of Medicine medical student Ginger Baker watches her at the Open Door Health Center in Homestead.

clinic were founded and continue to operate with contributions, from individuals to community organizations, and with in-kind services provided by physicians and healthcare companies.

Dr. Soto has run the health center since it opened in February 2001. She came from humble beginnings in Puerto Rico, she recalled, growing up in a wooden house "with barely a floor" near a sugar cane field.

She graduated from medical school there and later came to the U.S. She's been practicing medicine in southern Miami-

Dade since 1987.

"I am one of them," she said about her patients. "I came from the same background. I know how privileged I am."

"It's not just about money," she added. "It's about changing people's lives."

Dr. Carroll-Scott said she feels the same way. Her clinic sees many underprivileged African-American youngsters, some who come from troubled homes.

She has been heading the clinic since it opened in March 2007. Prior to that, she was working at a medical practice in

tony Bal Harbour.

However, she felt she was losing touch with why she originally got into medicine – to help the underserved. So when the opportunity arose to lead the clinic, she took it.

"It was a blessing for me," she said, adding about the clinic and its mission: "This is my baby. I'm personally invested in its success."

Other "Best of Miami" nominees in health care

Dr. **Steven Falcone** of the University of Miami Health System, or UHealth, went to undergraduate and medical school at

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2014

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

the university and has since built a strong professional reputation there as both a physician and a leader on the business side of health care.

"Tireless" is one word that Jackson Health System President and CEO Carlos Migoya uses to describe Dr. Falcone.

"Steve Falcone distinguishes himself as a leader, as a partner, and as a thoughtful defender of world-class health care for everyone in Miami-Dade County," Mr. Migoya said in nominating Dr. Falcone, who specializes in radiology and neuroradiology.

"The field of medicine and the business of hospitals are changing like a thrill ride: fast, unpredictable, and sometimes scary," Mr. Migoya added. "Dr. Falcone is the calm eye in that storm's center."

He described Dr. Falcone as "a top-rate" clinician who also thrives as a "transformative" organizational leader.

"His responsibilities at the University of Miami are vast, but he wears them lightly and creates the true collegiality necessary for long-term partnerships to thrive," Mr. Migoya said. "He has helped both Jackson and UM look past their own parochial interests and stay focused on our shared community mission."

About Dr. Falcone, he added: "He has played a pivotal role in making Miami a growing global center for some of the world's most innovative specialized care in areas such as trauma, neurosurgery, pediatrics and organ transplant."

"In every sense of the word, we are a healthier place because of Steve's contributions."

Don Steigman is making his mark in health care in a different way. As executive vice president and chief operating officer of the county-owned Jackson Health System, Mr. Steigman has played a key role in a dramatic financial turnaround for the organization.

The Jackson system has generated an operating surplus for the last two years and is the beneficiary of \$830 million in general obligation bonds that will be used for capital renewal and expansion of Jackson's network of facilities.

For such reasons, he was nominated by Joe Natoli, interim chief operating officer at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and UHealth.

From the administrative side, Mr. Steigman looks for ways to improve health care, said Mr. Natoli, also the university's senior vice president for business and finance and chief financial officer.

He said: "Don has partnered on... best-in-class programs including the Miami Transplant Institute and The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, in addition to renowned services provided at the Ryder Trauma Center and Holtz Children's Hospital."

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Three play vital roles in developing our international trade

BY SCOTT BLAKE

Bill Johnson self-deprecatingly said his recent appointment is as “the toilet czar” – a joking reference to the final year of his 35-year career in county government that he’ll spend as director of Miami-Dade’s Water and Sewer Department.

Actually, the self-described toilet czar has some important duties before he retires – overseeing a system that serves more than 2.6 million people that is the early stages of a \$13 billion-plus capital improvement overhaul to rehabilitate the county’s leaky, aged wastewater collection and treatment system.

Having recently departed an eight-year stint running PortMiami, Mr. Johnson still casts a big shadow over the area’s international trade industry. Prior to being the county director of the world’s busiest cruise port, he was an assistant county manager overseeing Miami International Airport.

Mr. Johnson has been named to this year’s Best of Miami for his long record of work and his passion for high-profile projects that have helped grow Miami’s international business. He was nominated by World Trade Center Miami President Charlotte Gallogly.

“In terms of making things happen, it takes a dedication,” Ms. Gallogly said in reference to Mr. Johnson, “and he has really helped further Miami’s agenda.”

During his tenure at the seaport, for example, Mr. Johnson helped launch one of the most ambitious capital development programs in its history, including a public-private partnership that built the recently completed \$1 billion-plus PortMiami tunnels.

He also oversaw expansion of new cruise brands at the port and championed plans to position PortMiami as a major cargo hub following the opening of the enlarged Panama Canal, including a deep dredging of the port’s shipping lanes to accommodate larger cargo vessels.

Related plans also included reactivating a freight rail line into the port, purchasing larger gantry cranes and improving cargo piers.

“I’ve been involved in a lot of issues through the years helping to promote economic development,” Mr. Johnson told Miami Today last week.

Aside from the airport and seaport, Mr. Johnson has been involved in key projects that have helped make Miami what it is today. Those include two downtown landmarks: the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, the city’s premier theatrical venue; and the American Airlines Arena, home of the Miami Heat,



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Jose Perez-Jones is a long-term champion for adding to trade with the Caribbean and South America.

currently pursuing its third consecutive NBA championship.

When asked in a 2012 interview when he was going to “slow down,” he flatly replied: “When I die.... I work every night. I take a briefcase home for reading. On vacation, I read. My Blackberry goes with me. You never disconnect, but to me it’s not work. I love what I do.”

Also named in this year’s Best of Miami in international business is **Chris Mangos**. Ms. Gallogly nominated him particularly for his work developing the cargo business at Miami International Airport, but he also works to develop passenger flights—the lifeblood of Miami’s tourism industry.

Mr. Mangos is the marketing division director for the Miami-Dade Aviation Department, which operates Miami International. His duties include oversight of passenger and cargo marketing programs, including air service and route development.

At Miami International, that’s a big responsibility, given the size

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2014
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

of the county-owned airport’s passenger traffic and cargo activity. Miami International handles the vast majority of air cargo shipped through Florida, while the airport ranks second in the nation in number of international passengers.

Overall, Miami International recorded 40.1 million passenger enplanements and deplanements in 2013, the fourth consecutive year of increases. The only decrease in the last decade came in 2009, when the economy bottomed out.

The same pattern largely holds true for Miami International’s air cargo business, which rose to 2.13 million tons in 2013. It also was the fourth consecutive year of increases after a slight decrease in 2008 and a sharp de-

crease in 2009.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Mr. Mangos came to Miami in 1987.

He joined the Aviation Department in 1988. Prior to his present position, he was the department’s chief of aviation marketing, chief of communications, and information officer. His past work experience included nine years at the Massachusetts Port Authority at Boston’s Logan International Airport.

Aside from his job, Mr. Mangos is a member of the International Affairs Committee of Airports Council International and is a trustee member of the International Air Cargo Association.

Also nominated this year for Best of Miami in the international business/trade category was **Jose Perez-Jones**, senior vice president of cargo shipper Seaboard Marine at PortMiami.

Ms. Gallogly said he “continues to be a champion” for growing Miami’s trade with the Caribbean and South America, in par-



Chris Mangos develops both air cargo and our passenger flights.

ticular, as an executive for Seaboard Marine – a major cargo presence at the port that continues to invest in its local operations.

In January, Seaboard Marine announced it had signed a 267,400-square-foot industrial lease renewal with a 64,000-square-foot expansion at its warehouse and office facility in Medley. And in March, the company announced it had added two new large mobile cranes at PortMiami.

Ms. Gallogly said Mr. Perez-Jones has cultivated relationships overseas that should pay off for Seaboard Marine and the port as whole once the enlarged Panama Canal opens, slated for 2016, creating the potential for Miami to draw even larger cargo vessels.

“Many of us look to his guidance [in matters involving] the import-export trade,” she said.

Born in Cuba, Mr. Perez-Jones was graduated from Miami Dade College.

His career in the maritime industry dates back to 1967. In 1983, he was one of the founding members of Seaboard Marine. As vice president of sales and marketing, he developed all sales to and from the US, Central America, South America, the Eastern Caribbean and elsewhere.

In 2001, Mr. Perez-Jones was promoted to his current position. In addition, he also has been a board member for a number of international trade organizations, including Caribbean Central American Action, Florida Free Trade Area Americas, and the Florida Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association.

Last year, Florida Gov. Rick Scott awarded him a Business Ambassador Award for making port investments a top priority in Florida and for expanding international trade opportunities through the state’s seaports, helping create job opportunities.

“I am pleased to recognize Florida leaders, such as Jose Perez-Jones,” the governor said, “who have made a big impact in creating opportunities for Florida families to succeed.”



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Bill Johnson, who has run PortMiami and Miami International Airport, speaks as Gov. Rick Scott listens.



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Bike spokesmen pedal on sustainability circuit

By Lidia Dinkova

Perhaps it's a nod to sustainability. Or perhaps it's a nod to tackling Miami-Dade's transportation woes.

This year, both nominees for Best of Miami's 'sparkplugs' category are advocates for biking as a transportation and recreation form.

Robert Ruano is co-founder and past chairman of non-profit Bike Walk Coral Gables, which promotes the accessibility of Coral Gables streets and trails to bicyclists and pedestrians, and **Tony Garcia** is a member of Bike Walk Coral Gables as well as of organizations advocating for environmentally conscious development of Miami-Dade and for biking and pedestrian-friendly county trails.

"Tony, I think, sparks change in that he has extensive knowledge about the bureaucratic process of getting things done.... He

is guiding us through some of these things that relate to grant writing all the way to what political leadership controls what and who sits on what board and what committee," said Frankie Ruiz, co-founder of Miami Marathon and chief running officer at Life Time Fitness. "That's proven to be extremely helpful, because you might have an activist but they don't know who to go to."

Mr. Ruiz nominated Mr. Garcia. The two have advocated and worked on the proposed 6-mile Ludlam Trail, a linear green space running along 67th Avenue. The company behind All Aboard Florida, a planned Miami-Orlando express rail, Florida East Coast Railway, owns the land, Mr. Ruiz said. Friends of the Ludlam Trail, a nonprofit, wants the trail to include community gardens and pedestrian as well as bike trails, according to its website.

For Mr. Garcia, it's all about



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Robert Ruano, left, president of Ecostrada, and Anthony Garcia, principal of The Street Plans Collaborative.



giving Miami-Dade residents more transportation options.

"More people choose to live here because it's an amazing place.... We shouldn't be sur-

prised there's more traffic," Mr. Garcia said. "As a community, we should have more options to get around town than just being in our car."

That includes expanding Metrorail and the public bus system, he said. He supports the proposed Baylink light-rail system that may connect downtown Miami to Miami Beach.

Another project high on Mr. Garcia's list is GreenLink, a pro-

posal to convert about 10 miles running underneath and along Metrorail from Brickell to Dadeland South stations to a walking, biking and exercise path.

Among Mr. Garcia's civic involvements: committee member of the nonprofit Friends of GreenLink, which advocates for the GreenLink project; chairman of the nonprofit Green Mobility Network, which advocates for making Miami-Dade more bike and pedestrian friendly; board member of the Urban Environment League, which advocates for environmentally conscious growth that preserves waterfront, public and historic spaces in Miami-Dade; and founder and chairman of the nonprofit Friends of the Ludlam Trail.

Mr. Garcia is the principal of The Street Plans Collaborative, an urban planning, design, and research-advocacy firm that strives to reverse suburban sprawl by creating mixed-use neighborhoods complete with public spaces.

"I get to do for a living what I do as a hobby, as an advocate," he told Miami Today.

Bike Walk Coral Gables, comprised of all volunteers including Mr. Garcia and co-founder Mr. Ruano, is as much about promoting bike and pedestrian safety as it is about promoting Coral Gables, Mr. Ruano said.

"We see it more as getting people more out on the road, teaching them the rules of how to be safe and everybody having a good time at a great place," said Mr. Ruano, a Coral Gables resident of 13 years and founder and president of Ecostrata Services, a resource, advice, application completion, general consultation and funding-development company.

Bike Walk Coral Gables organizes the annual Gables Bike Day, a street festival in the city's downtown, and monthly bike rides done in collaboration with Coral Gables Museum.

"We are very respectful of everybody on the road," Mr. Ruano said.

Bike Walk Coral Gables supports a proposed Coral Gables bike master plan.

"Ultimately, we want to make the city more bicycle friendly," he said.

"He [Mr. Ruano] is the kind of guy who is a very unassuming guy.... He is the kind of guy who people want to be around and people want to work with," said Sabadell Bank Vice President Patrick Morris, who nominated Mr. Ruano. Bike Walk Coral Gables "was an idea a couple of people had, and he was the force behind it."



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Principal, trust specialist represent well 40,000 school workers

BY NINA LINCOFF

Nearly 350,000 students attend 392 Miami-Dade County Public Schools and speak 56 languages, representing 160 countries. Working alongside those students are 40,000 employees, from teachers to janitors to counselors to coaches.

Herb Penton, resident principal at Thomas Jefferson Middle School under Project Lead Strong, and **Leo Shama**, a trust specialist at Devon-Aire K-8 Center, are just two out of 40,000. But they’re making their time in Dade schools count.

“[Mr.] Penton is an extremely committed educator for all the right reasons. He always stands for the right thing. He is an ardent supporter of students and their ability to have a chance to better themselves and their lives,” said Braddock Senior High School Principal Manuel Garcia. “I have witnessed firsthand his passion and dedication to our Public Education System... Great father, great educator and yet, better human being,” Mr. Garcia said.

A product of the Miami-Dade County public schools himself, with 21 years down as an employee of the system – five as a teacher and the rest as an assistant principal – Mr. Penton has spent most of his life in the county’s public school system. As part of this year’s six-person Project Lead Strong class, a county program that takes applicants from the 40,000 employee pool and grooms them for a year to become principal material, Mr. Penton has been to schools in all corners of Miami-Dade.

“I’ve been all over the county and it has provided me with a great point of view. Dade County is not homogenous, and there are very unique needs and issues depending on the part of the



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Miami-Dade Public Schools grad Herb Penton went on to become first a teacher and now a principal.

county that you are in,” Mr. Penton said. “Having moved around, I’ve seen them all.”

But in addition to any one problem, there are many positives. “Great educators, staff, students and parents,” Mr. Penton said. Coworkers, mentors and mentees are constant motivation, he said.

“The challenges are many. For good or bad our state has been economically impacted and hence schools have been negatively impacts,” Mr. Penton said.

“When it comes to the resources needed to address the pressing challenges in our schools, we see less today than we’ve seen in the past,” he said. While a funding drought presents its own set of challenges and the introduction of social media and smart phones onto the playground throws another curveball at students and administrators, some things have remained the same. “Committed and caring individuals who want to make a difference. It is those same characteristics that define the successful education today,” Mr. Penton said.

“When it comes to the profes-

The Best of Miami 2014 EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS

sion of teaching and making connections, it’s important to care,” Mr. Penton said. “It’s not an easy job. To teach today in a classroom is by no means easy, but it becomes a lot easier when you care and are genuinely committed.”

After many supportive teachers and coaches, Mr. Penton found himself turning to teaching and coaching himself. Making a connection with a student or a player, and helping to guide them as they grow, is one thing that drew Mr. Penton to education. And it’s what has kept him around.

“I probably wasn’t the best student in the classroom, but I was in certain situations, certain classrooms, with certain teachers, and it was in their going the extra mile, their ability to connect with students that had an impact on me,” Mr. Penton said. “And soon, I felt that I wanted to

do the same.”

Mrs. Shama is a product of a different county program that puts trust specialists, or certified clinicians, in every school. Or it used to. That program was sponsored by grants, but now with evaporating funds, school administration decides whether there are trust specialists at schools.

“I’ve been at Dade schools since 1999. My title is trust specialist, which is a dying breed,” Mrs. Shama said. And she agrees with Mr. Penton. What the schools need, she said, is more funding.

Trust specialists differ from guidance counselors, who nowadays largely deal with the academic needs of students. Having a licensed clinician in schools offers kids an outlet to express anything they may be feeling or thinking or need help with outside the realm of academics – which, if you remember middle and high school, there’s plenty of stuff that goes on outside the classroom.

For everything social and developmental that happens between kindergarten and high

school graduation, it’s nice to have a counselor at school to answer questions and offer guidance. Trust specialists are there to deal with bullying to social anxiety to mental illness and more, Mrs. Shama said. Because funding has disappeared, students who have moved on from her middle school to a high school campus still return for counseling, Mrs. Shama said.

“Mental illness is real, and we are so limited. One of the things that shocked me the most was how limited we are to provide services to children in the state of Florida,” she said. “Sometimes the only counseling these kids get in terms of mental health counseling is what they get from me.”

For Mrs. Shama, mental health education and social coping skills are part of the curriculum.

“It’s part of education. Life skills and coping skills should be an integral part of a child’s education. Especially the middle school years which are so formative,” Mrs. Shama said. “This is where kids spend the majority of their time. We see kids more than anyone else, probably more than their parents do.”

“[Mrs. Shama] can silence an entire cafeteria with just one look and still she will receive more hugs than anyone else from her students. Above and beyond doesn’t fully capture her,” said Grace Carricarte, executive director of the Ganley Foundation. “She treats them all as her kids and catches them if they are falling, with the compassion of someone whose strength supercedes expectation.”

Students spend a bulk of their waking hours at schools, and the quality of those hours is largely determined by those 40,000 Miami-Dade County Public School System employees – from teachers to janitors to counselors to coaches.

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Calixto García - Velez
Region Executive



May 30, 2014

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Banking industry leaders hailed

By Scott Blake

Since launching a new business plan in 2010, Miami-based TotalBank has done well and **Luis de la Aguilera** has been leading the charge as the bank's chief executive.

Mr. de la Aguilera joined TotalBank – part of Grupo Banco Popular Español, one of Spain's largest banking groups – in 2000 as an executive vice president. In 2009, he was appointed TotalBank's president and chief marketing officer.

Then, last year, Mr. de la Aguilera was named president and CEO shortly before the bank announced increases to its management team's responsibilities as it prepared for the second phase of its new business plan. He also has a seat on the bank's board of directors.

Currently, TotalBank ranks as the sixth-largest bank headquartered in Southeast Florida, based on regional deposits, with more than \$1.7 billion as of June 30, 2013, according to the latest statistics available from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Overall, TotalBank has \$2.5 billion in assets and 21 branches in Miami-Dade County. TotalBank also was one of 18 banks in Miami-Dade and Broward counties this year to receive a five-star rating – the highest possible – from bank rating firm BauerFinancial.

Mr. de la Aguilera deserves a

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lot of credit for TotalBank's success, said Florida Bankers Association President Alex Sanchez.

"Their lending and capacity is building Miami into the world-class city that it is," Mr. Sanchez said about TotalBank. "They're really involved in the community."

For such reasons, Mr. de la Aguilera has been named to this year's Best of Miami for being a leader in building Miami's status as a financial hub.

Mr. de la Aguilera has his fingerprints all over TotalBank, so to speak.

He oversees all business delivery channels, product development, marketing and sales initiatives within the bank. He guides and supervises the bank's main production units, including commercial, small business, real estate lending and residential mortgage lending, as well as the retail branch and international divisions.

He also oversees the bank's wealth management division, treasury and financial reporting, credit, risk, operations and information technology, international personal banking and project management office.

Mr. de la Aguilera earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the

University of Miami in 1981.

He started his banking career in 1982 at City National Bank of Miami, and followed that as vice president and commercial lender at Republic National Bank, then was senior vice president of corporate banking and assistant branch administrator at Ocean Bank.

TotalBank Chairman of the Board Jorge Rossell praised his new chief executive last fall.

The bank, Mr. Rossell said, "has been led by an experienced and proven management team. This talented team has positioned us with a solid, safe and readily scalable platform for the near future, which is why we have chosen Luis to assume the position of CEO."

In addition, Miami-based Ocean Bank President and CEO **Alfonso Macedo** has been named to this year's Best of Miami in the banking and finance industry.

Mr. Sanchez said it's hard to ignore Ocean Bank's impact on Miami through the years. A group of entrepreneurs founded the bank in 1982, using a trailer as an office and with just 14 employees. The next year, the bank moved to its current headquarters.

Today, Mr. Sanchez said, "when you drive around Miami, you can see all of the financing [of projects] that the bank has done." Mr. Macedo, he added, has been a big part of that legacy for the past decade.

A native of Venezuela, Mr.



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Luis de la Aguilera leads TotalBank, which received a five-star rating.

Macedo joined Ocean Bank in 2005 as a member of its board of directors. In 2006, he was named executive vice president of the bank's parent company, Ocean Bankshares Inc. And in 2008, he succeeded the retiring Jose Concepcion as the bank's president and CEO.

Today, Ocean Bank has \$3.3 billion in assets, 21 branches, and calls itself "the largest independent state-chartered commercial bank headquartered in Florida." It serves the tri-county market of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach.

It also ranks fourth among banks based in Southeast Florida in regional deposits, with \$2.88 billion as of June 30, 2013, according to FDIC data.

Ocean Bank notes that it has been Miami-Dade's most active lender in the US Small Business Administration's 504 loan program, which encourages economic development by providing small businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for expan-

sion and modernization.

The bank acknowledges that legacy, which has continued under Mr. Macedo's guidance:

"We have made a substantial contribution to the development of our community by financing many of the most important real estate projects in this area," its website states, "as well as granting numerous loans to local businesses."

Other nominees in this year's banking/finance category were **Jorge Triay**, president and vice chairman of the board at Miami-based First Bank of Miami; **Thomas Lumpkin**, attorney and chairman of the board at Biscayne Bank in Coconut Grove; **Eddy Arriola**, chairman of the board at Apollo Bank in Brickell; **Jorge Gonzalez**, president and CEO at City National Bank of Florida in Brickell; **John Fumagalli**, Florida president and CEO for The Northern Trust Co., also in Brickell; and **Miriam Lopez**, president and chief lending officer at Marquis Bank in Coral Gables.



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Newer Miamians make rapid contributions to community

By LIDIA DINKOVA

Eli Stiers has lived in Miami for about nine years.

In that time, he has co-drafted a bill, he has advocated for the upgrade of a Miami park, he has penned columns calling for public-transportation reform, and he has advocated for more green space as well as for safety measures for pedestrians and bicyclists.

“It’s not often that you get someone from out of town who wants to make the community better,” said Frankie Ruiz, co-founder of Miami Marathon and chief running officer at Life Time Fitness, who nominated Mr. Stiers. “He is not a directly interested party, he is not in the business of running or biking or any of that stuff. He is just a very concerned citizen.”

Mr. Stiers has advocated for the removal of a fence and upgrade of Alice C. Wainwright Park in Miami just off the Rickenbacker Causeway.

“It’s a beautiful 8-acre park. Our goal is to turn that into a really nice park with running trails,” said Mr. Stiers, a partner at Aronovitz Law.

“He is a doer,” said Mr. Ruiz. “Unless there’s really a champion [for reform]... it’s just fluff. But he turned around and next thing you know he is sending emails, setting up meetings with commissioners.”

As a transplant from Alabama, Mr. Stiers said he “grew up with the joy of the unbridled freedom just to hop on your bike. I wanted to continue to enjoy that, and I wanted others to enjoy that.”

He still remembers the first time he went jogging in Miami.

“I remember running around in Brickell and thinking, ‘I am going to get hit by a car one day,’” he said.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Eli Stiers, shown in Alice Wainwright Park, advocates to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Larry Williams, new to the Beacon Council, made quick connections.

Since then, he added, Miami has made strides as a lot more people are biking or jogging outside.

“We have a long way to go to get to being Portland, Oregon, and we may never be Portland, Oregon,” Mr. Stiers said. “But

we could be Miami, and we could be the best Miami we could be.”

Mr. Stiers co-drafted the Aaron Cohen Life Protection Act, which calls for a mandatory sentence of at least four years for leaving the scene of an accident resulting in death. This session, the Florida House and Senate passed the protection act, which was awaiting final approval from Gov. Rick Scott. The protection act is the namesake of Aaron Cohen, who in 2012 died after being struck by a hit-and-run driver on the Rickenbacker Causeway. The driver, Michele Traverso, was sentenced to about a year in jail.

Mr. Stiers said the act closes the punishment gap of leaving the scene of an accident versus staying at the scene.

“It reinforced the old, ‘Stay at the scene’,” he said. “Just be a considerate human being.”

Mr. Stiers is a board member of the Green Mobility Network, a nonprofit that strives to make

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Miami-Dade a safer place to bicycle and jog; the director of the Safe Streets Miami campaign, a project of the Green Mobility Network focusing on road safety; and a member of the City of Miami parks and recreation advisory board.

“Any true world-class city has respected the outdoors,” he said. “There’s so much more to offer the residents of Miami that people are slowly starting to discover.”

Another newcomer to Miami-Dade who has made strides advancing the county is Beacon Council President and CEO **Larry Williams**, who assumed the position in late 2013.

“Larry is trying to make sure that he is constantly in communication and trying to meet the mission and objectives of the Beacon Council,” said José K. Fuentes, chairman of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce’s Government Affairs Group and senior government relations consultant at Becker & Poliakoff. “He has been really good about working with the community. He seems to have established a really good relationship with the members of the county commission.”

According to the Beacon Council, Miami-Dade’s public-private economic development organization, Mr. Williams previously served as vice president of technology industry development for the Metro Atlanta Chamber and assistant director of international trade and economic development for the Washington State Department of Commerce.

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BEST OF MIAMI

Talented leaders helping performance arts to flourish

BY LIDIA DINKOVA

As visual art thrives in South Florida partially thanks to Art Basel and the international recognition of Wynwood and the Design District as art hubs, performance art, too, has been flourishing.

“I think the visual arts may be more noticeable because of the fairs,” said Rebekah Lanae Lengel, managing producer at the not-for-profit Miami Light Project, which supports the work of South Florida-based performance artists. “But the performance community here is strong and it is complementary, because the more creativity that exists, it continues to grow and foster in and of itself.”

Two artists who have fostered the South Florida performance-art scene, according to Ms. Lengel, are **Rosie Herrera**, artistic director and founder of Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre, and **Teo Castellanos**, artistic director and founder of Teo Castellanos D-Projects.

Both play an ambassadorial role of South Florida artistic work by touring and performing their pieces. Both incorporate a quintessential Miami flavor in their work. And both nurture young South Florida talent.

“It kind of comes down to their artistic excellence. It’s such a positive representation of what is being created here,” Ms. Lengel said.

The talent in Rosie Herrera’s dance-theater company is as diverse as South Florida. There are actors, singers and contemporary ballet dancers, and there are break dancers, drag queens and folk singers.

“Miami has a reputation for not being able to sustain dancers here for a very long time,” Ms. Herrera told Miami Today. “There’s not a lot of paid oppor-



Teo Castellanos has directed Dranoff 2 Pianos Piano Slam four years.

tunities so dancers are leaving. But I think that’s quickly changing.... A lot of people are returning because of opportunities that are available.”

Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre has about 10 core performers, Ms. Herrera said.

Aside from Miami Light Project commissions, Ms. Herrera has been commissioned by the American Dance Festival, an organization that supports modern-dance work, to do “Pity Party” and “Dining Alone.” Both are dance-theater pieces.

“I choose to live here for a reason,” Ms. Herrera said. “I am inspired by the sounds, the architecture, the energy. I think that’s reflected in the work.”

Mr. Castellanos, too, has drawn inspiration from Miami.

Watch a couple of minutes of his Miami Light Project-commissioned NE 2nd Avenue play and see the streets of Miami come to life in his solo performance.

“Other solo artists represent New York City,” Mr. Castellanos said, “and I wanted to do the same, and I really wanted to



represent my city and let the world know who we are.”

Mr. Castellanos toured and performed NE 2nd Avenue for about 10 years and in 2003 won the Fringe First Award at the annual Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland.

“Solo work,” he said, “is the hardest thing I’ve ever done as an actor.”

So he created Teo Castellanos D-Projects., a dance-theater company.

Ms. Lengel said Mr. Castellanos not only does the writing but also nurtures the young talent part of the company.

“He really trained them and built them and helped them really foster their own artistic careers and identities as artists... because he is a teacher and a leader,” she said. “When you’ve got those traits of a leader and an educa-



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Joseph Adler is cited for helping to expand a permanent talent base.

tor, it’s something that permeates the work that you do.”

Mr. Castellanos coaches Miami-based Tigertail Productions’ WordSpeak team comprised of several teens who participate in the national-poetry competition Brave New Voices, and he directs Piano Slam, an annual event produced by The Dranoff International 2 Piano Foundation.

Piano Slam mixes two classical pianists, a professional poet, a hip-hop DJ, dancers, and about 17 middle and high school students for a performance at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts.

“They [the students] are chosen only on the merits of their writing, which means that they aren’t necessarily great performers or that they feel comfortable in front of people,” Mr. Castellanos said. “So they learn a lot in a week.”

From artists like Ms. Herrera and Mr. Castellanos to the young talent they foster, **Joseph Adler** had good reason to say that “things are in a Renaissance period in South Florida for the arts.”

“The local arts community is

greatly indebted to him for the many years of consistent workforce opportunities he has created to help sustain and expand our local and permanent talent base,” said Jeffrey S. Hodgson, New World School of the Arts provost, who nominated Mr. Adler.

Since he took over GablesStage about 16 years ago, Mr. Adler has created a core audience.

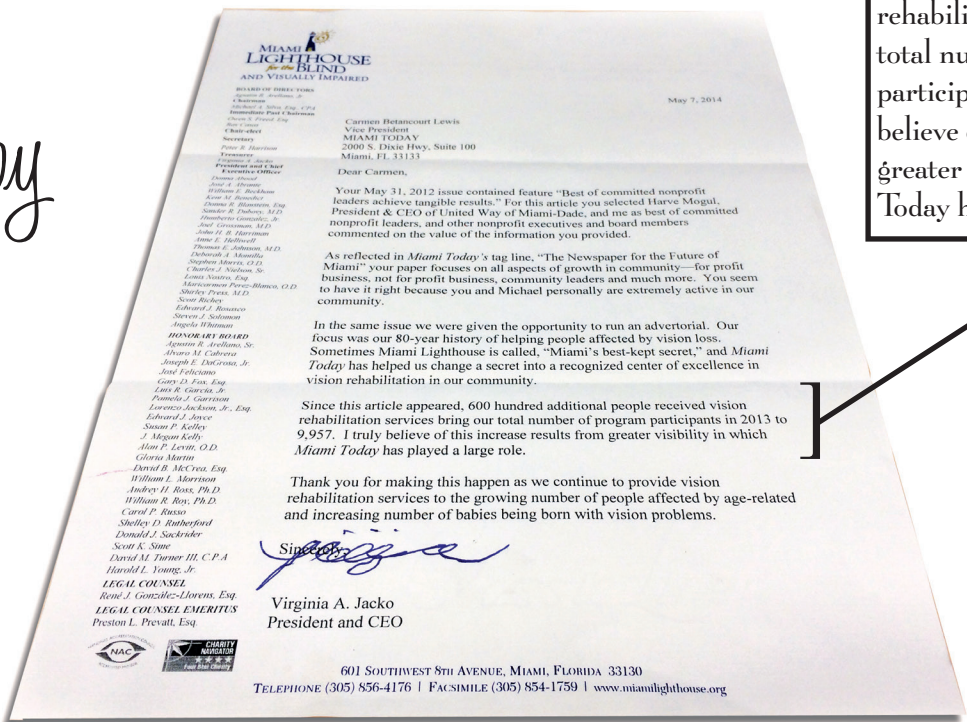
“Most of the time, the viewers describe us as ‘cutting edge,’ whatever that means,” he said. “I suspect it means that people will see on our stage what they would in real life.”

The theater is now showing Christopher Durang’s “Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike,” “a contemporary satire of [Anton] Chekhov,” and then will present Samuel Hunter’s “The Whale,” “a comic and touching play about a grossly overweight man,” Mr. Adler said.

“I love theater, so the opportunity to devote all my time in theater is so exciting,” Mr. Adler said. “I am excited about doing what I do, and I am as excited as when I started way back when.”

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Since this article appeared, 600 additional people received vision rehabilitation services bring our total number of program participants in 2013 to 9,957. I truly believe of this increase results from greater visibility in which Miami Today has played a large role.

Letter from Virginia Jacko, President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The opinions of these individuals are impartial and from the heart.



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Visioning the Future of Miami-Dade County's Public Transportation



The Transportation Summit brought the Miami-Dade community together to discuss a shared vision for the future of public transportation in our County. The citizens, transportation professionals and community leaders who participated in this event and the follow up Transportation Summit Community Forum demonstrated widespread demand and support for increased investment in public transportation by offering new mode choices, greater mobility solutions and innovative financing methods.

The Transportation Summit is one of the ways in which the Citizen's Independent Transportation Trust encourages discussions that aid in moving towards a vision for a comprehensive and coordinated public transportation system. Plans are underway for the 2014 Transportation Summit.



Information on the Report on Proceedings for the Transportation Summit, the Transportation Summit Community Forum, as well as the Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust and the People's Transportation Plan are available online at www.miamidade.gov/citt, by phone at 305-375-1357 or email at citt@miamidade.gov.

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BEST OF MIAMI

Miami leaders take positions on the national, global stages

BY SCOTT BLAKE

A shopkeeper's son; a Cuban immigrant; a college dropout; an Army paratrooper; an insurance salesman—**Miguel “Mike” Fernandez** has been all of those things. He's also known as Florida's newest billionaire.

Maybe that's what makes his story so compelling: Mr. Fernandez has done life the hard way, but now he makes it seem easy. From humble beginnings, he has developed a reputation beyond his hometown of Miami as one of Florida's most successful entrepreneurs, mainly in the health care field.

Mr. Fernandez has been named to this year's Best of Miami among businesspeople whose accomplishments transcend local fame and are known on the national stage.

"He is just a driven individual who has accomplished so much in his life and his businesses," said Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Barry Johnson, who nominated Mr. Fernandez.

After an early business failure, Mr. Fernandez put together a string of profitable ventures, building health care companies, selling them, starting again, and selling again. As of last year, he has had 11 companies.

In 2005, he started private equity firm MBF Healthcare Partners in Coral Gables. The firm's portfolio includes Navarro Discount Pharmacy and Simply Healthcare Plans. Simply Healthcare includes Clear Health, a partnership with the University of Miami and NBA Hall of Famer Earvin "Magic" Johnson that provides services to the HIV/AIDS population in South Florida and beyond.

In a 2012 interview with Miami Today, Mr. Fernandez spoke about his approach:

"When I was freshman in college, my counselor pulled me aside and said: 'Look, I need to talk to you. You should be thinking about a career as a policeman or a fireman because you're highly undisciplined. You need structure. And business class, you know, this is the wrong place for you.'

"If I had allowed that well-intentioned, well-educated professor to define me, I would have been a miserable, unhappy



Developer Armando Codina takes prominent roles on the boards of AMR Corp. and The Home Depot.

individual. Today, I'm as happy as they come. And I continue to do what I do, and go against the grain whenever I can."

Mr. Fernandez also has a political side. In 2012, according to reports, he donated \$1 million to Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's campaign and also hosted a fundraiser for Mr. Romney at his home in Coral Gables. And, last year, Mr. Fernandez donated \$1 million to Republican Florida Gov. Rick Scott.

About Mr. Fernandez, Mr. Johnson said: "He's definitely a 'rock star' in our town and is known nationally."

Another Cuban-born Miami power broker is **Armando Codina**, whose reputation extends to the national stage. "He's a very interesting person," said Mr. Johnson, who nominated him. "He's known nationally as a real leader."

Mr. Codina has had a close relationship with the Bush family since George Bush Sr.'s unsuccessful 1980 campaign for the Republican presidential nomination. In the early 1980s, Mr. Codina reportedly gave future Florida Gov. Jeb Bush his first job in Miami.

However, it's in real estate where Mr. Codina has made much of his fortune. In 1979, he founded the Codina Group, a South Florida-based commercial real estate firm. Under his leadership, the firm grew to be



Stuart Miller grew homebuilder Lennar Corp.'s national stature.

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commercial real estate company.

In 2006, Mr. Codina merged his firm with Flagler Development Group, part of Florida East Coast Industries, which was sold the next year to Fortress Investment Group.

In addition, he served as chairman of Flagler, a full-service commercial real estate firm based in Coral Gables. The company's portfolio spanned more than 12 million square feet of Class-A office and industrial space throughout Florida.

"Most of his focus has been on real estate projects. Most have been commercial projects," Mr. Johnson said. "But he's now doing residential."

In 2009, Mr. Codina formed Codina Partners, a real estate and development firm in Coral Gables. The firm's portfolio includes mixed-use projects, commercial buildings and other in-



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Miguel “Mike” Fernandez founded and heads MBF Healthcare Partners, which holds multiple companies.

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He then returned to the company with which he had grown up. From 1982 to 1997, he served as an officer and then vice president at Lennar.

When his father died in 1997, Mr. Miller became the company's president and CEO. That same year, he spun off the company's commercial real estate and management operations into LNR Property Corp.

Mr. Johnson said Mr. Miller helped build Lennar into a company with a national reputation, yet one that remains "very bullish" on the Miami market where it got started.

Under his leadership, Lennar became known for rapidly acquiring small house-building companies and successfully turning those acquisitions into viable branches of Lennar.

Also during his tenure, the company branched out into all aspects of construction services: house construction and sales, land development, mortgage financing, title insurance, closing services, insurance agency services, high-speed Internet access, cable television, and alarm installation and monitoring services.

In 2000, Forbes magazine named Mr. Miller to its America's Most Powerful People list.

Also receiving nominations for this year's Best of Miami category for local businessmen with national reach were **Robert Sanchez**, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Ryder System, a Medley-based transportation and supply chain management solutions company; and **Brian Keeley**, president and chief executive officer of Baptist Health South Florida, the region's largest not-for-profit health care organization.



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Ecologist with Everglades Foundation advances sciences

BY NINA LINCOFF

Where does the water for one-third of Floridians come from? Where are nearly 70 endangered species housed? If you’re still unsure, here’s an easier one: where is the only place in the world that the American alligator and the American crocodile co-exist?

What is, the Everglades? The 8 million acre ecosystem in South Florida provides a wealth of resources from educational to environmental, but even a national park the size of the Everglades needs help. Which is where **Stephen Davis**, Ph.D., a wetlands ecologist with the Everglades Foundation, comes in.

The Best of Miami nominee in advancing the sciences is positioned perfectly between the realms of research and outreach. His main directive at this point is to communicate the wonders of and the threats to the Everglades to anyone and everyone who will listen. From business leaders to school children to other scientists, Mr. Davis hopes to help explain and answer questions about one of Florida’s unique resources.

“One of the things that I really enjoy most is being able to translate what I do and why the Everglades are important and what



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Ecologist Stephen Davis is working to communicate to all the wonders of, and threats to, the Everglades.

we can do to restore it to everyone willing to listen, to the government, to Congress people and their staff, business leaders in the Miami community,” Mr. Davis said. “It’s just been great to interact with people at all levels.”

The challenges facing the Everglades today, and in the future, such as sea level rise, changing temperatures and coastal flooding require more awareness of

just how integral the ecosystem is to the lives of South Floridians. Communicating those pressing matters to a variety of people means that with every tour of the park, at every speaking engagement and during every interview, the language Mr. Davis uses changes slightly to connect to his audience.

“The terminology and the angle at which you try to connect them to the ecosystem is all in

some sense dependent upon what they do and how they’re connected,” Mr. Davis said. “If they’re fisherman you have a pretty easy connection to make. If they’re a developer you need to convey to them that the Everglades represents all of our water supply in South Florida. With further development we need to be thinking about restoring the ecosystem so we can ensure a sustainable water supply into the future.”

Taking hard science and turning it into an engaging narrative isn’t only the purview of Mr. Davis and the Everglades Foundation. Although he is new to the Miami science scene, Eldredge “Biff” Bermingham, chief science officer of the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, recognizes Mr. Davis’ importance to Greater Miami and the environment surrounding Everglade’s discussion.

Mr. Bermingham’s introduction to Mr. Davis started not in a national park or even outdoors, but at Coral Bagels. Amidst lox, pickled herring and whitefish – not to mention bagels – Mr. Bermingham’s lack of knowledge about Marjorie Stoneman Douglas was corrected by David Lawrence, former publisher of the Miami Herald, who accompanied him on a trip to the Everglades, where as it turned out, Mr. Davis was there to greet as a tour guide.

“Steve presented a masterful overview of the Everglades and the challenges that man has imposed on its ecosystem function, running the gamut from excess phosphorous to insufficient water flow,” Mr. Bermingham said.

One of the primary roles of the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science is to represent science for a broad community of visitors, and a huge part of that is Greater Miami’s “place between the Everglades and the Gulf Stream and just north of Florida Reef. These three ecosystems are remarkable treasures and drive the prosperity of South Florida; they are also globally celebrated features of our planet,” Mr. Bermingham said.

Being able to communicate the importance of those three ecosystems to Greater Miami in a

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LEADERS IN SCIENCE

way that engages and keeps visitors interested long after they dust off the dirt and return home is paramount to maintenance and restoration.

Mr. Davis does just that by combining complex science with an engaging narrative that anyone can understand, Mr. Bermingham said. Mr. Davis has worked closely with the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science on its “River of Grass” exhibit in the new museum location at 1075 Biscayne Blvd., advising on the accuracy of the narrative the museum will use to give visitors a glimpse of the Everglades.

Finding the sweet spot when explaining the implications of peat collapse on water supply and why the lifetime of a saw grass plant matters to the non-scientific is something Mr. Davis has had a lot of practice in.

After finishing his Ph.D. in biology at Florida International University, Mr. Davis taught both undergraduate and graduate students at Texas A&M University before returning to South Florida on sabbatical to work with the Everglades Foundation five years ago. That sabbatical turned into a more permanent leave when his position as a wetlands ecologist perfectly combined his research interests with his teaching interests.

Talking about the Everglades and understanding its impact on the day to day life of everyone in the Greater Miami area has become all the more important today, when climate changes threatens the balance of the ecosystem.

“Climate change has an impact to our fresh water, and that will resonate with any visitor that comes in,” Mr. Bermingham said. The effects of climate change on an ecosystem are something Mr. Davis remembers from his childhood.

Originally from Ohio, Mr. Davis’ grandfather had farms and orchards, and going out and checking on tomatoes and the various bugs and critters on each plant as a child isn’t far removed from going out into the park today and taking a tour group along.

Even as a child, the effects of a longer frost season or a drought were apparent in how they affected his grandfather’s crops, just as the changes in weather patterns are apparent today. And not just in the Everglades.

“With the tidal driven flooding on Miami Beach, the impacts of Superstorm Sandy... the National Climate Assessment report, we’re being forced to incorporate that into our messaging,” Mr. Davis said. “It’s not that we were reluctant. Now people are asking. People want to know. So we’re providing that.”

Moving forward, the more people that ask questions, the better Mr. Davis will be able to do what he was nominated for: advancing the scientific conversation in Miami.

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City’s planning, parking directors cited for looking ahead

By John Charles Robbins

He is the calm voice of reason in a storm of questions and concerns.

Growth and development can bring out detractors and opponents of change, and they can often be loud and vocal. **Francisco Garcia**, the City of Miami’s director of planning and zoning, approaches everyone the same way: in a professional and respectful way, he answers the questions and explains the details.

Mr. Garcia could have been a diplomat, and would surely have excelled in that endeavor as well.

Based in part on his professionalism and adherence to quality, Mr. Garcia was named to this year’s Best of Miami as one of the area’s best at looking ahead through planning.

Mr. Garcia was nominated by Iris V. Escarra, an attorney with Greenberg Traurig who is kept busy representing development firms planning projects large and small. A former assistant city attorney, Ms. Escarra has been with the Miami law firm for nearly 10 years. She specializes in land use and zoning in Miami-Dade County and its municipalities.

“As the director of one of departments with the highest demand in the City of Miami, Francisco Garcia is an exceptional professional who is able to promptly address concerns and find reasonable solutions to tough issues,” Ms. Escarra said of Mr. Garcia.

“Francisco is dedicated to making sure that each project, irrespective of size, is designed with the highest quality planning standards possible,” she said.

A Chicago native, Mr. Garcia earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture and master’s in urban design from the University of Miami.

His very first paying job in planning was with the City of Miami.

For more than 10 years Mr. Garcia worked in the planning, building and zoning departments, for the Miami Parking Authority, and the Neighborhood Advancement Team program. He served as the city’s zoning director for some time.

Around 2004 he decided to try his hand in the private sector. He worked for urban planning firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co. for several years, and Oppenheim Architecture + Design.

When the city’s planning director retired in 2010, Mr. Garcia sought and garnered the top job.

His return to public service coincided with the merging of the planning and zoning departments, and with the city adopting a modern set of zoning rules called Miami 21.

As planning director in a city that seems to be bursting at the seams with new growth and development, Mr. Garcia strives to strike a balance between competing interests, and Miami 21 helps in that endeavor.

Implemented in May 2010,



Photo by Sergio Alsina

Francisco Garcia returned to head the city’s planning operations in 2010 when his predecessor retired.

Miami 21 is a form-based zoning code. It doesn’t hurt that the consulting firm that worked on Miami 21 was Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co.

Earlier this year, Miami 21 won an award from the American Institute of Architects. Selected from more than 500 submissions, the city was one of 26 global recipients capturing a 2014 Institute Honor Award. The firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co. was also honored.

Miami 21 replaced Miami’s Floor Area Ratio and land-use based regulations. The new code focuses on “the control of building to assure pedestrian-oriented public space, and provide physical predictability for developers and residents alike,” the institute said. The city commission approved the new code in 2009 and it took effect in 2010.

“People were concerned when Miami 21 was being adopted that it would somehow negatively impact development in Miami,” said Ms. Escarra. “Well, we now know that isn’t true.”

Much credit must be given to Mr. Garcia for navigating through a brand new code and working with the development community on the various projects to make sure that Miami 21 helps accomplish their development goals, she said.

“He is truly amazing,” said Ms. Escarra.

Mr. Garcia was also commended for his professionalism by Brett Bibeau, managing director of the Miami River Commission.

“Francisco Garcia is a phenomenal director of the City of Miami’s Planning and Zoning Department, because he kindly listens to all perspectives first, and then carefully considers all the various factors while planning our communities’ future,” Mr. Bibeau said.

“Director Garcia gracefully strikes the difficult balance between various and sometimes competing interests, including developers, preservationists, residents, environmentalists and so on.

“He is widely admired, respected and appreciated by all,”



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Arthur Noriega helps partner with Miami Northwestern Senior High.

Mr. Bibeau said.

Arthur Noriega was nominated for Best of Miami in the field of those planning for our future by Dr. Elaine Liftin, president and executive director of the Council for Educational Change.

Ms. Liftin said Mr. Noriega

has been a “tireless” executive partner and coach to the principal at Miami Northwestern Senior High School.

“Under his mentorship the school went from a 50% graduation rate to 80% graduation rate, and moved from an ‘F’ to an ‘A’ school,” she said.



“He generously gives of his time and talents and resources to help school leaders better manage their schools so that students graduate college and are career ready,” Ms. Liftin said. Mr. Noriega has also served on the School Advisory Council for years.

“He is not only planning, but is instrumental in shaping our future to better the quality of life for the citizens of South Florida,” she said.

Northwestern’s Principal Wallace Aristide said Mr. Noriega is fully committed to the school and serves as a valuable source of ideas.

In the past three years, Mr. Noriega has helped the high school in securing a large number of Teach for America teachers for the school, said Mr. Aristide.

Mr. Noriega also takes pride in providing internships for a number of the students at Northwestern.

Perhaps known more for his day job as CEO of the Miami Parking Authority, Mr. Noriega is an economics graduate of the University of South Florida, with professional certifications from Tulane and Northwestern University.

Mr. Noriega is a dedicated community leader and volunteer, above and beyond his work with the school.

He serves on the boards of Switchboard of Miami, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Miami Progress Foundation. He is a member of the Federal Reserve’s Education Advisory Group, the Miami Sports Commission and a graduate of Leadership Florida’s 26th Class. He is currently on the Leadership Florida Regional Council.

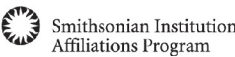
Mr. Noriega has headed the Miami Parking Authority since 1999. Before that, he was vice president of development at The Carlisle Group, where he worked with municipalities and Community Development Corporations across the state to create urban development projects. Before that, he worked as director of planning and development with the parking authority.

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HISTORYMIAMI



Public service, convening community mark two who give back

BY SCOTT BLAKE

Albert “Al” Dotson Jr. has accomplished a lot on the job, but what he’s done in his free time may be what really sets him apart.

Mr. Dotson is a partner at the Brickell Avenue law firm of Bilzin Sumberg, where he is the firm’s government relations and land development practice group leader.

He also has been a leading figure for many years with 100 Black Men of America, based in Atlanta with the primary mission of mentoring African American boys and African American young men – usually from middle school through college – to put them on the path to successful, fulfilling lives.

Mr. Dotson has been named to the Best in Miami among business executives who give something back to the community.

“He’s really a super guy,” said Knight Foundation Miami Program Director Matt Haggman, who nominated Mr. Dotson.

Mr. Haggman described him as a “top-flight lawyer” and “an amazing, thoughtful, generous guy.”

He’s not the only one who’s noticed. This year, President Barack Obama appointed Mr. Dotson to the President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans.

His duty on the commission is to advise the president and the US secretary of education on ways to advance federal programs that improve educational opportunities for blacks.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Al Dotson Jr. counts an appointment by President Barack Obama among his honors based on service.

It isn’t Mr. Dotson’s first stint in public service. In 2009, he was chosen as a member of the Florida Federal Judicial Nominating Commission, a statewide panel charged with selecting finalists for presidential appointments to district judgeships, US attorneys and US marshals.

Locally, Mr. Dotson also has been active with the Overtown Youth Center, the Orange Bowl Committee and the HistoryMiami museum.

However, Mr. Haggman singled Mr. Dotson out for his involvement with 100 Black Men of America, which has more than 110 chapters across the US and beyond, with more than 10,000 members and more than 100,000 participating youths.

Mr. Dotson has been involved with 100 Black for about 25

years. He founded the local chapter and later served as vice chairman for the entire organization for 10 years.

In 2004, he was chosen to head the entire organization, serving as chairman of the board for eight years. Today, he continues to serve on the group’s executive committee.

Formed in New York City in 1963, 100 Black Men’s stated mission is “to improve the quality of life within our communities and enhance educational and economic opportunities for all African Americans.” In addition to intensive mentoring programs for young black males, the organization has broader programs that serve youths of other racial groups as well as girls and young women.

“He’s incredible,” Beverly Ferguson, the organization’s senior vice president, said about Mr. Dotson. “He’s done tremendous things for the organization.”

When choosing who to mentor, Mr. Dotson said, the organization typically looks for kids with potential, but who are underachieving. He got involved because of “the recognition that there was an underserved group of young men in our school system,” he said.

“I and others who helped start the program [in Miami] realized they could benefit from mentoring and other support to help them benefit academically

and in other parts of life.”

Mr. Dotson also has received accolades for his work as a lawyer. He has been consistently named by Chambers USA and The Best Lawyers in America for his work in land use and zoning law.

At Bilzin Sumberg, he handles federal and local government procurement contracts and compliance cases. He also represents real estate developers in securing land use, zoning, and other government approvals and permits for large-scale real estate developments.

“Al routinely negotiates economic development incentive programs,” the firm’s website states, “on behalf of major US corporate clients.”

Other “Best of Miami” nominees for business executives

You might call **Mitchell Kaplan** the literary man’s executive – that laid back “cool” guy with a penchant for community involvement.

Mr. Haggman, who nominated Mr. Kaplan, calls him “a community convener and connector.”

Mr. Kaplan founded the Books & Books book store in Coral Gables in 1982. Since then, he has expanded the business with stores at Lincoln Road in Miami Beach, the Bal Harbour Shops, Miami International Airport, Biscayne Boulevard in Miami, Grand Cayman in the Bahamas,

The Best of
Miami
2014
GIVING BACK

and Westhampton Beach on Long Island, NY.

His story is not just about an independent small businessman who has made good in a sector dominated now by corporate chain book stores. He has become perhaps Miami’s leading figurehead in the bookselling business.

Books & Books is known for hosting acclaimed writers and celebrities for readings and other events on a regular basis.

“The balmy Miami weather helps bring them to town,” the Miami New Times wrote in 2011, “but it’s really Kaplan’s competence that gets them here.”

On its website, Books & Books explains its approach: “We’re a community of writers and readers, hosting 60 author events a month and featuring a carefully curated selection.”

Apart from his bookstores, Mr. Kaplan is co-founder of the Miami Book Fair International. He also serves on the steering committee of the Florida Center for the Literary Arts, Miami Dade College’s literary center.

In addition, Mr. Kaplan recently served a two-year term as president of the American Booksellers Association and serves on the board of the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression.

In 2011, he received the National Book Foundation’s “Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community.”

The award is presented to a person for outstanding service to the American literary community and whose life and work exemplify the goals of the National Book Foundation to expand the audience for literature and to enhance the cultural value of literature in America.

“I really believe in community gathering places,” Mr. Kaplan told Publishers Weekly in 2009. “Your store has to be so integral that your community won’t let it go out of business. There’s the library, the park system and your bookstore.”

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Photo by Parente-Ramirez Photography

Mitch Kaplan, famed as a top non-chain bookseller, is termed “a community convener and connector.”



Photos by Maxine Usdan

Nominated as best: Deborah Korge, executive director of Casa Valentina; Branches Executive Director Brent McLaughlin with Angel Mesa, Gaudner Paul and Aminta Giron.

Role of nonprofit leaders harder than for-profit counterparts

By Lidia Dinkova

Running a nonprofit organization is more difficult than running a for-profit.

So says Patrick Morris, who as current vice president of Sabadell Bank and co-founder and former CEO of nonprofit volunteer organization Hands On Miami has been a leader in both realms.

“In a for-profit, you have a finance person, you have someone doing human resources, you have someone doing marketing,” said Mr. Morris, a member of the Nonprofit Business Committee at the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce.

Nonprofit executives, he added, “have to have all those skills as well as be a motivator of their team and the board and be able to articulate the mission of the organization to the community.”

South Florida nonprofit executives who gracefully wear those hats, according to Mr. Morris, are Casa Valentina Executive Director **Deborah Korge** and Branches Executive Director **Brent McLaughlin**.

“When you spend time with [Ms. Korge], you see how much she oozes the mission of Casa Valentina and the work that they’re doing,” Mr. Morris said.

Since 2006, Casa Valentina has been the only Miami-Dade nonprofit that provides housing and mentoring to teenagers who age out of foster care once they turn 18. About 100 youths age out of foster care annually in Miami-Dade, Ms. Korge said.

“They are being told by the system, ‘You are off on your own. Find housing, find a job,’” Ms. Korge said. “We said, ‘Wait a second. These are still teenagers, and they aren’t ready to live on their own, they aren’t ready to come up with \$700 a month for rent.’”

Currently, about 22 residents between 18 and 23 live in housing Casa Valentina rents, owns or has access to through a partnership with Camillus House.

“Our goal is to try to get them as well on track as possible, so when they leave us, they are more like their peers who have not been in the system,” Ms.

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NONPROFIT EXECUTIVES

Korge said.

Challenges these youths have encountered range from abuse to lagging academically.

“Sometimes a student comes in and they are 18 and they are still in the tenth grade. That’s a big dent in their self esteem,” Ms. Korge said. “But if we say, ‘OK, let’s get your GED and now you can go to Miami Dade [College], or now you can go to vocational school,’ that goes a long way because it makes what they want to do a little bit more attainable.”

While Casa Valentina and Branches serve different community needs, they have a similar approach. Rather than fixing a problem for their participants, the programs give people the tools to help themselves.

“We are not going to do it for them... but we are here to provide them opportunities,” said Mr. McLaughlin of Branches. “Everything we do is really empowerment based.”

Founded in 1973, Branches gives after-school academic help and mentoring to elementary, middle and high-school students.

As Branches volunteers develop a relationship with students, “that really makes a difference in a child’s life because it’s someone who cares for them. It’s not just another exercise doing a worksheet,” Mr. McLaughlin said.

Branches educates adults how to reach financial stability through an array of programs – from tax-return preparation to budgeting and business development.

The Ways to Work Car Loan Program, for example, might qualify participants for a car loan at an 8% interest rate.

“This is a character-based loan program,” Mr. McLaughlin said.

If approved for the car loan, other parts of people’s lives start rolling forward, he added. They are able to go to work on time and take their children to school on time.

“This is the same group that will be preyed upon for predatory lending practices and student loans, so they are caught up in this cycle that they entered into blindly and they don’t know how to get out of it,” said Laurie Zapletal, business deposit officer at BB&T and Branches board member, who also nominated Mr. McLaughlin.

After school mentoring and

adult financial help classes are free, Mr. McLaughlin said. To qualify, children have to be on free or reduced-price school lunch, he said. Branches has centers in Florida City, South Miami, nearby North Miami and North Miami Beach.

At these nonprofits, successes stories are everyday accomplishments. A woman was recently able to pay off \$6,000 in debt in

eight months following Branches-provided financial education, and a Casa Valentina student is headed to Florida State University.

“We always look for those [successes] because it means so much to them and so much to us,” Ms. Korge said. “We celebrate it all because these are major accomplishments in their life, and we are so proud of them.”





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Unsung heroes help river and bay, Allapattah and children

BY JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

Persistent, consistent, and a champion for the environment and public access to the Miami River and Biscayne Bay.

That's what colleagues say about Dr. **Ernie Martin**, selected for Best of Miami as an unsung hero, those movers and shakers who work behind the scenes to accomplish grand things for the greater community.

Dr. Martin shies from the spotlight but not from challenges.

He can be vocal when he feels the time and occasion call for that approach. "I work best behind the scenes, building coalitions and collaboration," said Dr. Martin.

He was nominated for recognition by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson.

"Ernie Martin, a resident of Spring Garden, which is a quaint area near the Civic Center that sits on the Miami River, has been a staunch advocate for environmental protections for many years," said Ms. Edmonson.

"As a constituent, there was not an issue affecting our precious Miami River that Dr. Martin was [not] speaking up for or speaking out against. He has volunteered full time for numerous causes and boards for over 20 years. From affordable housing to the Miami River Greenway, Dr. Martin is an unsung hero for Miami-Dade County's general public and well-being," she said.

"Dr. Martin has lived on the river for many years and has seen the digression and progression of a once-flourishing workforce," Ms. Edmonson said.

"Ernie shares my passion for businesses to be sustainable up and down the Miami River as it once did. Additionally, and notwithstanding, the environmental protections of our marine life are equally as important to him," she said.

Dr. Martin was educated on the West Coast, but took a government job in South Florida with a goal to help revitalize lower-income communities.

He served as director of community and economic development for Dade County for 24 years, retiring around 1994.

Dr. Martin said when he first moved to Miami it was supposed to be a temporary thing. Instead, he quickly fell in love with this urban world set among tropical beauty.

"I thought the city's beauty, to me, was the views of the water — there's so much water everywhere," he said.

"I was living in the Edgewater area, in a waterfront condo, and being an urban planner by background I discovered such wonderful resources as Biscayne Bay and the Miami River," said Dr. Martin. The fact that there was very little public access to the bay and river was surprising to him.

"I developed an interest in revitalization and public access," he said.

Dr. Martin has served on the



Photo by Maxine Usdan

"I work best behind the scenes, building coalitions and collaboration," said advocate Dr. Ernie Martin.

Miami River Commission since its creation in 1998. He currently is chairman of the commission's Greenways Committee.

During his employment with the county, Dr. Martin moved to a riverside residence. Some of his friends wondered why, as the Miami River didn't have a great reputation.

"They'd ask, 'How soon can you get out?' The river was not considered desirable real estate... there was pollution and not very much access," said Dr. Martin.

"I joined with the Trust for Public Land to develop a master plan for a river greenway," he said. A major part of the overall plan was to secure public access to the river "at as many vantage points as we can," he said.

The Miami River Greenway action plan was adopted in 2001. The ultimate goal is for an uninterrupted public walkway from the mouth of the river downtown westward toward the airport, extending about 5 miles on each side. The current riverwalk on the north side of the river connects with the city's Bayfront Park.

Today the greenway stretches about 5 miles total, in different sections. Dr. Martin said he hopes to see the greenway completed in his lifetime — continuous and uninterrupted.

With the massive influx of people moving to downtown Miami, in condo towers sprouting up along the river's edge, it's more important than ever to fight for public access, according to Dr. Martin.

"It's understandably a growing concern that we have access to the water," he said.

As part of the Urban Environment League, Dr. Martin has spent years trying to force county leaders to follow through on a promise to turn the land east of American Airlines Arena into a public park on Biscayne Bay.

His public service work has extended to stints on the Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board, the Miami Waterfront Advisory Board, and his current appointment on the Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board.

In his own neighborhood, Dr. Martin has worked to turn two

small parcels into open, public green space. With the help of organizations like the Spring Garden Civic Association, Dr. Martin helped establish Spring Garden Point Park and Greenfield Garden.

Unsung heroes in our community wear many different hats.

Miami City Commissioner Wifredo "Willy" Gort wants to praise Father **José Luis Menéndez**, the pastor at Corpus Christi Catholic Church in the heart of Allapattah.

Mr. Gort, chairman of the city commission, said Father Menéndez is a wonderful person who does countless things for the community.

"He's done a lot of volunteer work in the Allapattah area, and he helped establish a museum there," Mr. Gort said.

His countless unselfish acts for the betterment of the community have spanned decades.

"The amount of work he does to improve the quality of life is just tremendous... for 20 or 30 years now," said Mr. Gort.

Father Menéndez was born in Havana in 1947. He ventured to the US in 1961, and then to Spain that same year where he settled. He attended secondary school in Madrid and in 1965 entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, where he remained until 1971.

He continued his studies in the Archdiocese of Madrid, where he was ordained as a priest in 1977.

In 1980, Father Menéndez was incardinated into the Archdiocese of Miami. His first assignment here was as parochial vicar at St. Mary's Cathedral.

In 1981 he was appointed to the Ermita de la Caridad and Hispanic youth ministry in the archdiocese. This was followed in 1982 by an appointment as director of the Youth Ministry of the Archdiocese of Miami, and he was also appointed spiritual director of La Salle High School.

Father Menéndez was appointed parish priest of Corpus Christi in 1988.

The padre is bashful and does

not like to be recognized for his contributions to the community, but many sing his praises.

Along with being a leader of the parish, Father Menéndez contributes to the community in other ways.

On the second floor of the Miami Police College on Northwest Second Avenue you will find a light sculpture created by the Italian artist Pietro Costa. The artwork, "Grace," pays solemn tribute to the men and women who lost their lives to terror on Sept. 11, 2001.

The sculpture was donated to the Miami Police Department by Father Menéndez, whose appreciation and knowledge of art seem to have no bounds.

For more than 10 years, Father Menéndez has been collecting artworks from Latin American's colonial period and documents from Florida's Hispanic history, according to the Archdiocese of Miami. He has been assembling these items inside the replica of an old Peruvian church he hopes will one day be a thriving museum. The goal is to assemble, preserve and display one of the largest collections of art and history of its kind, with 105 paintings and sculptures plus 410,000 historical records documenting family links between Florida and Latin America.

"We want to give back something to the United States for what it has given us," said Father Menendez, who gained his love for art and music while in Spain.

Father Menéndez has been called a "trailblazer" too.

In 2008, he was facing the prospect of having to close the parish school because of dwindling finances. But Father Menendez, working with Miami's now-retired Archbishop John C. Favalora and Catholic Schools Superintendent Richard DeMaria, found a creative and practical solution. By turning the parish school into a secular public charter school, they saved the parish, while continuing to offer a valuable alternative to the district public schools, according to Seaton Education Partners.

In a case study of the matter, Seton Education Partners applauded the leadership of Father Menendez, Mr. DeMaria and Archbishop Favalora, "because

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UNSUNG HEROES

we believe that there are alternatives to simply accepting what has been the steady and accelerating demise of inner-city Catholic education — even more so when, as was going to be the case in Miami, it would also be accompanied by the closure of inner-city parishes themselves."

For his years of commitment to the betterment of children's lives, **Arthur Hertz** was named as one of Best of Miami's unsung heroes.

He was nominated by Dr. Elaine Liftin, president and executive director of The Council for Educational Change.

"Mr. Hertz works tirelessly behind the scenes on behalf of children," said Ms. Liftin.

"He is an Unsung Hero because of the work he has done, and incentives he has provided to ensure that all children have a level playing field and are successful," she said.

Mr. Hertz is chairman and CEO of Wometco Enterprises Inc., which was the owner of the Miami Seaquarium, Wometco de Puerto Rico Inc., the owner operator of 57 Baskin-Robbins ice cream parlors in Puerto Rico, and franchisee of Dunkin Donuts for Puerto Rico.

Mr. Hertz serves on numerous community professional organizations and foundations including the University of Miami Hospital Board of Governors, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce board, City of Miami Off-Street Parking Board, and the University of Miami Alumni Association.

Additionally, Mr. Hertz is a member of the University of Miami's Board of Trustees. He is an active participant in numerous charitable causes and professional organizations throughout South Florida, including the Florida Tourism Commission, Visit Florida, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Mitchell Wolfson Sr. Foundation, Jackson Memorial Hospital Foundation, YMCA, the National Audubon Association and more.

Sometimes, being an unsung hero is as simple as being consistently pleasant to the people you meet, and never forgetting to smile.

John Blazejack, a business owner at 172 W Flagler St., said his weekdays are brightened by **Tony Martinez**, a postal carrier with USPS. He wanted to nominate Mr. Martinez as an unsung hero in Best of Miami.

"He's the kind of person that every day he comes with big smile... He's fast on his feet. He ping-pongs down Flagler Street like a whiz," said Mr. Blazejack.

This daily dose of positivity has been going on now for about 20 years, he said.

"He's the best," Mr. Blazejack said. "He always has something good to say. We all know him up and down Flagler Street, to the courthouse."

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16-STORY CLASS A OFFICE TOWER PLANNED TO RISE ON PONCE IN NORTH GABLES, PG. 42



CUTTING COUNTY COSTS: Miami-Dade commissioners gave final OKs Tuesday for staff to analyze how to cut operating costs and also for the commission auditor's office to include in its purview analysis of the county budget to pinpoint cost savings. Both resolutions call for all cost-cutting measures to avoid effects to county services. The original resolutions also called for cost-cutting measures that avoid layoffs. But that clause was sliced out

after some commissioners said that would make the study's scope too restrictive. The resolutions approved Tuesday call for staff to analyze alternatives if operating costs of each department were cut by 3%, 5% and 10%. The staff report is due in 60 days. Chairwoman **Rebeca Sosa** and Commissioner **Sally Heyman** sponsored the resolutions.

SAFETY AFTER FUNDING: Miami-Dade is to install signs that call for bicyclists' safety and alert drivers to watch out for cyclists at the entrance of the Rickenbacker Causeway. But the county is to install the signs only once it identifies the spare funding in its own coffers or a private sponsor donates the funds. Commissioners gave final approval Tuesday. The Rickenbacker Causeway, which leads to Key Biscayne, is popular with bicyclists. In 2012, bicyclist **Aaron Cohen** died from injuries after being struck by a hit-and-run driver on the causeway. Commissioner **Jose "Pepe" Diaz** was the resolution's prime sponsor. The legislation didn't specify whether the signs would be installed at the east or the west, or both, entrances to the Rickenbacker Causeway.

REAL ESTATE HIGH: Taylor & Mathis has finalized a 12-year, multi-million dollar renewal lease at the 550 Biltmore building in Coral Gables with UBS, a Swiss banking company, for its 43,500-square-foot property. This lease is the largest in Coral Gables this year. Before renewing, UBS was looking elsewhere in Coral Gables for a potential alternative location. The deal was brokered by Taylor & Mathis director of leasing **Ryan Holtzman** and UBS broker **Tony Jones** of Cushman & Wakefield.

RESIDENCES DRIVE CONSTRUCTION: Construction activity in South Florida continues to be driven by residential high-rise building as cranes dot the skylines in the urban core of Miami-Dade. April contracts awarded for future construction work in South Florida rose 21% from the same period a year earlier, according to McGraw Hill Construction, but the overall growth hides a total decline of 11% in nonresidential development and a 46% leap in residential development. For the year's first four months, a similar pattern applies: an 11% overall increase, with nonresidential construction contracts dropping 14% and residential climbing 28%.

THE ACHIEVER



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Grace Carricarte
Heads Ganley Foundation in preventing youth suicide
The profile is on Page 4

Art Basel, others shun city's limits

Convention space cut

BY NINA LINCOFF

As Miami Beach moves forward toward its Miami Beach Convention Center renovation for 2016-2018, major conventions and shows have already said they can't work within the city's parameters.

IDEA, a textile show, and Cruise Shipping have already decided to leave the Miami Beach Convention Center. Art Basel is not willing to work with the two-hall maximum offer and is looking to preserve its four-hall show. eMerge Americas, which held its first event this year, is also in talks to see if it can stay.

The Miami International Boat Show is discussing its long-term future with center staff and plans to announce in July where the show will be held from 2016 onward, said Bob Balsam, center general manager.

Loss of those big shows will cut into hotels and retail during construction. However, the Miami International Auto Show has said it will condense to two halls during the work, Mr. Balsam said during an advisory board meeting Tuesday.

To finish renovations and construction within the city's 36-month timeframe, the center will be partially closed during 2016-2018 to allow construction on half of the four-hall building at a time while keeping two halls open for use.

An idea of installing a tent to add space during construction, floated at a city commission meeting this year, is not likely to happen, convention center staff said. The tent would cost at least \$15 million, and probably much more because the center would need it for two or more years.

Even without a tent, the center's calendar is relatively booked for the construction period. The center will simply be operating as a two-hall site.

"Our clients have been incredible," Mr. Balsam said. "I've really been impressed with how many clients have said [they still] want to work with us."

Rail line, top-level grocers deal for depot store

BY LIDIA DINKOVA

Not only is All Aboard Florida planning residences, a hotel and offices at its downtown Miami station, but the company is also in talks with national grocery-store chains interested in setting up shop at the depot.

"When people get to the rail and think, 'I need to pick up dinner on the way home,' that's sort of the mentality we are trying to introduce," said Jose Gonzalez, senior vice president of corporate development at Florida East Coast Industries, the railroad's parent company. "We want to be able to have this energy here where people live, where people shop."

Representatives haven't revealed official plans about a supermarket at the station. But Mr. Gonzalez said the company is talking with Lakeland-based Publix; Austin-based Whole Foods Market, which targets the health-conscious consumer; and Trader Joe's, the California-based chain known for affordable gourmet offerings that last year opened its first Miami-Dade store in Pinecrest.

"I have to tell you, they are really excited about having an urban market there," he said. "It's something we see is very successful in other rail stations around the world."

All Aboard Florida aims to energize downtown by tailoring operations to both rail passengers and non-passengers through concepts such as the urban market, Mr. Gonzalez said.

Mr. Gonzalez likened All Aboard Florida's project to the Acela Express, part of Amtrak, connecting Washington and Boston. But, he added, All Aboard Florida's riders will be mainly tourists, a market downtown Miami's station will strive to capture through amenities such as the urban market.

"In Disney, when you get out of a ride what's the last thing you see?" Mr. Gonzalez said. "The gift shop. Everybody ends up at the gift shop. Why? Because we want you to spend more dollars. We want Miami to be that gift shop."

The station will be raised on a 50-foot viaduct. Renderings show translucent steel crisscrossing over the platform, which might block noise, Mr. Gonzalez said. Part of the station's development is a 70-story mixed-

use tower as well as three other buildings. Overall, the station is to include about 1,100 residential units, 1.1 million square feet of office space, 177,000 square feet of retail and 325 hotel rooms, Mr. Gonzalez told Miami Today.

All Board Florida plans three-hour rides linking downtown Miami to downtown Orlando with stops in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. A train will run every hour, for a total of 32 trains in both directions daily, Mr. Gonzalez said.

Mr. Gonzalez presented All Aboard Florida's plans for downtown Miami at a Freight Transportation Advisory Committee meeting last week. The committee, comprised of industry professionals, advises the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization.

While the railroad had approval to close Northwest 10th and 11th streets, it decided not to block the thoroughfares after meeting with downtown and Overtown residents, Mr. Gonzalez said, dispelling initial concerns by committee members. Construction on the downtown Miami station, he said, is to begin by year's end.

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THE INSIDER

UP AND DOWN: The past two weeks have been good news-bad news for **Jeff Berkowitz**, who plans a 1,000-foot observation tower on the edge of downtown overlooking the bay. Construction officially began last week on SkyRise Miami, with crews placing pilings near Bayside Marketplace. That work helped Mr. Berkowitz secure height approval for the vertical amusement center from the Federal Aviation Administration. A June 12 deadline loomed to start work. While savoring that step, Mr. Berkowitz learned Monday that Gov. **Rick Scott** had axed \$2 million set aside in the budget for transportation work to support SkyRise. Proponents had sought \$10 million, but the final budget proposal shaved the amount to \$2 million. Gov. Scott vetoed funding when he slashed \$68.9 million in projects from the budget. Mr. Berkowitz plans to sublease about 2 acres from Bayside Marketplace, which leases that land from the city. Lease negotiations go on, and the question of whether to allow that use on city property is expected to go to a vote by city residents in August or November.



Jeff Berkowitz

ROAD-IMPACT FEES: Miami-Dade commissioners gave final OK Tuesday to an ordinance that supporters say will spur small-business growth by allowing deferral of as much as half of road-impact fees owed the county. By ordinance, the building-permit applicant may waive no more than \$25,000 worth of road-impact fees, and the fees can't be deferred more than three years. At least a third of the deferred fees are to be paid to the county every year. To keep the county's road-impact-fee fund whole, Miami-Dade will stop the program once the county is owed \$1 million in such fees until some of that money is paid, records show. **Audrey Edmonson, Jose "Pepe" Diaz** and **Jean Monestime** sponsored the item.

SHIFT TO POINTEGROUP: Long-time leading commercial realty broker **Jack Lowell**, who had been a senior executive with Flagler Real Estate Services, this week was named executive vice president of PointeGroup Advisors in Coconut Grove.

STEPPING STONE: Along the main streets of downtown Coconut Grove, new sidewalks will soon be built, thanks to a county-funded project. City commissioners have agreed to enter into a joint participation agreement with Miami-Dade County for the project. It provides that the county will contribute \$1,529,000 for construction. The work includes installation of enhanced brick sidewalk along Grand Avenue from McDonald Street to Mary Street, Main Highway from McFarlane Road to Franklin Avenue, and McFarlane Road from South Bayshore Drive to Grand Avenue. The city will hire a contractor to construct the project, and will handle construction administration and inspections. The project budget includes a contingency of \$87,500 for tree removal or replacement.



Jack Lowell

TWO JOIN ETHICS COMMISSION: Former Doral Mayor **Juan Carlos Bermudez** and St. Thomas University Assistant Professor of Law **Marcia Narine** have joined the five-member Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust. Mr. Bermudez was appointed by the Miami-Dade League of Cities, replacing **Kerry Rosenthal**. The law schools of St. Thomas and the University of Miami jointly appointed Ms. Narine to replace University of Miami Professor **Charlton Copeland**. The independent ethics commission with advisory and quasi-judicial powers is geared to empower the community and bolster public trust.



J. Carlos Bermudez



Marcia Narine

FRENCH CHAMBER CHANGE: **Pascale Villet**, who has spent the past 13 years as a corporate events professional in France and the US, this week became executive director of the French American Chamber of Commerce of Florida, based in downtown Miami. Since September 2012 she had been projects director at JMT events and before that handled events at The Vibe Agency. For almost six years she worked in sales and projects at Business Solutions in Disneyland Paris. She was educated at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. Ms. Villet replaces **Laure McKay**, who had been at the chamber nearly three years and is joining a French culinary and gastronomy school opening here.

FIU ADDS TO BOARD: Florida International University named **Stacey Oddman** and **Wasim Shomar** its board this week. Ms. Oddman is a FIU alumna, having earned her bachelor of arts in chemistry in '94. She went on to earn her medical degree from Boston University and is the chief family practice physician with the Galt Ocean Holy Cross Medical Group. Mr. Shomar is the president and CEO of the Lynx Companies, a private equity firm that specializes in acquisitions and mergers, and was formerly president at the Miami Dade College Kendall and Wolfson campuses.



Wasim Shomar

NEW SCHOOL YEAR, NEW DIRECTOR: The University of Miami has appointed **Jill Deupi** director of the Lowe Art Museum, effective Aug. 11. Ms. Deupi is now director and chief curator of the University Museums at Fairfield University in Connecticut. As part of her goals for the museum, Ms. Deupi hopes to enhance public accessibility to the collection with an online, user-friendly database. UM's Lowe Art Museum is Miami-Dade County's oldest visual arts institution, having opened in 1952. Ms. Deupi replaces **Brian Dursum**, who retired.



Jill Deupi

80-STORY LURE: Piggybacking on the development of Swire's Brickell City Centre, Benzol Properties Corp. is seeking to sell 1.62 acres with 380 feet of Miami River frontage that it says can be developed up to 80 stories for residential units. CBRE Group Inc., retained to market the site, says it's "adjacent to Brickell City Centre." The sale location is at 99 SW Seventh St. at First Avenue.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

A Design District parking garage was being constructed at the end of last year on Northeast First Avenue.

Design District parking plan OK'd

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

A controversial parking program that led to a 120-day moratorium in February finally has been updated by Miami commissioners.

A second and final vote to approve changes to the Design District Parking Improvement Trust Fund and rules and fees governing parking waivers came after months of negotiation among the interested parties — mainly the city and the property owners in the burgeoning Design District.

An ordinance creating the fund hadn't been updated since 2006 so it didn't reflect market rates or consider the Design District's rapid expansion.

The goal is to use the parking waiver fees to build or obtain shared public parking to benefit the entire district.

By ordinance, developers in the Design District may buy parking waivers. The charge was \$12,000 per parking space waiver. The proposed amendment as drafted in February would have bumped that up to \$35,000 per space.

In the end, the price of a parking waiver will shoot so high that some fear it will discourage development by those property owners not blessed with the financing prowess of larger players.

When the dust settled on the final amendment, the fee was set at \$45,000 per parking space.

Art Noriega, CEO of the Miami Parking Authority, also known as the Department of Off Street Parking, anticipated "plenty of dialog" about the proposed changes at the commission's May 22 meeting.

He wasn't wrong.

Jeff Bercow, an attorney representing the Miami Design District Property Owners Association, said he was speaking on behalf of several dozen property owners concerned about the level of the new fee at \$45,000.

"Where does this number come from? Two weeks ago it was \$35,000," Mr. Bercow said.

The industry standard currently calculates the cost of providing one new parking space at \$15,000 to \$25,000, he said.

"Our group never opposed \$35,000," Mr. Bercow added. "We fear this large number will discourage future development."

No one responded directly to Mr. Bercow's comments.

Commissioner Keon Hardemon passed out the commission's final version of the amendment, with a few more modifications he had made.

Those changes dealt with the make-up of the Design District Improvement Committee, a new body with seven voting members who will oversee how the parking waiver fees are spent.

Deputy City Attorney Barnaby Min explained that the intent of the proposed language creating the committee was to ensure diversity among the members, basically to make sure the committee included other property owners in the district beyond Dacra, the major stakeholder.

Schiller Jerome, who said he was speaking for a group of property owners in an adjacent neighborhood, told commissioners there is already limited parking in the area and talk of allowing new construction without more parking is a concern.

"My community will have to deal with these parking issues," he said.

Commissioner Hardemon told Mr. Jerome the amendment would require a property owner to get a building permit within one year of getting a parking waiver, and the main intent of the ordinance is to "have the funds to put the parking in there."

The ordinance requires that the funds from parking waivers be used "to facilitate parking purposes within the area," through (in part): acquiring land for parking; constructing, operating or leasing off-street parking facilities for public use; coordinating parking facility improvements or expansion in conjunction with public transportation plans and operations; and providing accessibility to off-street parking facilities by suitable means such as public shuttle, tram or trolley.

The intent of the amendment is to have at least 90% of the money in the trust fund used for those activities, and it requires at least 10% be maintained as reserves.

"We're trying to alleviate the parking problem in your neighborhood," Commissioner Hardemon told Mr. Jerome.

Planning Director Francisco Garcia noted that parking waivers are not a commodity that can

traded or sold. The waiver runs with a project until built, then it runs with the property, he said.

If a parking waiver is not paid for as required, or if the project is never built, the waiver would be lost, he said.

The amendment also allows an applicant to pay for the waivers over time, after making a 50% deposit and paying a special \$500 application fee to the parking agency.

The commission approved the first reading of the amendment back on Feb. 13, along with an emergency 120-day moratorium on issuing parking waivers for the Design District.

Commissioner Frank Carollo feared the "floodgates" would open without the moratorium and the city would get countless applications for waivers at the \$12,000 rate from developers hoping to avoid a price hike.

Mr. Carollo and others were also concerned about control of the trust fund, and Mr. Carollo argued for wording to make sure the city commission retained oversight of the money.

The final version of the amendment grants initial oversight of the trust fund to the new improvement committee, and final approval by the Off-Street Parking Board. It does, however, require the parking agency's board to submit annual financial reports to the city commission each year.

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Photo by Maxine Usdan

The \$506 million price of the Metrorail Orange Line would take years to fund via the surtax, officials say. Private sector projects could be more creative, said Charles Scurr.

Transportation trust's next route: public-private partnerships

BY SCOTT BLAKE

Charles Scurr and his staff at the Citizens Independent Transportation Trust say they want to help give Miami-Dade residents the public transportation system they deserve and that the county needs to thrive.

However, with most of the tax revenue at their disposal committed to fixed expenses for years to come and no new taxes on the horizon, they're looking for creative partnerships to help get future projects underway.

The first major project to be accomplished through a public-private partnership could be the proposed rail line from Miami to Miami Beach, said Mr. Scurr, the trust's executive director.

With high ridership on the line practically a given, he said, it shouldn't be hard to attract interest from the private sector. And the partnership could go beyond a normal construction and operating agreement to one that also offers a private partner the opportunity to develop property along the route.

“The private sector has the ability to be much more creative, more efficient and more entrepreneurial,” he added.

In a recent interview with Miami Today in his 10th floor office at Government Center, Mr. Scurr discussed how People's Transportation Plan tax revenue won't be nearly enough to fund big projects and smaller, widespread improvements to public transportation in Miami-Dade.

As the trust's top administrator, Mr. Scurr heads a 15-member panel that oversees revenues generated through the People's Transportation Plan surtax.

The surtax is a half-penny increase in the county's sales tax that local voters approved via a November 2002 ballot referendum to pay for expansion of the county's existing public transit systems, as well as projects to create new services.

Another kind of partnership, he said, could involve the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority for a project to enhance public transit along one or more of the county's main east-west corridors. Such a partnership probably would involve a bus rapid transit system with dedicated bus lanes to speed up trips.

Although bus rapid transit is

considered a lower-level project, it could set the stage for the bus lanes to be eventually converted into a rail line whenever funding becomes available, Mr. Scurr said.

Ironically, revenue from the half-penny surtax has been increasing in recent years and is expected to do so for years to come.

Annual revenue from the surtax rose to roughly \$215 million in the last fiscal year and is projected to be about \$225 million for the current fiscal year. Mr. Scurr's office also projects increases through 2030, when surtax revenue is expected to near \$400 million.

Yet, there still won't be much

left for new projects. One reason is that a percentage of People's Transportation Plan revenue has gone to Miami-Dade Transit's operating budget each year since the program began rather than being set aside completely for new projects.

The percentage of annual surtax revenue used to fund existing transit operations peaked in 2009 at 32%. The percentage has leveled out at 19% or 20% from 2012 to this year.

Mr. Scurr expects that a chunk of surtax money will continue to go to operations, saying “it is critical to support operating transportation improvements as well as building them.”

However, the biggest chunk

of surtax revenue each year goes to paying off lingering debt from bond sales used to finance People's Transportation Plan projects during the program's early years.

Otherwise, Mr. Scurr said, the county would have had to wait years to accumulate enough surtax revenue to pay for big projects, such as the \$506 million Metrorail Orange Line extension that linked Dadeland in the Kendall area to Miami International Airport.

About \$70 million of this year's surtax revenue is earmarked for debt service from the bond sales. And debt service is projected to escalate to \$150 million a year by 2020 and to stay at that level at

least until 2030.

Starting in 2022, when the program's bond capacity increases, the annual debt service payments are also projected to rise, eventually reaching more than \$200 million a year in 2029 and beyond.

Another big chunk of the annual surtax revenue – currently roughly \$50 million a year – goes to 34 municipalities around Miami-Dade, earmarked to them to address their individual transportation needs.

After other fixed expenses and debt are taken away, Mr. Scurr said, only about \$96 million will be left over this year to actually help operate and maintain the transit system.

Grace Carricarte brings family history of philanthropy...

How many of us look back on our middle school or high school years and cringe? That hair, those clothes or that one time... chances are, there are a few memories that most of us would like to forget. And some of those memories are dark, and some may be darker still. But the upside is that there is help for those dark thoughts, if you know where to look.

One third of the general population in any given year will experience a mental disorder, and unfortunately, because a lack of prevention, treatment, care or even a diagnosis, suicide could be a result. But children and adolescents have for the past 10 years had a resource in the Ganley Foundation.

Grace Carricarte, executive director of the foundation, spends her time in schools and at talks promoting suicide prevention education getting discussions started.

By waking more people up to the prevalence of mental disorders and potential suicide risks, Ms. Carricarte hopes that if a child or teen is displaying signs, someone will be informed enough to step in and help.

Over her past five years with the foundation, they've saved more than Ms. Carricarte can count.

Miami Today Reporter Nina Lincoff interviewed Ms. Carricarte in Coral Gables.

Q: How is the psychology community in Miami?

A: On a nationwide level the communities, the small ones, do get to the level of full expertise. In Miami, most of my classmates from the University of Miami are my colleagues today and it's nice to see us all grow together professionally.

Our cohort was of about 20 people. The majority did stay in Miami, but not all are still practicing.

Q: What is a typical alternative if they're not practicing?

A: People who are working at community agencies doing counseling, or maybe within their own private practice, and individuals like myself. I'm using my mental health background and expertise I've developed through the counseling that I've provided my clients to now do prevention education.

I had a friend who actually went into interior design with a mental health angle, or design that was stimulating your mental health. We also have a friend who went to work with the FBI in forensics, so there's a bit of diversity if you get creative in our field.

Q: Is that because psychology can be applied to many fields?

A: Psychology is essential to human beings. Often in our society we separate physical and mental health when we're talking about the same whole person. Ultimately, mental illnesses and physical illnesses are all medical in origin and should be treated as such.

One of the big things I always promote is to treat it like the medical illness that it is and to prevent what we can when possible, and to intervene as early as possible.

Q: Why is treatment slow?

A: When it comes to mental health disorders, the way that society views



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Grace Carricarte, executive director of the Ganley Foundation, is a University of Miami psychology graduate who is using her professional training in prevention of suicides.

The Achiever

Grace Carricarte

Executive Director
Ganley Foundation
(305) 962-2258
info@ganleyfoundation.org
Age: 33
Born: Miami

Education: Loyola Marymount University, University of Miami
Personal Philosophy: We can always do better and we are all in this together.

It gets back to that sense of connectedness and supporting each other. There are so many good people on this planet and synergy is at the core of a lot of the success that we have, good people coming together and being able to do better.

them and even the individual themselves, who are struggling, can bring a lot of judgment.

There's a long history of stigma toward those who struggle with mental health issues, and while the brain does still remain quite a bit of a mystery, there's still a lot that we know. We could be doing a lot better to take care of it.

Q: Is philanthropy and education something you've always been passionate about?

A: I was born and raised in Miami and I come from a very, very philanthropic family. Being involved with the community and giving back is just a part of our culture and our lifestyle.

As a child – and it's not as surprising to most people that I got into a helping profession – I would worry about the caterpillar crossing the sidewalk from when I was just a few years old. Then as I continued to grow up my family would always be volunteering with schools that we adopted or non-profits, non-profit endeavors that we took upon ourselves.

I went to an orphanage in Ecuador to work with the students and it was just natural. I didn't know that every family didn't do that.

Q: Was there a specific moment you knew psychology was your field?

A: I had no idea what I wanted to do. If I could, I would have just been a full-time volunteer. Out of all the classes I took in high school I enjoyed psychology the most, and I was told that if I was undecided as a major it could harm my chances of getting in, so back when we did paper applications I just checked off psychology because that was the class I most enjoyed and I assumed I could always switch later.

But I've never looked back.

I do believe that it comes inherent to the profession that those attracted to it tend to be that friend that everybody talked to or that was already naturally empathetic and compassionate.

Q: Are you involved with outside organizations?

A: I am on the board for the Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment. I'm also on the board for Girl Power, which is in Liberty City. It's a great center for girls in that area. I'm also a foster for our local animal shelter.

Q: You take animals into your home?

A: I volunteer sometimes at the center, but mostly I'll just take them into my home as a foster mom for a couple of weeks and then find them a home. Sometimes they have to get better – you've got to put a little meat on them.

Q: How long have you've been involved with Girl Power?

A: I got to know them through my work at Family Counseling Center and as an individual and group therapist there.

I grew up in South Miami, but Miami is full of so many good people and I love being a part of all good efforts. Girl Power is definitely one of them, as is the Melissa Institute, and of course the obvious, the [Ganley Foundation] I work for.

Good people gravitate toward each other, and through synergy and working together we can do so much more. I don't care whether they're born in Liberty City or the Gables, every kid deserves the best outcome possible.

Q: In term of available mental health services, how does Miami compare to other cities?

A: Miami, like most major cities, has care options available, but generally speaking throughout the majority of the US there is limited access to appropriate care.

Q: What are some of the access challenges facing the Miami community?

A: One of the biggest limitations is people's ability to want to seek [care]. Just getting over their own concerns over how they would be looked at. Or maybe they're afraid to share that they're seeing somebody. Then they don't get the support they deserve for whatever they're going through.

The more support you have, the better off you are. The first barrier is the individual themselves, and then perhaps their family or social situation that they're in might prevent them from seeking [care]. After that it's finances. If you have deep pockets you can hire whatever private therapist you want, but most people aren't in that position.

It's wonderful that community agencies exist [to help]. I wish more people were able to know about them.

Q: Which community agencies stand out?

A: I always suggest that people first and foremost when they're seeking resources for mental health call 211, which is our children's trust health line. It's wonderful. They work in partnership with Switchboard of Miami, which is also connected to our National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

There they have a database of every resource and program or organization that might fit their need. Family Counseling Services is where I had worked in the past, and they're a wonderful agency, between their behavioral health services and the Journey Institute they have there.

Q: Is there a lack of awareness about available resources?

A: There's a lack of awareness about everything mental health related. Not only in those facilities that individuals can access, but just education itself.

That's my primary work as executive director of the Ganley Foundation. It's prevention, education and teaching people just about the basics of mental health because we miss a lot in the basics.

Q: How did you find the Ganley Foundation?

A: I went from graduating and not being able to find a job. I went from thinking I knew what I wanted to do to being totally confused. I knew I wanted to work with children, but at the end of the day you have to see what programs are hiring.

The first job I took I really loved. I was doing home visits at the Children's Diagnostic and Treatment Center in Broward County, and I worked with the parents and their children within their home environment.

Q: What's the benefit of going into somebody's home and being able to see their environment?

A: When you're with them in a private session you are limited to how they present themselves in front of you and what they share with you, but if you're in their home environment the limits are a bit removed and you can take in a lot more information about their lifestyle and daily habits. Is the home clean? Does it look like they haven't been bathed or been cleaned for weeks?

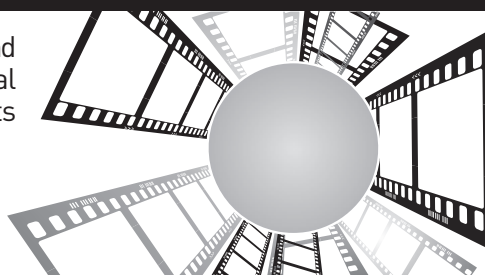
Q: Is it the more information, the better?

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...to Ganley Foundation in preventing suicides by youths

A: We never know it all, but the more we know the better we can all do. I apply that principle to our education efforts at the Ganley Foundation as well.

I went from the Children’s Diagnostic and Treatment Center to Family Counseling Services and I worked at the Journey Institute and then was able to develop the counseling program that’s at Girl Power today. I was the program manager for that.

The great thing about kids is that maybe there was an isolated trauma or they went through something longstanding, but being able to see them get better was an awesome privilege.

I was there several years, and I took a risk. I took the position that I have now as executive director of the Ganley Foundation. I accepted a position really with a very small non-profit. It was founded 10 years ago.

Unfortunately, like so many in the field of prevention, [the foundation] arose out of tragedy when Jimmy Ganley, the son of Jim and Ann Ganley, lost his life due to suicide.

I could use words like devastation, shock, but it could never fully capture [the sentiment]. To me they’re the real heroes here, because if we think there’s a stigma nowadays, I can’t imagine what it was like 10 years ago.

The courage that it took for them to still say, “we’re going to find a way to make a difference.” We began with the premise when I first signed on that all our efforts will be worth it if we just saved one life. Just one, and that’ll make everything worthwhile.

At this point I’m happy to say that we’ve lost count, we’ve been able to save countless, and our work is an act of faith too, because I have to assume there are others that I may never know about whose lives we could improve or maybe even help save because we got them the right information about how to get help just in time.

Q: How are Jim and Ann Ganley involved in the foundation?

A: Jim and Ann Ganley are the founders, and most of what we do within

our mission is part of their vision in how we want to make sure that no parent, if we can avoid it, has to bury their child. It’s unfortunate to lose a loved one in any capacity, but with suicide it can be a little bit more complicated because there’s that societal judgment.

They had the courage, they are the heroes in this because they knew they wanted to make some difference. To have that resiliency through the biggest pain and tragedy you’ve ever experienced is something I greatly admire.

Q: Are suicide rates among children and teens in Miami comparable to the national average?

A: There’s not really data to extrapolate that. Every state has a different method of violent death reporting.

In general we know that over 90% of individuals who die by suicide had a mental illness, either undiagnosed or untreated. We also know that in the US suicide is the 10th leading cause of death. What’s scary is that once you hit high school, from age 14 to 25 that rises from the 10th to the third leading cause of death.

Up to the age of 34, it’s the second leading cause of death. We know there are vulnerabilities that come with youth, and even though suicide rates are somewhat stabilized, the scary place where we’re seeing some notes of increase is in ages 10 to 14.

And throughout all 50 states, suicide rates are consistently double homicide rates.

In your average classroom of 30 students, by the time they graduate high school 20%, or 6 of those 30, will experience an episode of depression. These 6 will likely have thoughts of suicide. Three of these students will make a suicide attempt. Only one will receive any form of help whatsoever.

Q: What are contributing factors? If 90% of suicides may be due to some sort of undiagnosed mental illness...

A: Or untreated or not receiving proper treatment. Sometimes you get the diagnosis and people don’t keep moving forward to get the treatment that that they so

deserve.

Q: What could be contributing to a rise in suicide rates between 10 and 14 years of age?

A: There are a lot of factors, some of which we’ve looked at such as limited access to care.

In Miami-Dade it’s tough. I wish we had more counselors in the schools, that we had more support available, which is actually one of the wonderful things we’ve been able to work on. I’ve been able to provide staff trainings as well as parent and student presentations to help get that information into the hands of those who need it.

To a degree, stigma. When we look at issues like bullying we look at vulnerable populations within our youth, the GLTBQ or those who are socially isolated, maybe those who are getting into trouble and abusing drugs or maybe even within the special needs population. We see there are vulnerabilities, and when there are not enough protective factors to outweigh the risks that our youth are exposed to, it’s a bad combination.

With cyber bullying, it’s just another generation facing unique challenges that we’ve yet to know how to best deal.

But we can still do better than we’re doing.

Q: Are there new challenges facing the current generation of kids and teens?

A: Most of us would reflect on our adolescence as inherently awkward. There are changes in the body, complete changes taking place in the mind, changes in hormones. There are all these things going on, and adolescence is the age of onset for most mood disorders like depression or bipolar disorder.

Then we add the unique challenges this generation has in advances in technology, which there are good things that come out of it – we’re more connected, we can communicate quickly, connect with friends, and maybe all the kids have cell phones and their parents like that for safety. But what comes with all that are some of cons, which could be access to predators online, cyber bullying.

In our generation if you were bullied in the playground it was just your peers that you knew of that witnessed it and there was an end to it, at least mentally.

But nowadays, if somebody cyber bullies you or uses some form of technology in that child’s world, everyone has seen it, and thousands more can witness something versus a playground incident.

Q: Is a large part of your time spent engaging in preventative measures and going around schools, working with counselors?

A: Yes. I joke that the community is my real office, because if I’m behind a desk, I’m not doing my work.

What I’m here for is to train counselors, school staff members, to better recognize those early mental health warning signs so that instead of providing disciplinary action without a second thought, looking at it through a different lens and saying, “No. I think this might be warranting a referral as opposed to a disciplinary action.”

Since most teachers and staff and parents – most people in general – don’t have the background I have, something I might be able to see more clearly and be able to show them, they then are empowered by that information and are able to intervene in a more powerful way.

We’ve had success stories where teachers tell me, “You saved my student’s life because I took two extra seconds to check in with that kid that I wanted to yell at. I just took two extra seconds to say this isn’t like him, what’s going on? It turns out they were going through horrible things at home and they had thoughts of ending their life.”

Q: Is prevention education paramount to success in ensuring the safety of students?

A: Prevention is the key in solving almost every societal problem, especially when it comes to our children. I would hate an adolescent who has a depressive episode to struggle throughout life, because it is so unnecessary. I’d rather us be able to catch that early and give them better coping skills.

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Miami's condo euphoria treads a historically familiar trail

If you've been around Miami at least a decade you recall the euphoria that's causing condos to spring up faster than we can count.

"At this rate, we'll have 12,000 [units] just this year," architect Willy Bermello told fellow members of the Miami's Urban Development Review Board two weeks ago as more than 1,300 units in four unrelated towers sought approval.

Mind you, he only tallied what's about to rise inside the city of Miami, the county's hottest but not only boom area.

As with all of Miami's many booms, this one has unique elements, the reasons those caught up in the cycle use to assure anyone worried about a bubble that "this time is different" – which is always true right up to the point that it isn't.

This time indeed differs from the bust eight years ago: buyers now finance construction, not the banks that did it last time and certainly not developers, who for years have operated on OPM – other people's money.

So if condo values should ever fall – and it's a safe bet that they will by some percentage someday – it's the buyers

who'll be losers, nobody else.

And since most buyers are foreigners who rent out their units, bankers and developers take comfort, telling us that none of us will get hurt if the bubble bursts.

Nobody wants to talk about this, because lots of jobs and income are at stake. Why shake up the market?

Well, nobody wanted to talk about it in the past decade, either. In fact, nobody ever wants to talk about it.

Last decade, the global economic slide left more than 20,000 unsold condos in the county. We all thought they'd linger on the market – but fortunately the current boom soaked them up, leaving a hunger for more.

Developers are more than happy to feed that hunger. They are feeding it quickly. In downtown alone, 49 projects with 16,843 units are listed in preconstruction, though in their frenzy developers may already have begun some of them.

Thankfully, they're building high-quality buildings. They will fill a need. Condos won't go begging. The only question is, at what price? How long will it take foreign buyers to regain their full investments in sales or to rent profitably long term?

At the right purchase price, these units are all solid investments. But defining "the right purchase price" is tricky as the frenzy sends the sale price per

foot of new units soaring.

Before the last bust \$300 per square foot defined a luxury condo. The same units bring more than \$600 per foot today. New condos are pricing well above \$1,000 per foot – and getting their price.

The Miami Real Estate Gold Rush is an old story. Back in January 1926, Harper's Monthly Magazine ran a long tale of it by Gertrude Mathews Shelby that I read in a college class, when I marked passages about her dealings here in 1924 and 1925:

Florida land buyers "found themselves in the midst of the mightiest and swiftest population migration of history – a migration like the possessive pilgrimage of army ants or the seasonal flight of myriads of blackbirds. From everywhere came the land-seekers, the profit-seekers. Automobiles moved along the 18-foot-wide Dixie Highway, the main artery of East Coast traffic, in a dense, struggling stream."

And "On a street corner a woman selected a choice lot from a beautiful plat shown her by a complete stranger and paid him \$1,500 in crumpled carelessly hoarded bills. He gave her a receipt, but vanished. There was no land."

Don't get me wrong: today's sales are no con jobs. The condos are real, beautiful, useful and valuable – at least, they are today.

Back in the early 1920s, most of the sales were also real, with the values then

rising as much as 25% in a day, as Ms. Mathews Shelby documented. She claimed to have multiplied her own money when she quickly sold.

But less than a year afterward, the hurricane of 1926 wiped out much of downtown Miami's value. That and the stock market crash of 1929 so far depreciated the worth of what she and others had owned downtown that prices didn't return to their 1926 level until the 1950s.

All of us, condo buyers or not, face the reality that hurricanes do hit South Florida. We face the danger that sea levels are not set in stone. We face the fact that national and international economics are interlinked with Miami's as never before.

Condo buyers in the city's core also might consider that while we are adding tens of thousands of residents and their cars, we aren't adding parking for everyone or new streets for anyone. And the county is decades behind on waterworks and sewerage.

New condo towers also displace what in the 1920s buyers flocked to Miami to enjoy: the environment. Downtown's green space is gone, Brickell's is going fast.

In this edition we detail a plan to add 1 million orchids in the community. Let's hope they'll thrive on the outer walls of condo towers. Lots more walls will soon be available.



Michael Lewis

The sooner any of our economy's bubbles burst, the better

If you go back 20 or 25 years, "bubble" was not part of everyday language.

To be sure, scholars debated financial bubbles. Most famous was the stock market bubble of 1929. Before that, there was the South Sea bubble of 1720 in England. And before that, there was the Dutch tulip bubble of the 1630s.

But most Americans were blissfully ignorant of these episodes. Hardly anyone imagined bubbles as a modern problem.

Now the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme. Almost any powerful phenomenon that is deemed unsustainable qualifies as a "bubble."

Is there a "college bubble," suggesting that there are more college graduates than jobs for college graduates? Or is the tea party a "bubble," implying that its power was exaggerated and is waning?

Still, bubbles' notoriety – as a term and concept – remains grounded in the economic and financial world.

Generally, these bubbles signify a situation when some prices (say, of stocks or houses) get dramatically disconnected from their underlying economic foundations (in these cases, corporate profits or family incomes). Prices may temporarily rise on the self-fulfilling expectation that they will increase. Herd psychology rules.

But sooner or later, the disconnect becomes too great. The bubble "pops."

Prices collapse.

We're told by authorities that we may face multiple bubbles. The housing bubble is said to be returning or has already returned. Since their low point in March 2012, home prices are up 23%, according to the S&P/Case-Shiller index.

Another alleged danger is a bubble in "tech stocks," with prices grossly overvalued. Facebook's price-earnings ratio (P/E) is near 80, according to Yahoo Finance. LinkedIn's exceeds 650. By contrast, stocks' average historical P/E is close to 15. (The P/E is the ratio of a stock's price to its per-share earnings, or profits.)

We're also warned of possible bubbles in bonds, farmland and corporate takeovers.

Globally, China is struggling with a credit and housing bubble. Canada may face a housing bubble, says Alex Pollock of the American Enterprise Institute. Its run-up of house prices since 2000 (132%) actually exceeds the peak US increase (90% in mid-2006), he says.

"Bubble" is no longer a neutral word. Given its association with the financial crisis, it's pejorative. It suggests impending doom. Popped bubbles are to be feared. That's the conventional wisdom, and it is overkill.

In advanced economies with reasonably free markets, bubbles are unavoidable. Some asset prices will always get too high. This will reflect miscalculation, greed or John Maynard Keynes' "animal spirits."

The popping of these bubbles is, on the whole, a good thing. It restores a

sense of proportion and reminds people to be more careful in their decisions. Markets go down as well as up. This learning is an important, if distasteful, discipline.

It cannot be performed exclusively by regulation. Regulators, like the people and institutions they regulate, have blind spots. Most missed the housing bubble.

It's always easier to identify a bubble after it has burst than while it's inflating. The evidence often confounds. Today's national home prices, for example, are up from their lows but are still 20% below earlier peaks.

Nor do most popped bubbles cause economic calamity. They impose losses and hardship, but more often than not, these are limited.

Even the effects of the most damaging bubbles can be exaggerated. The 1929 stock market crash did not cause the Great Depression. The government's too-passive response, turning what would have been conventional downturn into a tragedy, was the main culprit. From 1929 to 1933, the government permitted 40% of US banks to fail.

Similarly, it was not simply the bursting of the housing bubble that created the Great Recession.

Consider the contrast between the 1990s' tech-stock bubble and the housing bubble. Both inflicted multitrillion-dollar losses. Yet, the first caused only a mild recession while the second plunged the economy into a deep and stubborn slump.

Why?

The difference is this: The housing bubble spawned a broader financial panic; the tech bubble didn't. No one

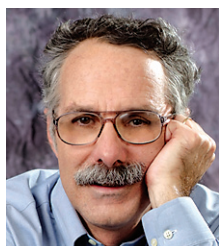
knew which banks held "toxic" mortgage securities and which didn't. Large deposits fled banks, which in turn reduced lending (banks' loans fell nearly \$600 billion in 2009). Borrowers cut their expenses. Firms laid off workers; consumers curbed spending. It was the panic that did the most damage.

Having ignored bubbles for decades, we now see them around every corner.

For more than five years, the Federal Reserve has tried to revive the economy with low interest rates. One danger of this strategy is that the cheap credit will inflate financial bubbles rather than promote spending and production.

This is the crux of today's worries about bubbles, whose existence and magnitude are – at this point – unclear.

If there are bubbles out there, the sooner they pop the better.



Robert Samuelson

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County’s turf war: whose transit needs are most neglected?

By Scott Blake

A routine agenda item for mass transit improvements before county commissioners Tuesday ignited a contentious turf debate over which areas of Miami-Dade are having their transportation needs neglected.

Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz raised the issue while commissioners addressed a proposal for enhanced county bus service along Northwest 27th Avenue corridor from the Miami-Dade/Broward county line south to the Miami Intermodal Center at Miami International Airport.

Mr. Diaz, whose District 12 includes most of Northwest Miami-Dade, said he isn’t opposed to the Northwest 27th Avenue plan, but residents in the western parts of the county are being forgotten when it comes to mass transit services.

“I think the people of the west are saying, ‘Enough is enough,’” he added. “Everybody pays taxes in this town... We’re isolating the west parts of the county.”

Commissioner Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa tried to move the item to a vote, but the debate was just getting started.

The item called for commissioners to approve an agreement between the county and the state to each provide \$2.8 million to construct a park-and-

ride facility and bus terminal at Northwest 27th Avenue and Northwest 215th Street in Miami Gardens.

Commissioners eventually approved the item, but not before tense exchanges.

Dennis Moss, whose District 9 includes the south end of the county, said he has submitted an item to the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization to expand bus rapid transit service to all of the county’s major transportation corridors.

Mr. Diaz wasn’t satisfied. He said all corridors are being addressed, except to the west.

Javier Souto, whose District 10 covers an area west of Coral Gables and South Miami, came to his colleague’s defense.

“What Commissioner Diaz is saying is totally right,” he said.

Mr. Souto said proposals for transit projects in the west areas of the county through the years have “died” or “disappeared” for years.

The population there, he said, has “exploded” and many were voters there who supported the People’s Transportation Plan.

The 2002 plan called for a half-penny county sales tax increase to fund new transportation infrastructure, but county officials since have conceded that many of the projects that were discussed be-

fore now don’t have the funding to be built.

Meanwhile, Mr. Souto said, areas such as Kendall, Westchester and Fontainebleau suffer with chronic traffic congestion, while the downtown area gets the attention with transit improvements.

“Everything seems to be going downtown,” he added. “Are we second-class citizens?”

When the commissioners moved on to the next agenda item – an agreement between the county and the state to each provide \$5.2 million to buy 11 electric-hybrid buses for the enhanced bus service along Northwest 27th Avenue – the debate started again, although the item was eventually approved.

“You can take my comments [from the last item] and put them with this one,” Mr. Diaz said. “The issue is the same thing.”

A Miami-Dade Transit Authority staffer tried to allay Mr. Diaz’s concerns by pointing out that the Northwest 27th Avenue project is not even bus rapid transit. “But at least it’s a system,” Mr. Diaz responded, referring to absence of any bus service in west areas.

The staffer also noted that the Dolphin Expressway, the county’s main east-west corridor, is slated to get bus rapid transit service in 2019.

“We’re not going to wait until 2019,” Mr. Diaz said, promising to bring a more immediate plan back to commissioners. “I’m going to come up with an item.”

He said the People’s Transportation Plan originally called for a full penny sales tax increase, but it was scaled back.

Chairwoman Sosa said, although she opposed it, commissioners decided to use some of the People’s Plan money to run the county’s existing transit systems rather than put all the money into new projects – and that remains in effect today.

“But we always have time to revisit it,” she added.

At that point, Barbara Jordan, whose District 1 in north Miami-Dade includes the Northwest 27th Avenue corridor, jumped into the discussion, saying she had been trying to remain silent.

Ms. Jordan said the county’s north corridor had been promised Metrorail service long ago but it didn’t happen and it took years to get enhanced bus service.

“Let’s be real,” she said. “Metrorail was a promise made to the community over 30 years ago to build a north [passenger rail] corridor... So to find we’re now getting [bus service] – I find it reprehensible to even be talking about it.... It’s taken over 30 years to get this.”

Film interests scrambling to rebuild incentive funds

By Catherine Lackner

Film Florida’s legislative committee on Monday reviewed this year’s state legislative defeat of new film incentive funding and strategized how to win funds next year, ranging from new leadership for a return legislative trip to a tax on online purchases.

Despite a nearly year-long campaign by the advocacy group to educate lawmakers on the economic contributions of the state’s entertainment industry, Tallahassee added no new incentives to the budget for a second year running.

Though two bills had been filed, and support for one sponsored by state Sen. Nancy Detert appeared strong, no deal had been reached when the legislative session ended May 2.

“It was a matter of philosophy, of necessary game-playing in Tallahassee,” Dave Caserta, lobbyist and managing member of the Caserta & Spiriti law firm, said at CAMACOL’s Miami Media and Film Market. “We get stuck in the game-playing. It’s not right and it’s not fair.”

“We came back with an empty bag two years in a row,” said Kelly Paige, a principal of the Level Talent Group in Tampa. Educating legislators on the return on investment (ROI) from film incentives – generally recognized as \$5.6 for every dollar – seemed effective, Mr. Caserta said.

“The ROI point has been handled,” agreed Jud French, director of research and innovation initiatives at Florida State University’s College of Motion Picture Arts. “The governor said he would sign a bill.”

“Do we need new champions?” asked Graham Winick, film and event production manager for the

City of Miami Beach.

Sen. Detert “wants to be our champion,” said Sandy Lighterman, Miami-Dade County film commissioner, who led the statewide effort to have a bill passed.

“She doesn’t like to lose,” Ms Paige said. She suggested the film group begin working with Sen. Detert early in the legislative season to hammer out a new bill that will be added to the budget in 2015-2016.

“She was there for us,” Mr. Caserta agreed. “But she has to work with the leadership.”

Seeking a means of preserving the industry that does not rely solely on Tallahassee, he has collected information and ideas from other government relations and industry groups.

For instance, a revolving trust fund that would draw revenue from hotels would “let the industry fund itself. Hotels are ancillary businesses that benefits from the film industry,” he said. Productions use 3,000 to 4,000 hotel room nights per year, so a 20- to 30-cent charge per movie could add up quickly.

A sales tax for online purchases or point-of-sale purchases might support the trust fund, Mr. Winick suggested.

“With any new revenue source, there will be a lot of people at that trough,” Mr. French warned.

The group also considered forming alliances with the state’s Visit Florida tourism organization, which has money for films promoting the state, and with the state’s Enterprise Florida economic agency.

There was also discussion of calling the next proposed legislation a jobs creation or economic investment bill, rather than an incentives bill, as incentives seem to have a negative connotation.

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New Magic City venue, Hialeah Park's pending

By Scott Blake

With a new court ruling in their favor, the owners of Miami's Magic City Casino are looking to expand their gambling operations and Florida City in southern Miami-Dade County is their most likely target.

"It's one of the plans we are considering," Isador "Izzy" Havenick, Magic City's vice president of government affairs, told Miami Today last week. "More than likely, it's going to be Florida City."

First, however, regulators at the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation must grant Magic City's parent company, West Flagler Associates, a summer jai alai permit.

The department's Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering already turned down West Flagler's application, but a ruling last week by the First District Court of Appeal

in Tallahassee directs the department to reinstate the application.

West Flagler has the option to buy a piece of property in Florida City and wants to offer betting on jai alai matches in the summer months with the chance of eventually opening a poker room there, Mr. Havenick said, but having slot machines in Florida City is not an option.

The Department of Business and Professional Regulation agreed.

"A summer jai alai permit holder, if it meets eligibility requirements, may apply for a cardroom license," department spokeswoman Tajiana Ancora-Brown wrote in an email to Miami Today. "A summer jai alai permit does not provide for an entity to be eligible for a slot machine operating license."

For now, Mr. Havenick said, West Flagler is not yet counting on having jai alai in Florida City,



Photo by Maxine Usdan

A summer jai alai site in Florida City for Magic City Casino awaits state action, said Isador "Izzy" Havenick.

given that the court's ruling only requires the state to reconsider its application and not necessarily approve it.

"This could be a while before anybody knows," he added.

Meanwhile, the department is mulling over its next step and hasn't ruled out an appeal.

"The department received the ruling last Tuesday and has not yet

determined any future legal action," Ms. Ancora-Brown wrote.

West Flagler isn't the one only seeking a summer jai alai permit. The operators of Hialeah Park Racing and Casino, another pari-mutuel, also applied for a permit and also were turned down by the department.

Like West Flagler, Hialeah Park has appealed the department's

decision before the Third District Court of Appeal in a case that is pending.

Both Magic City Casino, west of Little Havana, and Hialeah Park Racing and Casino in Hialeah offer slot machines, poker, electronic table games, and live and simulcast racing. However, jai alai betting is not one of the things they now have.

Trucks compete with park-n-ride for site near Dolphin Mall

By Lidia Dinkova

The Florida Department of Transportation is looking into truck parking as well as a park-

and-ride site on an about 63-acre publicly owned West Miami-Dade site near Dolphin Mall.

This is one of nine lots examined for overnight truck parking

as a way to deal with "severe shortage of overnight truck parking within the county," according to a study by design-consulting firm Kimley-Horn and Asso-

ciates Inc. on behalf of the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Miami-Dade Transit wants to open a park-and-ride hub on the site with about 1,000 parking spaces, the department said. The park-and-ride site, which isn't expected to be completed by 2020, would connect commuters to county bus routes 7, 36, 71, 137, 238 and the 238 weekend express; Sweetwater and Doral municipal trolleys; and four future express-service bus routes, according to Miami-Dade Transit. The park-and-ride facility would include electric-vehicle charge stations.

"The proposed Park-and-Ride/Transit Terminal station is located at a major system interchange of two major expressways with nearby residential, commercial and retail land uses," the transit department told Miami Today in an email.

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority and the Florida Department of Transportation own the site studied for both uses. The lot stretches from Northwest 25th Street south to Northwest 12th Street and the Dolphin Expressway, and from the Homestead Extension of the Florida Turnpike west to Northwest 127th Avenue, transportation department representatives said.

According to design parameters outlined in the study, a truck and tandem truck parking area requires about 17 to 26 acres, and a park-and-ride lot and transit hub require about 15 acres, according to the transportation department study being done by Pennsylvania-based GannettFleming, a planning, design, technology and construction management firm.

GannettFleming is looking at an array of factors, including a four-year crash study and average traffic volumes on surrounding roadways, as well as pedestrian, bicycle, transit, right-of-way and land-use data.

Some freight-industry experts

have said truck parking should be the priority for the site.

"Trucks first," said Barbara Pimentel, executive vice president of Florida Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association Inc., at an April 30 Freight Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. The committee of industry professionals advises the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization. "The truckers are getting fined left and right, ticketed for parking their trucks illegally whether it's a gas station, whether it's overnight [at] Wal-Mart," said Ms. Pimentel, committee chairwoman.

Miami-Dade Transit later told Miami Today it's feasible to have both uses on the site as the department is working with the Florida Department of Transportation on a project at Golden Glades where a park-and-ride hub as well as a truck-parking facility will open.

Freight committee members emphasized that if the site were to be used for both truck parking and a park-and-ride lot, there should be different entrances and exits, partially because the freight trucks are carrying "valuable cargo."

"It's a safety concern," Ms. Pimentel told the committee.

"That is why we are doing a feasibility study, [to determine] what should go here, what can be compatible, because actually there is competing interests" for this site, said Elizabeth Rockwell, Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization public involvement manager, at the meeting. She was present as a Metropolitan Planning Organization staffer, not as a committee member.

She later told Miami Today that while freight advisory committee members prioritized truck parking, the Metropolitan Planning Organization governing board hasn't taken a position on the issue.

The transportation department study is to be completed by September.

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County extends sewers to backwatered locales

By Scott Blake

Hoping to breathe new life into old commercial and industrial corridors, Miami-Dade commissioners Tuesday approved \$126 million in sewer line extensions to help existing businesses and attract new ones.

The county will use unallocated bond funds from the Building Better Communities program approved by voters for water and sewer improvements.

Commissioners agreed that extending the sewer system to underserved corridors that rely on septic tanks because no connections are available should set the stage for economic development and job growth in the future, while protecting the water supply by eliminating commercial septic tanks.

Jean Monestine of District 2, the resolution’s primary sponsor, said business in those areas can’t grow because there is no sewer service. The resolution was cosponsored by Sally Heyman of District 4.

The line extensions will impact about 2,200 parcels of property, Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department Director Bill Johnson told commissioners.

Jose “Pepe” Diaz of District 12 – to the west of Mr. Monestine’s and Ms. Heyman’s districts – said he’s not opposed to the plan, but there’s a need for such improvements in the business-industrial stronghold to the west, which he called an area of “immediate growth.”

Mr. Johnson suggested Mr. Diaz’s district isn’t alone: many spots throughout the county could use water and sewer enhancements to the tune of about \$3 billion in addition to the department’s roughly \$13 billion long-term capital improvements plan.

Department spokeswoman Jennifer Messemer explained that businesses in areas where the sewer lines will be extended still will have to pay to hook up to the lines – a connection fee – like any other users.

The \$126 million “is money that will be targeted for these commercial areas,” she added. “It’s not taking money away from other projects.”

The resolution notes that businesses in a number of older commercial and industrial areas have septic tanks that are at capacity and can’t be expanded because of environmental regulations.

“Without the availability of a sewer collection system,” it



Jean Monestine cited growth aim.

states, “businesses are not able to locate in those business corridors and existing businesses are not able to expand, resulting in the loss of new jobs and a restraint on economic development.”

Also Tuesday, commissioners approved two multimillion-dollar increases to Water and Sewer Department contracts to make improvements to its wastewater system as required by a federal consent decree.

One raises compensation from \$8.8 million to \$13.3 million for MWH Americas Inc. to start work on capital projects and assist the department’s in-house staff with “time sensitive wastewater projects” at the Central District Wastewater Treatment Plant and its related facilities.

The other raises compensation from \$8.8 million to \$13.3 million for CH2M Hill Inc. to start capital improvement projects and assist in-house staff also with “time sensitive wastewater projects” at the South District Wastewater Plant and its related facilities.

Affordable housing builders face tighter county scrutiny

By Lidia Dinkova

From now on, Miami-Dade will more closely regulate affordable-housing builders who use county surtax money to fund part of their projects.

Florida law allows counties to levy a surtax on documents associated with the transfer of property, except single-family homes. In 1984, Miami-Dade started its documentary surtax program where 45 cents of every \$100, taxable per state law, is levied at the time property transfers are recorded. The money is put in a county housing trust fund.

Now, Miami-Dade will recapture and reallocate these funds from builders who didn’t use the money within a specific period.

While county commissioners supporting the item say this is a way to give the funds to those projects that are ready for construction and that need it, commissioners who oppose it say builders usually aren’t stalling on purpose but need to obtain financing.

“Let’s say a developer comes, and they need \$10 million,” said Dennis Moss, who voted against the resolution Tuesday. “If they get \$2 million or \$3 million, they can’t do anything in six months.”

Mr. Moss suggested a work-

shop be held so developers may fully understand “the ins and the outs of developing affordable housing,” he said.

According to the approved resolution, if a recipient of documentary surtax funds doesn’t close on financing within the later of six months after award of the funds or six months after the resolution’s effective date, the money would go to a different builder of affordable housing.

Miami-Dade, however, may also provide a certain number of administrative extensions to builders without consulting the elected board.

“They get two years of staff extension, so c’mon already,” said Vice Chair Lynda Bell, a co-sponsor of the resolution. “We’ve got to be more on the side of those who need the housing.”

Miami-Dade’s approval of the resolution Tuesday was final.

Per an approved amendment of the resolution, county staff is allowed to recapture funds from a builder without consideration or vote by the full county commission. But administration has to bring an item to the commission when it comes to real-locating the money to a different project, records show.

That amendment, too, proved to be contentious.

PEOPLE

Douglas Elliman names executive VP

Douglas Elliman Development Marketing has named **Susie Glass** executive vice president of sales and marketing.

Ms. Glass will oversee all projects and implement the strategic sales and marketing plans for the firm’s \$3 billion new development pipeline in Florida. She previously was vice president of marketing.

Before joining the firm, she was vice president of marketing and sales for Cervera Real Estate, and prior to that she served as vice president of marketing of Metro 1 Properties.



Abraham Katz



R. E. Nault-Hix Jr.



Iris Escarra

Swire Properties adds design manager

Swire Properties Inc has added **Abraham Katz** as design and construction manager.

Mr. Katz will be responsible for managing and coordinating projects, including the company’s mixed-use development, Brickell City Centre.

Prior to joining the company, he founded PCU Design & Construction Management Services, where he oversaw commercial, office and residential projects in Venezuela, Costa Rica and throughout the US.

He holds a master’s degree in construction and a master’s of engineering degree from Stanford University.

UM names executive director

The University of Miami has named **Raymond E. Nault-Hix Jr.** associate dean of enrollment management and executive director of financial assistance services.

He most recently served as vice president of the Higher Education Assistance Group. He was also the associate director of financial aid at Wheaton College and director of student financial services at New England College.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Franklin Pierce College and a master’s degree in higher education leadership from Capella University.

Greenberg Traurig names land co-chair

Greenberg Traurig has named **Iris Escarra** co-chair of its Land Development Practice Group.

Ms. Escarra will work closely with Lucia A. Dougherty on continuing to develop the firm’s land use, zoning and real estate development practice in Miami-Dade County.

She is a shareholder with the firm.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Florida International University and a JD from St. Thomas University.

Youth Fair adds operations director

The Miami-Dade County Youth Fair & Exposition has named **Rosa Madrugá** director of operations.

She joined the organization in 2005 as operations assistant and most recently held the position of facilities coordinator.

She is a graduate of Miami Senior High School.



Ross Report on Real Estate

by Audrey Ross

Buyer Confidence

One of the biggest challenges a Realtor® faces in today’s market is the loss of buyer confidence. Negative media portrayals of market conditions, economic and job market instability have made buyers reluctant. A depressed market makes buyers, already worried about the economy, skittish at the thought of purchasing a home. The limited availability of credit from lenders prevents solid candidates for home ownership from even trying to qualify for a loan, deciding instead to wait it out

until the market improves. As a Realtor®, the toughest task you’ll face is in helping your clients overcome these worries and take advantage of the benefits of today’s market. Reassure your clients, but remain honest and realistic in your dealings. Today’s buyer is more research savvy, and keenly attuned to the importance of understanding the legal process involved in buying a home. When faced with a buyer whose confidence is shaken, remind them of the long-term benefits of investing in a home,

but be pragmatic in your approach to listening to their concerns. Take time to formulate a “worst-case scenario” plan of action. If clients are confident that there’s a “safety parachute”, they may be willing to buy—which is what the market needs to re-gain its strength. For professional advice on all aspects of buying or selling real estate, please contact me at aross@miamirealestate.com or 305-960-2575, or come by the office at 355 Alhambra Circle, 9th Floor, in Coral Gables.

www.miamirealestate.com

FILMING IN MIAMI

These film permits were issued last week by the Miami-Dade County Mayor’s Office of Film & Entertainment, (305) 375-3288; the Miami Mayor’s Office of Film, Arts & Entertainment, (305) 860-3823; and the Miami Beach Office of Arts, Culture and Entertainment-Film and Print Division, (305) 673-7070.

CINELOG INC. Miami. Discovery H&H. Swale Parking. WORLD OF WONDER PRODUCTIONS. LA. Million Dollar Listing. Countywide.

SOUTH BEACH TOW PRODUCTIONS INC. LA. South Beach Tow. Miami Beach citywide.

VEVISION PRODUCTIONS LLC. Miami. Voltea Pa’ Que Te Enamores. Swale Parking.

RTÉ CORK. Ireland. Creedons Weather. Crandon Beach Park.

MESQUITE PRODUCTIONS INC. Homestead. “Untitled KZK Project #3.” UF County Extension.

CG VIDEO PRODUCTIONS INC. North Miami Beach. Dreaming in Autistic Colors. South Florida Evaluation Center.

TELEMUNDO STUDEIOS/NBS UNIVERSAL MEDIA LLC. Miami. Reina de Corazones. South Florida Evaluation Center.

THE BOLLOCKS PRODUCTION LLC. North Carolina. Stills for UK Editorial. Crandon Park Beach.

WALTER GIORDANI PHOTOGRAPHY. LA. Stills for Vitnik. Crandon Beach Park, Miami Beach citywide.

SUNRISE PRODUCTION RENTALS LLC. Miami Beach. Stills for Miami Sites. Miami Beach citywide.

MUCHMORE PRODUCTIONS. West Hollywood. Stills for shoot 4. Haulover Beach Park.

SELECT SERVICES INC. Miami. Stills for Next Branded. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide, Rickenbacker Causeway Beaches.

JACOB PRITCHARD PHOTOGRAPHY. Brooklyn. Stills for Chase Mobile. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.



OMNI REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PLEASE ALL TAKE NOTICE that a Board of Commissioners Meeting of the Omni Community Redevelopment Agency is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, June 11, 2014 at 12:00 p.m., at Miami City Hall, 3500 Pan American Drive, Miami, FL 33133.

All interested persons are invited to attend. For more information please contact the OMNI CRA office at (305) 679-6868.

#19468

Pieter A. Bockweg, Executive Director
Omni and Midtown
Community Redevelopment Agencies

16-story Class A office tower set to rise in North Gables

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

A Class A 16-story office tower is planned to replace far smaller offices at 1200 Ponce de Leon Blvd. in Coral Gables.

The tower, owned by 1200 Ponce LLC, will have 96,427 square feet of commercial space and 322 parking spaces, said attorney and shareholder Mario Garcia-Serra. The present building is 13,175 square feet.

The Coral Gables Design Review Committee gave owners positive feedback Fri-

day, saying the excellent design needs just a traffic study and review of landscaping before moving to the permit and approval process.

The 28,524-square-foot site at the southwest corner of Antilla Avenue and Ponce de Leon requires rezoning of two lots now used for parking from multi-family to commercial. In addition, owners seek a conditional use approval for a bank drive-through.

Architect Alberto Cordoves said the drive-through will be away from the site’s

western boundary, where it abuts multi-family medium-density use, and will be designed with good traffic flow to avoid conflicts with residences.

“We’re treated the building in harmony with others around it and believe it will be a positive project for the city,” said Mr. Cordoves, president of Corwill Architects.

Design Review Committee members agreed the proposal would add beauty to the North Ponce area.


“You have done a great job on design and

it has been a pleasure working with you,” said Ramon Trias, committee chairman.

City Architect Carlos Mindrea said he will respond favorably when the project comes before the Board of Architects this week.

“This is one of the nicest designed projects – quite handsome,” he said.

City police requested a traffic study. Troy Springmyer, landscape services superintendent, asked for more plantings. The application also faces a Planning and Zoning Board hearing.



Public Notice

NOTICE IS GIVEN that **meetings will be held before the following Committees on the dates stipulated below** in the Commission Chambers, located on the Second Floor, of the Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First Street, Miami, Florida, wherein, among other matters to be considered, a **public hearing** will be held relating to the following proposed ordinances/resolutions:

Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee (CRC) Meeting – Monday, June 9, 2014, at 9:30 AM

- Ordinance **amending Section 26-1 of the Code to provide that non-fenced and non-gated parks need not be well-lit in order to remain open until 11:00 P.M.**

Health and Social Services Committee (HSSC) Meeting – Monday, June 9, 2014, at 2:00 PM

- Ordinance **establishing notice requirements for Condominium Associations, Homeowners’ Associations and Cooperative Associations Communities when rejecting or approving perspective buyers or renters; creating Section 11a-18.1 of the Code**

Finance Committee (FC) Meeting – Tuesday, June 10, 2014, at 9:30 AM

- Ordinance **replacing references to “County Manager” within Article XLVII relating to the Commission Auditor; amending Section 2-477 of the Code, to remove such references; amending Section 2-479 of the Code**

Infrastructure and Capital Improvements Committee (ICIC) Meeting – Tuesday, June 10, 2014, at 2:00 PM

Public Safety and Animal Services Committee (PSASC) Meeting – Wednesday, June 11, 2014, at 9:30 AM

- Ordinance relating to solicitation or collection by minors in the public right-of-way; **creating Section 21-36.2 of the Code**
- Ordinance relating to animals; **creating “Miami-Dade Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Ordinance” amending Sections 5-1, 5-9, 5-10, 5-13, and 8cc-10 of the Code**

Transportation and Aviation Committee (TAC) Meeting – Wednesday, June 11, 2014, at 2:00 PM

- Resolution authorizing Miami-Dade Transit **to make bus service adjustments to be implemented on or after June 22, 2014**

Land Use and Development Committee (LUDC) Meeting – Thursday, June 12, 2014, at 9:30 AM

- Ordinance **changing the boundaries of the City of Sweetwater, Florida and the City of Doral, Florida pursuant to Section 6.04(b) of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter to separate certain property from the City of Sweetwater and annex such property to the City of Doral; amending the Charters of the respective cities accordingly**
- Resolution **approving an Interlocal Agreement between Miami-Dade County and the Village of El Portal** in connection with the proposed annexation by the Village of El Portal
- Ordinance **changing the boundaries of the Village of El Portal, Florida, and amending the Charter of such municipality by providing for the annexation of certain lands, under and pursuant to proceedings prescribed by Section 6.04(b) of the Home Rule Charter**
- Ordinance amending **Chapter 11c of the Miami-Dade County Code, amending Section 11c-6 creating an exemption for accessory storage structures incidental to single family homes and duplexes**
- Ordinance **relating to Zoning and other land development regulations; providing for the Country Club Urban Area District; creating Sections 33-284.99.74 through 33-284.99.80 and amending Section 33-2 of the Code**
- Ordinance **extending Amnesty Period created by Ordinance 11-64; providing for a limited exception from civil penalties and liens for building code violations upon a homeowner’s compliance with the building code**
- Ordinance **relating to membership on County Advisory Boards and Community Councils; amending Section 2-11.36.1 and amending Section 20-43.2**
- Ordinance relating to Zoning; **providing for Farmers’ Markets in certain Zoning Districts; amending Section 33-13, of the Code**
- Ordinance relating to Zoning; **amending the responsibilities of the Developmental Impact Committee; amending Section 33-303.1 of the Code**

Economic Development and PortMiami Committee (EDPC) Meeting – Thursday, June 12, 2014, at 2:00 PM

- Ordinance **pertaining to Community Small Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 10-33.02 of the Code to create graduation criteria based on personal net worth**
- Ordinance **pertaining to Community Small Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 10-33.02 of the Code to create graduation criteria based on personal net worth,** (See original item under File No. 140287)
- Ordinance **pertaining to Community Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 2-10.4.01 of the Code to create graduation criteria based on personal net worth**
- Ordinance **pertaining to Community Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 2-10.4.01 of the Code to create graduation criteria based on personal net worth** [See original item under File No. 140285]
- Ordinance **pertaining to Small Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 2-8.1.1.1.1 of the Code to create graduation criteria for wholesalers and manufacturers**
- Ordinance **pertaining to Small Business Enterprise Program; amending Section 2-8.1.1.1.1 of the Code to create graduation criteria for wholesalers and manufacturers** (See original item under File No. 140286)
- Ordinance **relating to the Rules of Procedure of the Board of County Commissioners; amending Section 2-1 of the Code to require that reports prepared at the request of the Board of County Commissioners be presented to the Board and reports prepared at the request of a committee of the Board be provided to such committee**
- Ordinance **amending Ordinance 99-37 relating to straw ballots in Miami-Dade County by limiting straw ballots regarding ad valorem millage rates to fund particular services unless approved by supermajority of Board Members**

All interested parties may appear and be heard at the time and place specified.

A person who decides to appeal any decision made by any board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at its meeting or hearing, will need a record of proceedings. Such persons may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its programs or services. For material in alternate format, a sign language interpreter or other accommodation, please call 305-375-2035 or send email to: agendco@miamidade.gov.

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK
CHRISTOPHER AGRIPPA, DEPUTY CLERK

For legal ads online, go to <http://legalads.miamidade.gov>

Big wealth management firms set to merge in July

By SCOTT BLAKE

Evensky & Katz Wealth Management in Coral Gables and Foldes Financial Management in Dadeland announced this week they are merging, saying it will create South Florida’s largest independent investment advisory firm.

The firms reached an agreement last week and expect to close the deal July 14.

The combined firms expect to have more than 800 clients and manage more than \$1.5 billion in assets. Evensky & Katz has about 400 clients and about \$920 million in managed assets. Foldes has 400-plus clients and manages about \$600 million in assets.

Harold Evensky, who founded his firm in 1985, will remain as chairman of the combined firm. Steve Foldes, who founded his firm in 1996, will become vice chairman of the combined firm. The new name will be Evensky Katz Foldes Financial Management.

The Foldes firm plans to move to the Evensky & Katz office at 4000 Ponce de Leon Blvd. in Coral Gables when its lease at 9150 S Dadeland Blvd. expires at the end of October.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Mr. Foldes said he will stay with the new firm for at least six years.

The two firms say they will retain all of their employees and will have a combined staff of 25, including 13 certified financial planners.

Mr. Foldes said he agreed to the merger with the long-term welfare of his clients and staff in mind.

“I’m turning 65 this year,” he told Miami Today. “I’m looking to ensure the client relationships that I’ve had” for many years will continue and “that their needs will be taken care of.”

In a statement, Mr. Evensky said: “I couldn’t be more excited. With an amazing increase in intellectual capital and financial resources, we’ll be able to significantly grow the quality and range of services to our clients.

“A large benefit of our merger is the opportunity to significantly expand the ownership of members of the firm,” he added. “E&K is positioned to be around for decades to come.”

Matt Mcgrath, managing partner at Evensky & Katz, said: “Life as they know it will not change for clients of either firm immediately following the merger, but we certainly expect to offer

even better service over time as the benefits of this union materialize.”

The merger also will reunite Mr. Foldes with Evensky & Katz, where he was a client from 1986 to 1991, then joined the firm from 1991 to 1996 before starting his own advisory firm.

Mr. Foldes started his career as a lawyer and later turned to running the shoe manufacturing business that his father started. Along the way, he co-founded Fun-Footwear Company and led the business from \$1 million in sales and 50 employees in 1979 to \$20 million and 750 employees when he sold the firm in 1984, then moved to the Miami area.

Flush with liquidity from the sale, Mr. Foldes met Mr. Evensky and became one of his clients.

A few years later, Mr. Foldes said, he had started a footwear consulting business and was traveling too much, spending a lot of time away from his family, when Mr. Evensky suggested that he join his firm and become certified as a financial planner.

“After five years learning from the master [Mr. Evensky] and being an entrepreneur,” Mr. Foldes said. “I decided it was time to strike out on my own” and start my firm.

Mr. Foldes said he started the firm 18 years ago, managing about \$25 million to \$30 million, and garnered new clients and grew that number to about \$600 million today.

Evensky & Katz has some high-profile and institutional clients, but its “bread and butter” are professionals, entrepreneurs and small business owners who have “worked hard, did the right thing and now they want to maintain their standard of living in retirement,” said David Evensky, a partner at the firm and the founder’s son.

Mr. Foldes said his clients typically are “high net worth” individuals with wealth ranging from \$1 million to \$20 million – professionals, small business owners, entrepreneurs, corporate executives and those with inherited wealth.

About the current merger, Mr. Foldes said: “So, after months of intensive due diligence, I am returning to my roots and the people I know very well to create the very best financial planning and portfolio management firm I can imagine.”

Harold Evensky added: “We are immensely proud to once again have Steve back in the fold and we look forward to an exciting future for our clients and our firm.”

ART

Tuesday 6/10
ART SEMINAR

Life Is Art presents “Art/Work Connections #20: Social Relations with John Mahoney.” Mr. Mahoney, a consultant from Social Media Connector, will focus his presentation on creating real relationships through social media. 6:30-9 p.m. SeaFair Mega Yacht, 100 Chopin Plaza, Dock, downtown Miami. \$10. RSVP. Details: <http://awc.lifeisartfest.org> or www.expoships.com.

BOOKS

Thursday 6/5
WAITING AT JOE’S

Deeny Kaplan Lorber, author of “Waiting at Joe’s,” will discuss her book based on Joe’s Stone Crab, which opened in Miami Beach in 1913 as a modest restaurant situated behind the apartment of owners Joe and Jennie Weiss, back when Miami Beach was not yet a city, could be accessed only by ferry, and stone crabs weren’t even on the menu. Throughout its history, Joe’s has never accepted reservations. The anticipation and camaraderie in waiting two to three hours for a table has become as much a part of the dining experience as the food. The book gives a voice to the wait staff and reveals the inner workings of Joe’s in this collection of intimate vignettes. 7 p.m. Books & Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. Details: (305) 442-4408 or www.booksandbooks.com.

Friday 6/7
CHASING THE SUN

Natalia Sylvester discusses her book “Chasing the Sun.” The book is set in Lima, Peru, during a time of civil and political unrest and follows Andres as he suspects his wife has left him – again. Then he learns that the unthinkable has happened: she’s been kidnapped. Too much time and too many secrets have come between Andres and Marabela, but now that she’s gone, he’ll do anything to get her back. Or will he? 7 p.m. Books & Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. Details: (305) 442-4408 or www.booksandbooks.com.

BUSINESS

Thursday 6/5
NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce hosts “Leveraging GayBizMiami.com to Attract Customers and Build Your Brand” networking breakfast. Attendees are required to bring laptops to engage with chamber staff as they teach you how to utilize the online tools required to complete your organization profile and add SEO phrases, advertise promotions through “Shop at the Dot,” promote upcoming events, upload videos, photos and multimedia content, recruit talent with job postings and much more. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. LGBT Visitor Center, 1130 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Free. RSVP required. Details: (305) 673-4440 or scott@gaybizmiami.com.

PROFESSIONALS HAPPY HOUR
The Brazilian-American Chamber of Commerce of Florida and ADRIANA HOYOS host their first “Professionals Happy Hour of 2014.” 6-9 p.m. ADRIANA HOYOS, 4120 NE Second Ave., Miami. Free. RSVP required. Details: <http://business.brazilchamber.org/events/details/baccf-2014-1st-professionals-happy-hour-at-adriana-hoyos-1425>.

Monday 6/9
GOALS CONFERENCE
The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce hosts the annual Greater Miami Goals Conference, a two-day planning retreat for business leaders to develop the programming and goals that will drive the chamber and its vision to move the community forward. The conference will include three critical issues panels focused



GABY DURAN: The W South Beach presents its “SpeakerBox Concert Series” featuring soulful singer Gaby Duran. The evening will also feature signature cocktails inspired by the evening’s musical styling and snacks from Living Room’s menu. 7-9 p.m. June 5. W South Beach Living Room Bar, 2201 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Free. Details: (305) 938-3000 or www.wsouthbeach.com.

calendar of events

week of thursday,
june 5, 2014

on “Facing Our Future – Opportunities & Issues, Sustainable Energy Solutions, and Transportation & Infrastructure,” as well as committee workshops, premiere events and networking opportunities. June 9-10. The Biltmore Hotel, 1200 Anastasia Ave., Coral Gables. \$215-\$365. RSVP. Details: (305) 577-5433 or spevents@miamichamber.com or www.miamichamber.com.

Tuesday 6/10
MIAMI NETWORKING
The Miami-Dade-Monroe Florida District hosts CCIM Miami Networking event and reception. Attendees will network with CCIM Miami Professionals and instructors and students of the CI 102 course. Ticket includes one drink and snacks. 5:30-7 p.m. Hampton Inn, 50 SW 12th St.,

Miami. Free for members. \$10 others. RSVP. Details: (305) 591-3044 or rincer@comreal.com.

BRITISH NETWORK
The Florida Association of British Business hosts “The British Network of Miami,” an event for making local professional British contacts. 6:30-9:30 p.m. The News Lounge, 5580 NE Fourth Ct., Miami. Free. Details: (305) 371-9340 or britishflorida@aol.com or www.britishflorida.com.

Wednesday 6/11
HYPE MIAMI
The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce’s young professionals committee, HYPE Miami, hosts “A Sip of Summer with HYPE.” The event will serve as a kick off to summer where young professionals will

network and learn more about the chamber. Bunbury, 2200 NE Second Ave., Miami. \$15 advance. \$20 on site. RSVP. Details: (305) 577-5430 or elebron@miamichamber.com or www.miamichamber.com.

CHILDREN

Saturday 6/7
BUILD YOUR IMAGINATION
The Miami Children’s Museum hosts grand opening for “Tinkertoy: Build Your Imagination.” The exhibit introduces children to the construction and function of simple machines through the use of this iconic children’s play set. Attendees will try to build the tallest towers, construct their own roller coasters and drum along with “Drumming for Wellness.” 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Miami

Children’s Museum, 980 MacArthur Cswy., Watson Island. Details: www.miamichildrensmuseum.org.

DANCE

Friday 6/6
BALLET HISPANICO
The Adrienne Arsht Center presents “Ballet Hispanico.” The show features a world premiere by Miami choreographer Rosie Herrera and works by Artistic Director Eduardo Vilaro, as it explores the contemporary Latin soul through pieces that fuse ethnic dance with classical and contemporary techniques. 8 p.m. Additional performances on June 7. Adrienne Arsht Center, Ziff Ballet Opera House, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. \$30-\$90. Details: www.arshtcenter.org.

Saturday 6/7
DANCE & WELLNESS
The So You Think You Can Dance Alumni host “Type 2 Diabetes Wellness Event and Dance Class.” Participates will follow in an easy-to-follow hip-hop and Latin dance class by Fik-Shun and Janette Manrara. Event will include dance instruction, health screenings, wellness tips and information for living well with type 2 diabetes. 12-3 p.m. Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Complex, 3000 NW 199th St., Participants must be 18 years or older. Miami Gardens. Free. RSVP. Details: (844) 202-9344 or www.t2dancecrew.com.

DINING OUT

Thursday 6/5
TASTE OF THE GABLES
The 2014 “Taste of the Gables” will kick off Coral Gables restaurant week. VIP attendees will have access to all areas, plus a Bacardi open bar, additional food stations and a goody bag to take home. Must be 21 to attend. 6:30-8:30 p.m. The Westin Colonnade Hotel, 180 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. \$30 advance general admission. \$40 on site general admission. \$55 advance VIP. \$65 on site VIP. Details: (305) 569-0311 or info@shopcoralgables.com.

WHISKEY LOVERS
The Betsy-South Beach and Jack Daniels host “Whiskey Lovers Take Note: Sinatra Dinner.” The evening will include a whiskey pairing dinner featuring cocktails, passed hors d’oeuvres and a four-course dinner paired with Jack Daniels Sinatra Select and signature whiskeys by BLT chef Danny Ganem. 6:30 p.m. B-BAR speakeasy at The Betsy-South Beach, 1440 Ocean Dr., Miami Beach. \$85. RSVP. Details: (305) 673-0044 or david@bltsteak.com.

Sunday 6/8
SIMPLY SMOOTHIES
The Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU hosts “Simply Smoothies... A Sampling with Linda Gassenheimer.” Attendees will enjoy a smoothie demonstration by Ms. Gassenheimer and tasting as she presents her latest books “Simply Smoothies: Fresh and Fast Diabetes-Friendly Snacks” and “Complete Meals and Fast and Flavorful: Great Diabetes Meals from Market to Table.” 2 p.m. Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU, 301 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Free for members. Details: (786) 972-3164 or info@jewishmuseum.com.

EXHIBITS

Thursday 6/5
CARIBBEAN KICK OFF
The Pérez Art Museum Miami, host Neki Mohan of Channel 10 News, Caribbean-American Heritage Florida and The Rhythm Foundation host kick off to Caribbean-American Heritage Month. The event celebrates Caribbean culture with the museum’s exhibit “Caribbean: Crossroads of the World” and a live music by Lauderhill Steel Ensemble, who will present a preview of their upcoming Colors of the Caribbean Festival performance.

calendar of events

BOOKS



Lynn Waddell.

Fringe Florida

Lynn Waddell lectures on her book "Fringe Florida: Travels Among Mud Boggers, Furies, Ufologists, Nudists, and Other Lovers of Unconventional Lifestyles." The book explores the most unconventional of Floridians in unbelievable and spectacular places like the Fetish Con, the Holy Land Experience theme park in Orlando and Animal Amnesty Day outside Busch Gardens. 6:30 p.m. June 12. Books & Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables.

Details: (305) 442-4408 or www.booksandbooks.com.

EXHIBITS



Papalotero by Yamila Lomba.

Gallery Night

Books & Books hosts Coral Gables Gallery Night Opening for "Cubans: The Forgotten Faces," an exhibit by Yamila Lomba. The exhibition focuses

on portraits that capture the attitudes of different generations of Cubans on the island. 7-10 p.m. June 6. Exhibits through June 29. Books & Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables.

Details: (305) 442-4408 or www.booksandbooks.com.

BUSINESS



Network with young professionals.

HYPE Miami

The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's young professionals committee, HYPE Miami, hosts "A Sip of Summer with HYPE." The event is a kickoff to summer where young professionals will network and learn more about the chamber. June 11. Bunbury, 2200 NE Second Ave., Miami. \$15 advance. \$20 on site. RSVP.

Details: (305) 577-5430 or elebron@miamichamber.com or www.miamichamber.com.

OUTDOORS



Meet the Ambassador Loggerhead.

Sea Turtle Walks

The Museum of Discovery and

Science presents Summer Sea Turtle Walks. Participants will have the opportunity to witness a 300-pound Loggerhead sea turtle venture out of the ocean to lay her eggs. The evening includes an informative hands-on session about turtles (land, fresh water and salt water) with an expanded focus on sea turtles and a meet and greet with the museum's Ambassador Loggerhead sea turtle, which is almost one year old. Must be age 9 or older to participate. 9 p.m. June 5-July 10. Museum of Discovery and Science & AutoNation IMAX 3D Theater, 401 SW Second St., Fort Lauderdale. \$18 members. \$20 others. RSVP required.

Details: (954) 713-0930 or www.mods.org.

DANCE



A reflection of ever-changing diversity of Latino cultures.

Ballet Hispanico

The Adrienne Arsht Center presents "Ballet Hispanico." The show features a world premiere by Miami choreographer Rosie Herrera and works by Artistic Director Eduardo Vilaro, as it explores the contemporary Latin soul through pieces that fuse ethnic dance with classical and contemporary techniques. 8 p.m. June 6. Additional performances on June 7. Adrienne Arsht Center, Ziff Ballet Opera House, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. \$30-\$90.

Details: www.arshtcenter.org.

DINING OUT



Who will be named the best?

Coral Gables Restaurant Week

Downtown Coral Gables celebrates its seventh annual Coral Gables Restaurant Week, presented by Bacardi USA, with kick-off party. Attendees will sample signature dishes from restaurant week newcomers and veterans and begin their votes for the "Best Taste of the Gables." During the restaurant week, participating restaurants will offer special three-course lunch and dinner menus. Must be 21 or older to attend. June 5 kick-off. Runs June 9-29. Westin Colonnade Hotel, 180 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables.

Details: (305) 569-0311 or info@shopcoralgables.com.

FILM



Film screening and panel discussion.

"The Day It Snowed In Miami"

The Miami Herald Media Co., in association with WPBT2 and filmmaker Joe Cardona, presents "The Day It Snowed In Miami." The documentary, chronicling South Florida's role in the LGBT-rights movement, will be accompanied by a panel discussion with its filmmaker, community activists and moderated by Fred Fejes, LGBT scholar and director of graduate studies in the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies at Florida Atlantic University. 7-9:30 p.m. June 5. The Classic Gateway

Theatre, 1820 E Sunrise Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale. \$25-\$75.

Details: www.savedade.org/snow.

MUSIC



The Blue Album.

Weezer

The Hard Rock Live presents alt-rock's Weezer live in concert. The band, best known for songs like "Beverly Hills" and "Island in the Sun," has released nine full-length albums, six EPs and a DVD over the past 20 years. 7 p.m. June 8. Hard Rock Live at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. \$39-\$59.

Details: (800) 745-3000 or www.myhrl.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS



Pablo Francisco.

Ultimate Miami Kick-off

Magic City Casino kicks off its third season of "Ultimate Miami" with the "Ultimate Miami Voice" featuring Cynthia and Johnny O and the "Ultimate Miami Comedian" featuring Pablo Francisco. The talent competitions showcase local rising stars, paired with performances by nationally-known entertainers. Must be 21 and older to attend. 8 p.m. June 6-7. Stage 305 at Magic City Casino, 450 NW 37th Ave., Miami. \$10-\$40.

Details: (305) 460-6579 or www.magiccitycasino.com.

EXHIBITS

cont.—

6-9 p.m. PAMM, 1103 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. Free. Details: info@pamm.org.

PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum at Florida International University presents "Shards of the Past," an exhibit of pre-Columbian art from its permanent collection. The exhibition features 26 works including figures, vessels, bowls and plates from Peru, Colombia, Mexico and Central America. Exhibits through Aug. 31. Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum at FIU, 10975 SW 17th St., Tamiami. Free. Details: (305) 348-2890 or www.thefrost.fiu.edu.

Friday 6/6

GALLERY NIGHT

Books & Books hosts Coral Gables Gallery Night Opening for "Cubans: The Forgotten Faces," an exhibit by Yamila Lomba. The exhibition focuses on portraits which capture the attitudes of different generations of

Cubans on the island. 7-10 p.m. Exhibits through June 29. Books & Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. Details: (305) 442-4408 or www.booksandbooks.com.

FILM

Sunday 6/8

HELI

The film "Heli," directed by Amat Escalante, exposes with brutal realism the undercurrent of modern Mexico's most prevalent continuing problem, the war on drug trafficking. A young girl, herself involved in the occupation of drug trafficker, falls in love for the first time with a police cadet who is also struggling to survive amidst the chaos of the predicament that has defined a nation. Can any beauty exist here? Despite the harrowing harshness of what surrounds it, the answer is left to the two young protagonists and the audience to decide. In Spanish with English subtitles. 9 p.m. Additional screening on June 11. Miami Beach

Cinematheque, 1130 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. \$8 members. \$9 seniors and students. \$10 others. Details: www.mbcinema.com.

Tuesday 6/10 BLACK MAGIC

The Miami Jazz & Film Society screens "Black Magic" part two. The documentary tells of the struggle for civil rights as experienced by basketball players and coaches at historically black colleges and universities. Directed by Dan Klores, the four-hour program airs in two parts, Wynton Marsalis and Samuel L. Jackson narrate. 5-6 p.m. reception. 6-8 p.m. film. June 10 part two. African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, 6161 NW 22nd Ave., Miami. Free. Details: (305) 684-4564.

Thursday 6/12

SUMMER SHORTS

The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts hosts the 2014 "Summer Shorts Festival." 8 p.m. Additional performances through July 6. Adrienne Arsht Center for the Per-

forming Arts, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Carnival Studio Theater, Miami. \$45. Details: (305) 949-6722 or www.arshtcenter.org.

MUSIC

Thursday 6/5 BOSTON

The Hard Rock Live presents BOSTON live in concert. 8 p.m. Hard Rock Live at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. \$50-\$65. Details: (800) 745-3000 or www.myhrl.com.

Friday 6/6

FREE JAZZ

The Miami Jazz and Film Society presents "Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra" with Wynton Marsalis through a live webcast. 7:30-10 p.m. African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, 6161 NW 22nd Ave., Miami. Free. Details: (305) 684-4564.

Sunday 6/8

MIAMI THROUGH MUSIC

Orchestra Miami kicks off its

"Miami Through Music" series with a performance of "Masonic Mozart" at Miami's Historic Scottish Rite Temple. The program features Orchestra Miami's principal clarinetist Richard Hancock in Mozart's "Concerto for Clarinet," K. 622 and Tony Boutté as the tenor soloist in "Die Mauerfreude," a cantata for tenor and orchestra. 4 p.m. Miami Scottish Rite Temple, 471 NW Third St., Miami. \$5 students. \$20-\$40 others. Details: (305) 274-2103 or www.orchestra.miami.org.


Tuesday 6/10

GRAND FINALE CONCERT

The Greater Miami Symphonic Band presents its Grand Finale Concert as an end to its 35th season with David W. Brubeck, bass trombone soloist. The concert features Gary Green as music director and Robert Longfield and Tom Keck as conductors. 8 p.m. Gusman Hall at the University of Miami, 1314 Miller Dr., Coral Gables. \$5 students and children. \$15 others. Details: www.GMSB.org.

calendar of events

To submit



This is a calendar of selected events in Greater Miami for the week beginning Thursday, June 5, 2014.

Information must be received in writing two weeks before the event.

Include costs, details, relevant phone numbers and photos if possible.

Send to:

Miami Today Calendar
Attention Jennifer Lima
2000 S. Dixie Highway, Suite 100,
Miami, FL 33133
E-mail:
calendar@miamitodaynews.com

OUTDOORS
Saturday 6/7
UNDERWATER FESTIVAL
The Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science host the third annual Miami Underwater Festival, in honor of World Oceans Day. June 7-8. Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, 3280 S Miami Ave., Miami. Free. Details: www.miamisci.org.

ROYAL POINCIANA FIESTA
The Tropical Flowering Tree Society presents the 77th annual “Royal Poinciana Fiesta.” The festival includes a tree planting, picnic, tour and closing reception. June 7-9. Times and locations vary. Details: www.tfts.org.

PUBLIC MEETINGS
Thursday 6/5
CRANDON PARK COMMITTEE
The Crandon Park Amendment Committee meets. 9 a.m. Hickman Building, 275 NW Second St., 5th floor large conference room, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT
The Shoreline Development Review Committee meets. 2:30 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., 11th floor rear conference room, Miami. Details: (305) 375-2842.

CODE ENFORCEMENT
The Code Enforcement Board meets. 5 p.m. Miami City Hall, commission chambers, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-2037.

Friday 6/6
CIVIL INFRASTRUCTURE
The Civil Infrastructure Engineering Services Committee meets. 9:30 a.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., 13th floor conference room A, Miami. Details: (305) 375-2774.

INVESTIGATIVE PANEL
The Civilian Investigative Panel meets with the Complaints Committee. Noon. Civilian Investigative Panel Office, 970 SW First St., #305, Miami. Details: (305) 960-4952.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT
The Downtown Development Authority meets with the Budget Workshop Committee. 9 a.m. Downtown Development Authority, 200 S Biscayne Blvd., suite 2929, Miami. Details: (305) 579-6675.

Monday 6/9
CULTURAL AFFAIRS
The Cultural Affairs & Recreation Committee meets. 9:30 a.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

HEALTH SERVICES
The Health and Social Services Committee meets. 2 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

Tuesday 6/10
FINANCE COMMITTEE
The Finance Committee meets. 9:30 a.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

PUBLIC ART
The Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust meets. 12:30 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., sixth floor, Miami. Details: (305) 375-5436.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS
The Infrastructure & Capital Improvements Committee meets. 2 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
The Economic Development Action Committee meets. 2 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., Miami. Details: (305) 375-5661.

GROVE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT
The Coconut Grove Business Improvement District Board meet with the Marketing Committee. 9:30 a.m. Coconut Grove BID Office, 3390 Mary St., suite 130, Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 461-5506.

EDUCATION ADVISORY
The Education Advisory Board meets. 4:30 p.m. Miami City Hall, staff room, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-1532.

BEACH TRUST
The Virginia Key Beach Park Trust meets with Events/Marketing/Development Committee. 6 p.m. Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, 4020 Virginia Beach Dr., Virginia Key. Details: (305) 960-4603.

WATERFRONT ADVISORY
The Waterfront Advisory Board meets. 6:30 p.m. Miami City Hall, commission chambers, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-2037.

Wednesday 6/11
ANIMAL SERVICES
The Public Safety & Animal Services Committee meets. 9:30 a.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

AVIATION COMMITTEE
The Transportation and Aviation Committee meets. 2 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
The Arts and Entertainment Council meets. Noon. Miami City Hall, staff room, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-1415.

GROVE WATERFRONT
The Coconut Grove Waterfront Master Plan Implementation Committee meets. 5:30 p.m. Miami City Hall, staff room, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-1209.

CODE ENFORCEMENT
The Code Enforcement Board meets. 5 p.m. Miami City Hall, commission chambers, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove. Details: (305) 416-2037.

BEACH TRUST
The Virginia Key Beach Park Trust meets with Historic Preservation & Museum Committee. 6 p.m. Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, 4020 Virginia Beach Dr., Virginia Key. Details: (305) 960-4603.

Thursday 6/12
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT
The Land Use and Development Committee meets. 9:30 a.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
The Economic Development & Port Miami Committee meets. 2 p.m. Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW First St., second floor commission chambers, Miami. Details: (305) 375-1293.

VIZCAYA TRUST
The Vizcaya Trust Collection Management Committee meets. 4 p.m. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 3250 S Miami Ave., Miami. Details: (305) 860-8452.

VIZCAYA TRUST
The Vizcaya Trust Executive Committee meets. 5 p.m. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 3250 S Miami Ave., Miami. Details: (305) 860-8452.

MIAMI COMMISSION
The Miami City Commission meets. 9 a.m. Miami City Hall, commission chambers, 3500 Pan American Dr., Coconut Grove.

FIREFIIGHTERS’ RELIEF
The Miami Firefighters’ Relief & Pension Fund meets. 8:30 a.m. 2980 NW S River Dr., Miami. Details: (305) 633-3442.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Thursday 6/5
GABY DURAN
The W South Beach presents its

6 To Plan 4

TECH BASH
TigerDirect hosts its third annual “TigerDirect Tech Bash.” The evening will include technology exhibits, demonstrations and large-scale activities. 7-11 p.m. Nov. 7. Marlins Park, 501 Marlins Way, Miami. Details: www.tigertechbash.com.

OVERTOWN FUNDRAISER
St. John Community Development Corporation hosts the 15th annual “Things Are Cooking in Overtown” fundraising gala. 6:30-10:30 p.m. Aug. 22. Jungle Island, treetop ballroom, 1111 Parrot Jungle Trail, Watson Island. \$100. Details: www.stjohncdc.org.

ANNIVERSARY SEASON
The New Theatre undertakes its 29th anniversary season for 2014-2015. The season will include “Cuban Spring” by Vanessa Garcia, “The Gospel According to Jerry” by Richard Krevolin & Irwin Kula, “Twelve Angry Men” by Reginald Rose, “Woman Playing Hamlet” by William Missouri Downs and “Clybourne Park” by Bruce Norris. Sept.-June. New Theatre, 8567 Coral Way, #355, Miami. Details: www.new-theatre.org.

NIGHT UNDER THE STARS
The Lynne Mitchell Foundation hosts the 2014 “Night under the Stars.” 8 p.m. Sept. 27. The Westin Colonnade, 180 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. \$90-\$150. Details: www.lynnemitchellfoundation.org.

CAFFE ABBRACCI
Caffe Abbracci hosts celebration for its 25th anniversary. Attendees will enjoy an a la carte dinner from the regular menu and a Perrier Jouett champagne option. July 6. Caffe Abbracci, 318 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables. \$25-\$50. Details: (305) 441-0700 or caffeabbracci@comcast.net.

MIAMI RECOGNITION DINNER
The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force hosts 18th annual Miami Recognition Dinner. The fundraising event honors individuals for their outstanding contributions to the social, cultural, political and humanitarian needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Oct. 11. Fontainebleau Miami Beach, 4441 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. \$450. Details: (305) 571-1924 or www.miamirecognitiondinner.org.

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

RECYCLING MEETING
The Bureau of International Recycling holds its annual meeting. About 400 attendees expected. Ends June 6. Fontainebleau Miami Beach, 4441 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Details: www.bir.org.

CONMED TRIP
ConMed Linvatec holds its US Presidents Club Trip. About 120 attendees expected. Runs June 5-7. Eden Roc Miami Beach, 4525 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Details: www.conmed.com.

VAPOR EXPO
FBO Network Inc. holds “World Vapor Expo 2014.” About 2,000 attendees expected. June 7. Miami Beach Convention Center, 1901 Convention Center Dr., Miami Beach. Details: www.worldvaporexpo.com.

HIV CONFERENCE
The International Association of Physicians in Aids Care holds the ninth annual International Conference on HIV Treatment. About 400 attendees expected. Runs June 7-11. Loews Miami Beach Hotel, 1601 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Details: www.iapac.org.

SOURCE: GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

“SpeakerBox Concert Series” featuring soulful singer Gaby Duran. The evening will also feature signature cocktails inspired by the evening’s musical styling and snacks from Living Room’s menu. 7-9 p.m. W South Beach Living Room Bar, 2201 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Free. Details: (305) 938-3000 or www.wsouthbeach.com.

Sunday 6/8
CATWALK FOR CHARITY
Catwalk for Charity hosts its annual fundraising event with a focus on bringing awareness to the challenges of Haitian children in Miami’s Little Haiti district and those in Haiti. The event will include a runway show featuring designs from the 2014 Spring Collection by Nicole Miller and Gustavo Cadile. The fashion show will be hosted by supermodel and philanthropist Lydia Hearst. \$150 general admission. \$250 VIP. Details: www.catwalkforcharity.org.

Monday 6/9
WEDDING SALON
The Wedding Salon returns to Miami for another year. The expo includes cake tastings, cocktails, honeymoon giveaways and beauty makeovers with celebrity make-up artists. 4-8 p.m. Epic Hotel, 270 Biscayne Blvd. Way, Miami. \$15 with discount code: M14CLP. Details: www.weddingsalon.com.

Thursday 6/12
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
100 Black Men of America, in part-

nership with the US Army, presents the 28th annual national conference “Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders for Success.” Attendees will network with mentoring and education experts, educators, leading entrepreneurs, corporate and nonprofit executives and entertainers. Conference attendees will also be invited to experience elements of the Army lifestyle through an interactive exhibit in the 100 Lounge in the Great Hall 5 and 6 to learn about the numerous educational resources that the Army provides. June 11-14. Westin Diplomat, 3555 S Ocean Dr., Hollywood. Details: www.100blackmen.kintera.org/28thconference.

THEATER
Thursday 6/5
GREAT GOD PAN
The Zoetic Stage and the Adrienne Arsht Center host opening night for “The Great God Pan,” a play by Amy Herzog and directed by Stuart Meltzer. The play follows Jamie and his life in Brooklyn with a beautiful girlfriend, a budding journalism career and parents who live just far enough away. But when a possible childhood trauma comes to light, lives are thrown into a tailspin. 7:30 p.m. Additional performances through June 8. Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Carnival Studio Theater, Miami. \$45. Details: (305) 949-6722 or www.arshtcenter.org.



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1803 4/5.5 Spectacular unit, private elevator.....\$3.750M
PH3401 5/6/2 Impeccably furnished by Artefacto.....\$9.0M

Carbonell - 901 Brickell Key Blvd.
1903 2/2.5 Italian kitchen and bathroom.....\$935K

Three Tequesta Point- 848 Brickell Key Dr.
501 3/2.5 Spectacular direct bay views, spacious.....\$1.450M

Two Tequesta Point- 808 Brickell Key Dr.
1707 1/1.5 Large unit, marble floors, built-in-closet.....\$495K
2906 1/2.0+Den Marble floors, water & city views.....\$719K
2601 3/2.5 Impeccable corner unit, amazing views.....\$1.6 M
704 3/3.5 Beautiful, renovated, waterfront unit.....\$1.790M

Courts Brickell Key - 801 Brickell Key Blvd.
1810 2/2.0 Amazing views, marble floors.....\$639K
3010 2/2.0 Great unit, full service building.....\$649K
1011 2/2.5 Excellent amenities, gym, sauna, pool.....\$650K

Courvoisier Courts - 701 Brickell Key Blvd.
1805 2/2.0 Completely remodeled baths, 3 parking.....\$570K
203 3/2.5 Right on the water, completely updated.....\$995K

Isola
1711 1/1.0 Remodeled, wood floors, water views.....\$320K
1404 2/2.0 Spectacular upgrade unit, wood floors.....\$495K

Brickell Key One- 520 Brickell Key Dr.
A1511 1/1.5 Spacious one bedroom, "AS IS" sale.....\$315K
A1916 2/2.0 Spectacular corner water views.....\$785K

Brickell Key Two - 540 Brickell Key Dr.
1402 1/1.0 Spectacular water view, remodeled.....\$315K

BRICKELL
950 Brickell Bay Dr. 3603 1/1.0 New wood floors.....\$440K
90 SW 3 St. 4202 2/2.0 Amazing views.....\$539K
950 Brickell Bay dr. 1407 2/2.0 Brand new carpet.....\$540K
1420 Brickell Bay Dr. 303A 3/2.0 Water views.....\$615K
500 Brickell Ave. 1702 2/2.0 Great location.....\$645K
1331 Brickell Bay Dr. 3609 2/3.0 Marble floors.....\$1.785M
244 Biscayne Blvd. 4203 3/3.0 Sophisticated.....\$2.5M

MIAMI
865 NE 133 St. 2/1.0 Single Remodeled, new roof.....\$150K
444 NE 30 St. 801 1/1.0 Loft style building.....\$215K
3324 NW 23 Ave. 3/2.0 Duplex Updated unit.....\$239K
605 W Flagler St. PH2 2/2.0 Corner unit.....\$259.9K
1211 Pennsylvania Ave. D-2 1/1.0 Remodeled.....\$279K
4101 SW 62 Ave. Single 3/1.0 Spectacular house.....\$280K
10750 NW 66 St 310 2/2.0 Direct lake view.....\$320K
200 Biscayne Blvd. 3114 1/1.5 Fantastic City view.....\$535K

200 Biscayne Blvd. 3914 1/1.5 Furnished unit.....\$549K
50 Biscayne Blvd. 4404 2/2.0 plus den, wood floors.....\$665K
2020 N Bayshore Dr. 1709 1/2.0 Brand new furn.....\$819K
50 Biscayne Blvd. 5110 3/2.0 Excellent corner unit.....\$875K
2020 N Bayshore Dr. 1407 2/2.5 Amazing views.....\$1.379M
11080 Paradel St. Single 5/4.5 Impeccable house.....\$1.799M
3471 Main HWY 308 4/4.2 Villa, Partial Water Views.....\$1.849M
17121 Collins Ave. 2308 3/3.5 Direct water views.....\$2.995M
2960 NE 164 St. 7/6.5 Singe Boaters Paradise.....\$3.280M

SPAIN
Les Voltes 14 14 2/1.0 Overlooking the sea.....\$265K

RENTALS IN BRICKELL KEY
900 Brickell Key Blvd. 1905 2/2.5 Beautiful unit.....\$5,900
901 Brickell Key Blvd. 805 2/2.5 water views.....\$4,250
901 Brickell Key Blvd. 304 3/3.5 Spectacular unit.....\$8,250
848 Brickell Key Dr. 3603 1/1.5 Furnished.....\$3,100
848 Brickell Key Dr. 501 3/2.5 Direct bay views.....\$6,500
808 Brickell Key Dr. 2204 3/3.5 Direct bay views.....\$6,700
801 Brickell Key Dr. 3010 2/2.0 Excellent cond.....\$3,200
801 Brickell Key Blvd. 1204 3/3.0 Great views.....\$3,700

701 Brickell Key Blvd. 502 2/2.5 Remodeled unit.....\$3,250
770 Cloughton Island Dr. 409 1/1.0 New floor.....\$1,850
520 Brickell Key Dr. O203 Office with 3 parking.....\$2,400
520 Brickell Key Dr. A503 2/2.0 Marble floors.....\$2,800
520 Brickell Key Dr. A1615 2/2.0 Remodeled.....\$3,200
540 Brickell Key Dr. 1617 2/2.0 Nice clean unit.....\$2,700

RENTALS IN OTHER AREAS
1290 NE 191 St. 1290 2/2.5 Two story townhouse.....\$1,350
1542 NW 45 St. Townhouse 3/2.5 Like new.....\$1,550
11818 SW 92 Ter. Townhouse 3/3.5 Renovated.....\$1,900
60 SW 13 St. 1618 1/1.5 Nice clean unit.....\$2,150
950 Brickell Bay Dr. 2504 2/2.0 Bay & City views.....\$2,850
500 Brickell Ave. 602 2/2.0 City, park & BK views.....\$2,900
1050 Brickell Ave. PH3418 1/1.5 Tow level PH.....\$3,000
Santo Domingo 3/4.0 A-3 Spectacular PH with pool.....\$3,000
950 Brickell Bay Dr. 4005 2/2.0 Remodeled unit.....\$3,100
2020 Bayshore Dr 809 1 1/2.0 White marble floors.....\$3,350
50 Biscayne Blvd. 5110 3/2.0 Excellent location.....\$4,700
999 Brickell Ave. Suite 520 6 private offices.....\$7,770
2124 Fisher Island Dr. 2124 3/3.5 New Kitchen.....\$13,000
6 Turtle Walk Single 5/6.0 Excellent location.....\$13,500

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County votes 10-2 to extend Heat’s lease 10 years, pays more

By Scott Blake

County commissioners Tuesday wiped out an infamous profit-sharing deal with the Miami Heat for use of the county-owned American Airlines Arena that resulted in the county getting nothing for years until the Heat offered up \$257,134 last year.

Mayor Carlos Gimenez, who with his staff and county attorneys negotiated the new agreement, and most commissioners praised the deal as a significant improvement from the original deal from the county’s perspective.

The mayor said the deal both “recognizes the value of the Heat and protects taxpayers.”

Representatives from the Heat, who are preparing to play for their third straight NBA championship this week, described the deal as enhancing the franchise’s long-term security in Miami.

“Our fan base is growing. The downtown area is growing. It’s a win-win situation,”

former Heat star-turned-team-executive Alonzo Mourning told commissioners. “We’re going to continue to do our best to represent each and every one of you.”

Commissioners voted 10-2 to approve the deal, with Xavier Suarez and Lynda Bell dissenting.

Mr. Suarez expressed concerns about giving away too much in the arena’s naming rights. Ms. Bell said the new deal is better than the old one but questioned whether the county could have done better still.

“Is this the best that Miami-Dade County can do?” she asked.

The deal rearranges parts of the Heat’s original agreement with the county, due to expire in 2030, and adds 10 years to it.

The original agreement had a profit-sharing clause that was so broadly written that it allowed the Heat to include numerous expenses that, according to the mayor’s office, re-



‘Our fan base is growing. The downtown area is growing. It’s a win-win situation.’

Alonzo Mourning

sulted in nothing for the county during the first 13 years of the arrangement.

The new agreement scraps that part and replaces it with a fixed annual payment from the team – \$1 million, retroactive

to last year – continuing through 2030, then increasing to \$1.25 million from 2031 to 2035.

Under the original agreement, the county pays \$6.4 million a year toward the arena’s “operational and maintenance expenses.”

The new deal will increase the county’s annual payment to \$8.5 million from July 2031 through June 2035, but allows the county to pay nothing during the final five years of the deal from 2036 to 2040. The money for the annual payments comes from the county’s hotel and tourist tax collections.

Also, for the period from July 2030 through June 2040, the new deal gives the county the right to sell the arena’s naming rights or transfer them to the arena manager, a Heat-affiliated firm named Basketball Properties Inc.

If the county gives the naming rights to the manager, it would avoid having to pay the manager a \$2 million annual naming rights payment.

“It is in the best interest of the county to ensure that the Miami Heat remain as users of the arena for the long-term,” Deputy Mayor Ed Marquez wrote in a memo to commissioners.

“This agreement accomplishes that goal by extending the current arena agreement for an additional 10 years, and, also addresses numerous financial provisions that, given the passage of time of these agreements, more equitably adjust the county’s annual payment made to the arena manager, as well as provide a guaranteed influx of revenue to the county.”

Mayor Gimenez said the Heat also will be expected to invest more in improvements to the arena with the pledge to ensure it remains “a first-class” facility.

In addition, commissioners amended the agreement to call for the mayor and the team to make “a good faith effort” to secure an NBA all-star game at the arena in coming years.

Suit to invalidate city’s Grove development plans tossed out

By John Charles Robbins

The City of Miami was victorious in a lawsuit that challenged the validity of a 2013 referendum about future development of the Coconut Grove waterfront.

At the conclusion of a hearing last week in the 11th Judicial Circuit Court in Miami, a judge threw out the case of Graciela Solares against the city.

Attorneys for Ms. Solares, a community activist, argued that the ballot language was vague and misleading.

On May 30, Judge Darrin Gayles granted a summary judgment to the city, finding sufficient notice had been given of the referendum and that the ballot title and summary accurately reflected the city commission’s resolution to enter a lease with Grove Bay Investment Group LLC, and adequately informed the public of its contents.

In the summer of 2013, the commission agreed to lease about 7 waterfront acres in Coconut Grove to Grove Bay

Investment Group LLC for \$1.8 million a year upon completion, and about \$17.9 million of privately-funded improvements to redevelop a marina, construct restaurants, improve the public bay walk, fund a portion of a parking garage and other improvements.

But the plan to revamp the waterfront in an area that includes Scotty’s Landing and the Chart House restaurant stirred opposition, with some community members raising concerns about the proposal, citing the size, especially of the garage, the added retail and supposed loss of park space.

The issue was put to a referendum in November for city voters to decide.

Vote results were 61% for and 39% against the proposal. The vote cleared the way for the city and development firm to sign a 50-year lease.

Ms. Solares sued in October, initially requesting an injunction to prevent the vote. Judge Jerald Bagley denied that request.

Another lawsuit related to the water-

front plan, Kneapler v. City of Miami, is pending disposition.

The proposal to redevelop the waterfront east of City Hall includes two formal restaurants, Shula’s and Oceana, and a causal restaurant, Pub & Grub, in addition to waterfront retail, mostly in the former airplane hangar closest to City Hall.

The hangars, like city hall itself, are left over from when the area was the terminal of Pan American Airways. The hangars have been designated historic, and will even dictate design of the garage, as it won’t rise above the height of the hangars, according to city officials.

In April, the Miami Parking Authority announced plans to move ahead with the garage.

The Harbour parking garage is planned to rise east of Pan American Drive and north of City Hall, near the large hangars.

On April 2 the city’s Off-Street Parking Board agreed to hire architects Wolfberg Alvarez to design the multi-

use facility, with design fees not to exceed \$375,000.

Parking Authority CEO Art Noriega noted that legal challenges to the referendum still loomed, “but for our piece, we’re moving forward.”

He said in April he wanted to select a design team to avoid losing time.

The property where the new mixed-use garage will be built is also bordered by South Bayshore Drive and Chart House Drive, according to the waterfront proposal.

Design firms were given guidelines for the garage, including a requirement that the building reflect the architectural style, character and scale of the surrounding area. It should be low-scale, not surpassing three stories – that is, not higher than the hangars.

The garage is expected to have at least 40,000 square feet of ground floor retail and about 500 parking spaces between the structured parking and any added surface parking in the abutting areas.

Miami may allot \$2 million more to develop Regatta Park

By John Charles Robbins

The plan to revive a key portion of the waterfront in Coconut Grove is expected to get a big boost this month, to the tune of \$2 million for improvements.

City planners made the announcement at the third of three public meetings on the Regatta Park Plan on May 29 at City Hall.

Cesar Garcia-Pons, deputy director of planning and zoning, told the crowd he had exciting news about the project. He said the city commission will consider allocating an additional \$2 million to get Phase 1 off the ground.

“It’s basically doubling the budget,” Mr. Garcia-Pons said. The money would come from impact fees that developers pay the city.

The city initially set aside \$2 million for the first phase, which included the cost to demolish the old Coconut Grove expo center. With the large expo center now removed, the city has just over \$1

million left for the initial work at Regatta Park.

City planners have promised the first major change might be coming yet this year with grass being placed on the giant footprint of dirt left by the razing of the expo center.

The plan calls for this area, west of City Hall, to become the Great Lawn – a wide open green space framed by rows of existing and mature trees.

“We’re putting a lot of grass back,” Mr. Garcia-Pons said.

Planners said \$3 million will allow the city to accomplish several parts of Phase 1.

Phase 1 shows 5.5 acres of lawn, a parking lot with 184 spaces and a second with 172 spaces, 500 linear feet of bike trail, 1.5 acres of gardens, 1,100 linear feet of multiple use paths, trees, 1 acre of open space set aside for a proposed community center, a half-acre carved out for a future amphitheater, a dockmaster’s building (currently under construction), 2 acres for a sailing cen-

ter, and 1,000 linear feet of bay walk and promenade.

Planners reminded residents present that the boat launch near the end of Southwest 27th Avenue won’t be moved soon. They explained earlier the reason is officials haven’t found a place to move it and there’s no money now to build a new launch.

However, the search for a suitable new site for the boat launch continues, said Mr. Garcia-Pons.

With the boat launch staying put for now, it delays at least two other planned changes: extending Southwest 27th Avenue beyond South Bayshore Drive into a pier, and moving the sailing clubs to that location.

Mr. Garcia-Pons began the meeting with an overview of public comments from the March meeting. He said one main desire expressed by most was: “We want to keep open water views.”

The wide open feeling was illustrated when the planning staff presented col-

orful before-and-after images in a PowerPoint presentation.

The master plan for the entire waterfront adopted in 2008 includes kayak rental, a tot lot, a skating park, dinghy tie-up, picnic island lookout, ecological gardens, a bike trail, a cultural and community center, a lawn amphitheater and more. The estimated price tag for all of that is about \$26 million.

Major commercial uses on the waterfront are targeted and limited to the land east of Pan American Drive.

The stated goal of the overall master plan is “to transform the underutilized waterfront into more cohesive and vibrant public spaces and reorganizes the Expo Center and Dinner Key Marina areas into a concentrated working waterfront for recreation, education, and live-aboards.”

The city is seeking funds from the Florida Inland Navigational District to improve and expand the bay walk and for other waterfront improvements.

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