

Applications for Kerdyk Music Scholarship being accepted

BY GLORIA BURNS

The Kerdyk Family Fund, managed by Coral Gables Community Foundation, will be offering \$6,000 in music scholarships again in 2007. Scholarship recipients will be chosen from applications received from graduating seniors planning to major in Music (piano, violin, other orchestral instruments, voice or classical music history). Dance and ballet will be addressed in another manner according to William Kerdyk, Sr., one of the funds' donor-advisors.

Applicants must be a student of a Miami-Dade County High School: public, parochial or private. They must have a 3.00 weighted GPA or better. In addition, they will need to submit a letter of recommendation, their high school transcript and a short essay (100

words or less) stating their qualifications and why they want this scholarship.

A panel of community judges representing the fields of education, music and business will make the selection. Should ties occur, preference will be given to Coral Gables residents first and then Coral Gables High School students second.

Last year's scholarship recipients were Coral Gables High School senior, **Stephanie Diaz**, Coral Reef Senior, **Alaina Galliford**, and **Lisette Mediavilla**, of the New World School of the Arts.

To apply, send the above mentioned information to William Kerdyk, Sr., 2631 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL, 33134. 305 446-2586. **Deadline for application is April 1, 2007.**

If you have any QUESTIONS or COMMENTS you can reach us via email at cnceditor@gate.net

Executive Director's Discretionary funds help families in need, programs

Recent grants from Coral Gables Community Foundation Executive Director's Discretionary Fund have assisted families in need as well as provided funding for local programs and initiatives. This donor-advised fund is made possible through the generosity of philanthropist **Kirk Landon**.

Praising Landon for his good works, **CGCF Executive Director, Gloria Burns, states, "Kirk Landon is a man who has blessed so many worthy organizations with his generosity over the years,"**

Below are grants awarded over the last few months from the Foundation Executive Director's Discretionary Fund.

\$500 — To assist a needy family through the Interact Club of Miami Christian School which operates under the sponsorship of The Rotary Club of Coral Gables. The Club has adopted a family and is raising funds to provide them with a holiday meal but needs additional help to purchase gifts this season. The family of 3 boys, who are in high school, and 1 girl, who just started college, loss their father unexpectedly in August. The mother is trying to make ends meet with her one job and the daughter has also taken an extra job while going to college to help out with

the financial situation. As you can imagine, this will be a hard holiday season — the first one without their father. This donation will help lighten a heavy burden for this family.

\$1,000 — To St. Mark's Lutheran Church's "Helping Hands Fund" to help a family in dire need. A hardworking mother with two children was recently abandoned by her verbally abusive husband without enough money to even pay the rent. The funds will help pay living expenses over the next several months to get the family back on its feet.

\$1,500 — Junior Orange Bowl Committee to help underwrite \$10,000 in prize money for the 2006 Caroling Competition. Participants in this program come from around Miami Dade County. The program also provides a week of great choral concerts in front of the 550 Building free to the public during the holiday season.

\$500 — To The Villagers who are hosting a tour of private homes and using the proceeds for preservation projects and to help fund scholarships for students interested in pursuing a career in historic preservation.

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Amendment 3: Voters, what were you thinking?



R. Kenneth Bluh

KENNETH'S COMMENTARY

Do you enjoy going into a restaurant and finding the air clean and free of cigarette and cigar smoke? Do you appreciate the fact that our children and grandchildren are in smaller classes, enabling them to receive more attention from their teachers?

Well, guess what, if our state constitution, as we just amended it, existed when you and I added the classroom size and no smoking in restaurants amendments to the constitution, they would not have passed.

What, you say? We went out and covered the entire state of Florida, obtained tens of thousands of petition signatures, petitioned for our Florida Supreme Court's approval of the amendment's wording, got it on the ballot, and campaigned to see that sufficient voters approved the amendments. They did support the amendments — and they became law.

That would not have happened under our constitution as it just was amended. You see we (not I) amended our state constitution a few weeks ago by approving Amendment 3 which increased the percentage of votes required to amend the constitution from 50 percent plus one vote, to 60 percent plus one vote.

It seems the commercial with a bunch of rowdy guys playing poker, smoking cigars and kidding about the ease of amending our constitution fooled you into thinking that the amendment was a good idea.

Sure we made a mistake and passed the foolish "pig" amendment. Everyone makes a mistake. And, perhaps we were premature in passing the "bullet train" amendment. Although, someday we will see super fast trains run the length of the state.

Where did we go wrong you ask? First, we watched TV, read the papers, listened to the radio, and took as gospel the "pitch" being presented in those 30-second or one minute commercials. Remember to ask yourself, when listening to one of these commercials, who paid for it and what are they going to get out of it?

Let's talk about Amendment 3 that passed with 58 percent of the voters approving the amendment. The funny thing is that if the amendment, as proposed, already was in our constitution, it would not have passed. It would need 60 percent of the vote, and it only got 58 percent.

So why was it "sold" to us and who benefited?

Members of the Florida House of Representatives and Senate, who, like most other elected officials, want our support when running for office. Once in, they want us to leave them alone to the run the state, the city, the county, the nation, as they see fit — many times for their personal benefit and not for the good of the people.

The answer is simple, and obvious. The members of our House and Senate do not want us amending the constitution unless it is an item that benefits them. Convincing us that restricting ourselves to a 60 percent plus one vote was for our benefit was designed to reduce the voters' ability to amend our constitution. It is called "taking away our control."

And they were successful. Now the question is — who benefits? Who put up the big dollars to market the commercials that "sold" us on selling ourselves down the river? The answer is obvious. They are the organizations and businesses that benefit from lobbying the legislature for laws that will make their interests more profitable.

Their rule is to spend big dollars to get their "boys" (and girls) elected. They want legislators who will pass the bills that will benefit their interests. Their next rule is see to it that the voice of the voters cannot be heard by making it more difficult to change the rules by which our state is governed. This is accomplished by restricting our ability to amend our constitution.

They were successful. We were fooled into restricting our ability to amend our constitution. It is not the legislators' constitution. It belongs to the citizens of the State of Florida.

How do we get that "right" back? We must go back out on the streets of Florida. Get petitions signed amending the amendment back to 50 percent plus one vote, get the wording approved by the Florida Supreme Court, raise money to market the commercials to vote, get out on the street at election day and see to it that 60 percent plus one — not 50 percent plus one — vote for the amendment. Talk about shooting ourselves in the foot.

See what we did to ourselves by not "looking behind" the commercials and asking who benefits — special interests or the residents of the great State of Florida?

We were bamboozled. Legislators, shame on you for deceiving us. Shame on us if we let them fool us again.

We appreciate your opinions on this column whether in agreement or disagreement. Please send your comments to (fax number) 305-662-6980 or email to <rkbluh@communitynewspapers.com>. The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of this newspaper, its editors or publisher.

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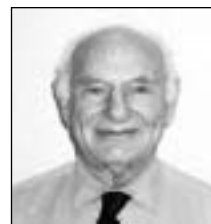
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GLORIA'S GAB, from page 1 --

was packed to overflowing with well wishers attending the event. Among the VIPs in the crowd were **City Manager David L. Brown, Vice Mayor Maria Anderson, and Judge Juan Ramirez**, all showing their support and appreciation for the bank and what it means to the entire community. Mr. Best, along with **Mayor Don Slesnick, Vice Mayor Maria Anderson, Commissioners Chip Withers, Ralph Cabrera, William Kerdyk, Jr.** and the entire Board of Directors officiated the Bank of Coral Gables official opening by cutting the ceremonial ribbon. In addition, a Proclamation was presented to the Bank of Coral Gables CEO and President, Terry Best on behalf of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.

Guests enjoyed spirits provided by Southern Wine and Spirits and Bacardi while enjoying the exotic car display provided by The Collection.

The University of Miami's Women's Guild was treated to a talk by Women's **Head Basketball Coach Katie Meier**. Katie Meier, who graduated from Duke with an English major, found her passion for coaching while she played professional basketball in Belgium. It seems she spent her down time coaching a team of young 13 year-old girls while there, learning the Flemish language in the process and discovering that coaching was the thing she loved most. After successfully coaching several winning college teams and being recruited by many others, South Florida was fortunate to have her choose to take the head coaching job at the University of Miami.

In her presentation to the Women's Guild, Coach Meier talked about putting a face on women's sports at UM and asked the group to call her if she or her players could participate in charitable events or community activities, as volunteers or speakers. If Katie Meier's enthusiasm for her team are any indication, UM Women's Basketball is in great hands and, in fact had quite a nice crowd for the season opener on November 10th and they won.

Among the many faces seen at that luncheon were **University of Miami's Virginia Miller and Christine Casas, Thelma Gibson, Jeannett Slesnick, Janet Barone, Audrey Finkelstein, Maxene Graham, Ruth Kassewitz, Margaret Steele, Cynthia McNeill, Ruthe Howard, Jane Noppenberg and Blanche Brownell**, to mention a few.

The Miami Council of International Visitors held their 47th Annual Meeting and Installation on Thursday, October 26th, at the Sonesta Hotel & Suites

Coconut Grove. A wine tasting on the outside patio gave the crowd a chance to socialize before the sit down dinner that featured **Richard T. Arndt**, author of *The First Resort of Kings*.

During the evening, *The Florida Immigration Advocacy Center* and the *Lucha Project* were presented with the Rosa S. O'Neill Award for Outstanding Community Resource. Also, receiving a life-long honorary membership was June Frost for her years of service and dedication to MCIV. Outgoing President Christina Prkic was recognized for being a *Citizen Diplomat Extraordinaire* with a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of Miami.

The list of new officers installed that evening by **Judge Marcia G. Cook** were **Janet Stearns, president; Carolina Rendeiro, 1st vice- president; Gavin Macphail, 2nd vice- president; Alyce Neji, Secretary; Sharon Fine, treasurer; Christina Prkic, past president.** Directors installed were **Desmond Alufohai, Ana Bierman, Santiago Cueto, Carmen Dominguez, Marvelle McIntyre-Hall, Vivian Miller, Mel Morgenstern, Lucy Vanpelt Sexton, Mohammad Shakir, and Jeanne Westphal.**

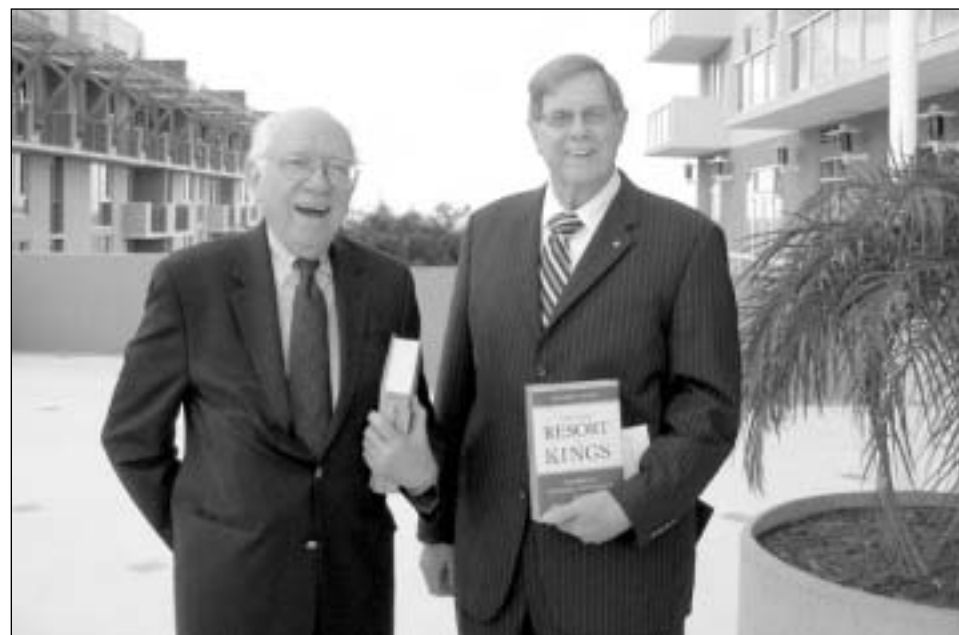
Among the guests were **Hank Langston and Ricardo Tano-Feijoo**, representing the event sponsors Gulliver Schools and Holly Real Estate respectively.

In other news, Commercebank, one of the largest privately held banks headquartered in South Florida, recently hosted "Zoo Week", a six-day celebration at its Tamiami Banking Center commemorating the new Commercebank Children's Zoo at Miami Metrozoo. Commercebank has entered into a long-term alliance with Miami Metrozoo and the Zoological Society of Florida (ZSF) to rename and upkeep its children's zoo as the Commercebank Children's Zoo. During Zoo Week, local residents and their children were invited to the Commercebank Tamiami Banking Center where they enjoyed free activities including face painting, magic shows, spooky storytelling, caricaturists, and a special appearance by Metrozoo Communications Director Ron Magill and his animal friends. The branch personnel also raffled free Metrozoo annual passes and "Behind the Scenes" Metrozoo tours among the attendees.

Complementing the new Commercebank Children's Zoo and the "Zoo Week" celebration, Commercebank partnered with the Jack D. Gordon Elementary school in Tamiami to conduct a drawing contest among their students. More than 1200 students participated, the



Evelyn Budde, UM Women's Basketball Head Coach Katie Meier and Jeannett Slesnick.



Author Richard Arndt with Hank Langston at MCIV Installation Dinner.

school art teachers selected 12 finalists, and Commercebank displayed their artwork at the Tamiami Banking Center throughout "Zoo Week" selecting three finalists that received a savings account with a monetary deposit. All finalists received a free family annual pass to Miami Metrozoo. Commercebank also donated a \$500 check to the school Art Program.

Miami Metrozoo is rated among the top ten zoos in the U.S. With close to 300 developed acres on a 740-acre parcel of land, Metrozoo is the only zoo in the continental United States located in a subtropical climate. Miami Metrozoo is located at 12400 SW 152 street; Miami, FL 33177. General Zoo Admission is: \$11.50 per Adult, \$6.75 per Child (3-12), \$10.50 per Senior (65 and older). Children under two, ZSF members and parking are free. Metrozoo's hours are 9:30 am - 5:30 pm; ticket booths close at 4pm. For more information, please call 305-251-0400 or visit www.miamimetrozoo.com

Finally, Coral Gables Chamber held a Cultural Art Stroll on November 9th. More than 90 Chamber members and guests were welcomed by University of

Miami President **Donna Shalala** and then toured three art galleries in one night. Guests enjoyed great food and entertainment in a beautiful setting thanks to sponsorship provided by UM and BlueCross Blue Shield Florida. Helping orchestrate the event were UM's **Vivian Miller and Sarah Artecona**; Montica's **John O'Rourke**; Actors' Playhouse **Barbara Stein**; and the Chamber staff.

Until next week, keep making each day count.

Keeping up with what's happening in our community is quite a challenge and I am certain there are many activities I miss. If you would like to submit information for this column, please fax your news to my attention at 305 661-0954 or send your news via e-mail to galburns@aol.com.

Gloria Burns is executive director of Coral Gables Community Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization with a mission of promoting programs and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for people living and working in Coral Gables. For more information on the Foundation, call 305 446-9670.

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Lettie Bien to speak, Nov. 28, at Coral Gables Area Democratic Club

BY SUSAN FUHRMAN

Lettie Bien, a former president of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, will speak to the Coral Gables Area Democratic Club on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 7 p.m., at the Coral Gables Youth Center, 405 University Dr.

Bien assumed the position of president/CEO of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce on Apr. 1, 2002. Prior to that she was an attorney and a certified court mediator with her own private practice. She is a past chairman of the Military Affairs Council of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and a founding member of the Miami-Dade Defense Alliance.

Bien is a frequent speaker on the topic of community economic development and military matters. She is an active member of numerous community organizations such as the Coral Gables Community Foundation, Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre Advisory Board and

the Greater Miami Tennis Foundation. She also serves on the City of Coral Gables Emergency Management Board.

Bien is a colonel in U.S. Army Reserve where she is a civil affairs specialist in Army Special Operations Command. She is in her 29th year in the service, combined between active duty and reserves.

She served as the U.S. Senior Advisor/Senior Consultant to the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals in Baghdad. Iraqi Interim Government Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi, appointed Bien to serve on the National Privatization Commission because of her expertise with Iraqi state-owned enterprises.

She earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Miami Law School. Bien received a bachelor's degree in Government and Psychology from Florida State University and a Master of Arts in Public Administration and Management from Webster University in St. Louis.

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