

# 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.**

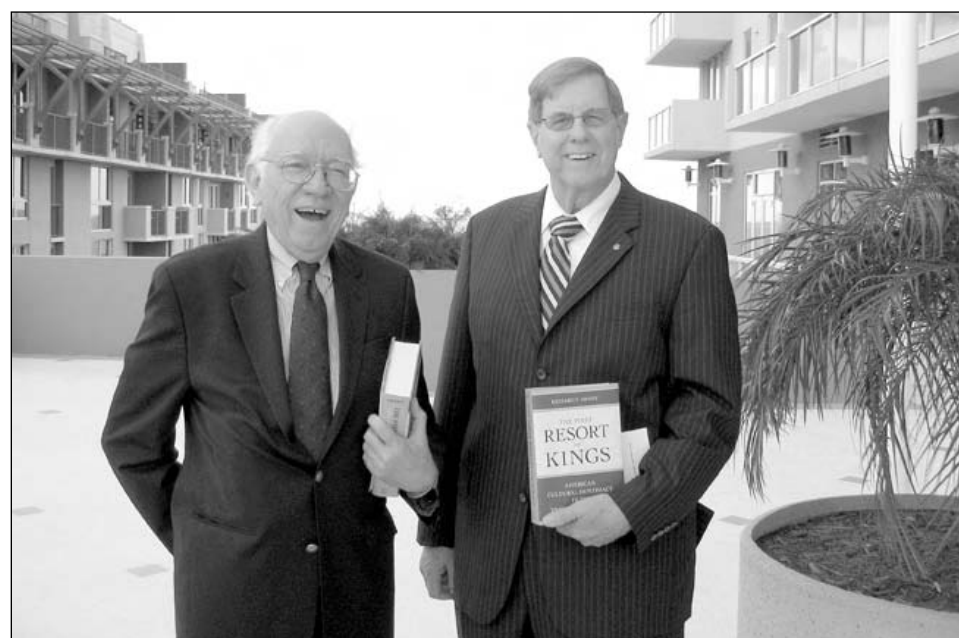
Among the guests were **Hank Langston and Ricardo Tano-Feijoo**, representing the event sponsors Gulliver Schools and Holly Real Estate respectively.

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](http://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](mailto: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.*