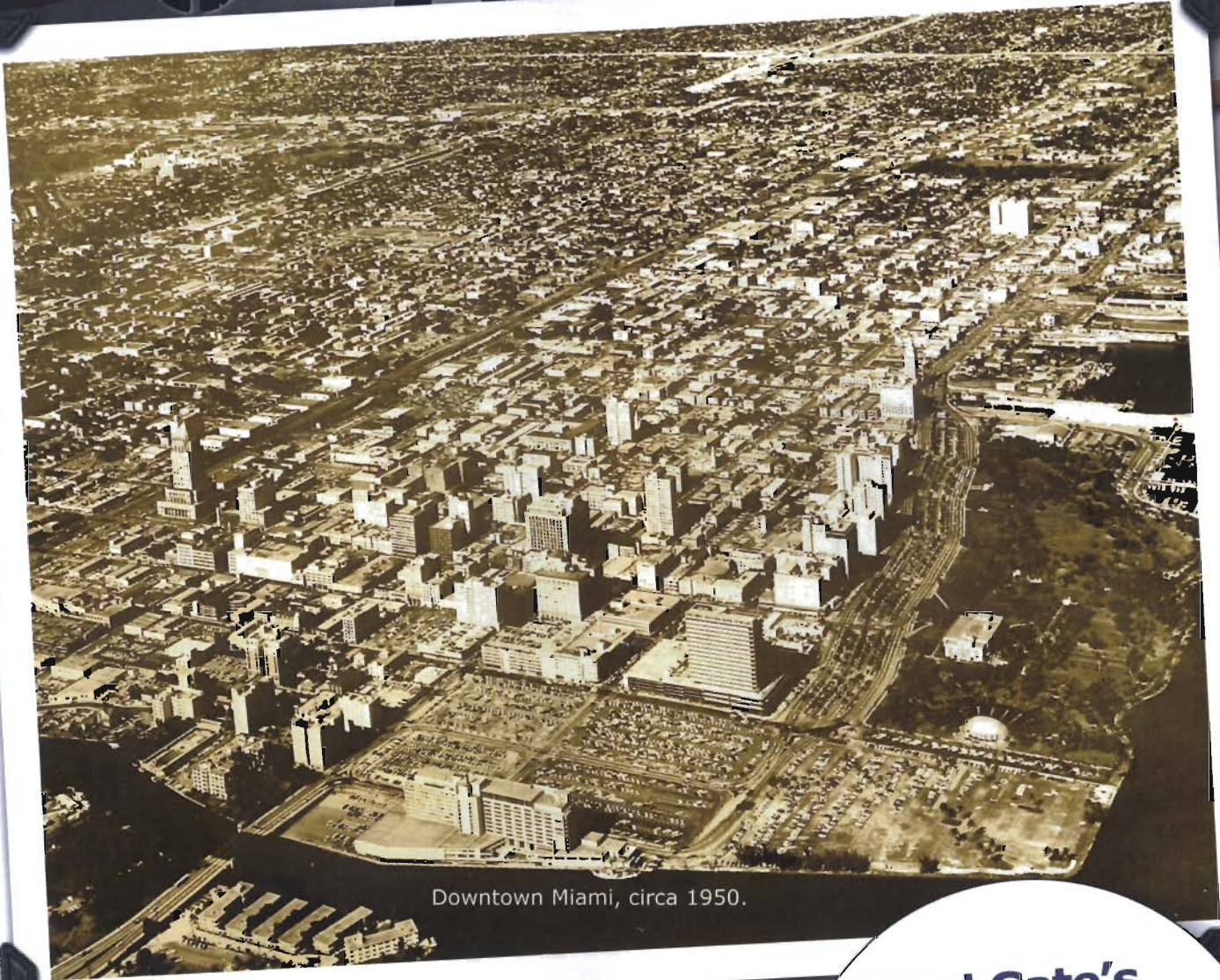


the

CGA NEWS

Summer  
2010



Downtown Miami, circa 1950.

### Happy Birthday Coral Gate

by Wilma Dick (resident since 1961)

Here we are. July 2010. Coral Gate is officially 60 years old! And here we are, still working. Or rather, "fighting" for the preservation of our oasis in the middle of Miami. We still have to stand up against the intrusion of parking lots, businesses, multiple unit housing, traffic and crime. We have talked, walked picket lines, written letters, signed petitions, and attended City Commission meetings. Always with one goal in mind: preserving our way of life. Preserving

our single family, residential community where we can live in peace and quiet, and possibly, put the troubles of the world out of our minds for just a little while. A place where we can start our families, raise our children and retire right here and always feel right at home. I hope all residents feel the same and continue to join us in our steadfast commitment to keep Coral Gate one of Miami's finest little neighborhoods.

So, from all of us residents, new and old, Happy Birthday Coral Gate!

Coral Gate's  
**60<sup>th</sup>**  
birth  
day

1950 - 2010

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Paul and Jennie Bartling were married on Valentine's Day, 1949. They rented an apartment in the Donna apartment building near S.W. 8th Street and 12th Avenue. They began thinking about starting a family and began looking for a house. They had heard about a new development west of where they lived called Coral Gate where their friend, Stanley Stearns lived. Stanley Stearns' Dad worked on the zoning board and told him how well the houses in Coral Gate were built. They looked at some of the model homes and soon found out that the development was completely sold out. The salesman heard that Paul had been in the Navy and was pre-approved for an FHA loan so he put them on a waiting list.

They received a call from the salesperson telling them that a buyer's loan had not gone through and asked if they were still interested in a house in Coral Gate. They completed the paperwork on a house that was being built at 3270 S. W. 21st Street. They were anxious to see the house being built but became discouraged by how bare everything looked. Jennie's Sister, Annie, came with them one day to watch the progress and told them, "don't worry it will look fine when it is painted and the sod is laid". She was right, everything did look fine once the house was finished and the grass was placed on the bare landscape.

In July, 1952, Paul and Jennie were blessed with a baby girl they named Judy. Paul worked for Southern Bell and eventually was transferred to the Coral Gables office at

Alhambra and Galiano. Paul and Jennie loved their new house and enjoyed the convenience of having nearby stores. Behind their house was a Margaret Ann grocery store which later became a Winn Dixie and is now a Staples Office Supply. There was a Steven's grocery store on the corner of Coral Gate Drive and 33<sup>rd</sup> ct, where the Miracle Square is today. Sears was just around the corner and provided everything for new homeowners. Miracle Mile provided additional shopping and dining.

In July 1957, Paul and Jennie were blessed again with a son they named David followed by a son Don the next year. By the early 60s, Paul and Jennie felt the need to find a larger house. They heard of some new homes out west near 97th Avenue and S.W. 16th Street called Coral Park. They found a 3 bedroom, 2 bath house that they thought would be perfect for their growing family so they bought the house and moved. The house was nice but there was a longer commute to work for Paul and there were no stores out that far west so they had to drive back to town to buy groceries and other items.

After only a year at Coral Park, they moved back east to be closer to work and shopping.

They were driving around Coral Gate and Jennie



saw a house for sale and pointed. Paul said, "I don't see a house there". The house at 1681 SW 32 Court was an estate sale and everything was overgrown and the house was barely visible. The house had 3 bedrooms and a large yard for the children to play in. In August of 1963, the Bartling family moved back to Coral Gate and has remained there for the same reason they moved back in 1963.

There were all kinds of rumors about the house since the owner was deceased. The rumors ranged from the house being haunted to the former owner having buried treasure in the backyard. In the early sixties, a worker had heard of some of these stories and was secretly hiding some coins for the children to dig up as part of the buried treasure.

The Bartling children quickly made friends with the other children in the neighborhood. Many of the children formed a melting pot of 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants from various countries. The Bartling children were 3rd generation Germans, across the street were 2nd generation Greek children, down the block were 2nd generation Cuban children, down 17th street there were 2nd generation Polish children, to the north were 2nd generation Colombian children, around the corner were children from Costa Rica and there was a very large population of Jewish children. All of the children played well together at the various houses and Coral Gate Park when there

were too many to play in the yard. Don attended kindergarten at Coral Gate Park in 1964. The Patiños moved into Coral Gate around 1969 and one day Pepe looked at Don's kindergarten picture and pointed to his picture and said that he was in the same class with Miss Dottie.

Paul Bartling was known for tinkering with automobiles and had many tools. One day, Mrs. Patiño came to the house and asked the children if she could borrow a snake. Don, who was about 11 years old went in the house and came out and handed Mrs. Patiño a 5-foot Boa Constrictor snake. Mrs. Patiño screamed, "NO! NO! A plumbing snake"! The Bartling children also brought back a box turtle from North Carolina one summer. Over the next few months, turtles of every size and shape started showing up in the



yard. One turtle was an alligator snapping turtle and was donated to the Metro Zoo.

In addition to turtles, foxes have been spotted in Coral Gate as recently as two years ago. There was a lot of vacant land around the neighborhood at Woodlawn and a vacant lot where the St. Raymond's Catholic Church is today.

There have been some changes in the past 60 years but the neighborhood has remained basically the same. It is a small quiet neighborhood with nearby businesses, schools, and shopping. Around 1970, the Twin Gables movie theatre was built and in 2000, the time capsule was opened and the building was torn down to become a Varadero grocery store. The Steven's grocery store became a Grand Union grocery store and was later torn down to become the Miracle Center.

The new Publix grocery store at Douglas and SW 16th Street was the former Coliseum which in the 1940s was an ice skating rink, in the 1960s, a bowling alley, and in the 1980s it became the SportRooms Indoor Racquet Ball club.

There have been some major improvements in the neighborhood in the past few years including traffic circles and road closures which have reduced the traffic and noise.

The new wall project has added some prestige and security to Coral Gate residents and creates a new chapter in Coral Gate History.



## CORAL GATE CHRONOLOGY

by Mary Andreu

### January 1948

David M. Woolin, trustee for Coral Way Estates, made successful bid of \$778,000 for land that was auctioned off by the heirs of David H. Clark. The first 108 of the development we know as Coral Gate sold out almost immediately

### 1950-1951

First newsletter, *The Coral Gater*, published by Marion and Charles Freefield, cost \$.01 to mail.

### April 16, 1951

Mrs. Freefield writes about the purchase of 4 acres of land designated for Coral Gate Park. "This newspaper has been in the forefront of the fight for expanded recreational facilities in Coral Gate, and our articles have always pointed out the lack of such facilities."

### 1951

Residents agreed to a special assessment by FPL to provide street lighting. *The Coral Gater* claims the construction was conducted in a "speedy, efficient and orderly manner."

### October 1986

The Coral Gate Homeowners Association is born. Homeowners band together after two homes are razed for construction of an office building on Douglas Road. Since then, NO MORE HOMES have been lost to developers.

### October 1986

Miracle Center barricade built by Miracle Center Associates at persistent urging of the CGHA.

### October 1989

Residents protest Varadero Market plans to convert 4 homes into parking lot. We win!

### August 1991

Coral Gate protests when Southern Bell dumps asphalt, concrete and dirt on the circle that we know today as Musial Circle.

### 1993

Homeowners launch campaign to close streets. A traffic study indicated 19,000 cars per day traveling an average of 45 miles per hour. If each of our 463 homes has 2.5 cars allotted to each, there would still be only 1,157 cars belonging to the Gate. This explains why the street closures were so necessary!

### 1994

We receive a \$14,400 grant from the Florida Department of Agriculture to plant trees.

### 1996

City of Miami Committee on Beautification and Environment awards Coral Gate a commendation for beautifying our city.

### 2000

Coral Gate celebrated 50 years with a block party on January 23, 2000. 22 original residents still living in the Gate were honored by city officials. Children played four-square on our streets, mounted police, classic cars and a high school band paraded through.

## CGHA efforts during the past 10 years:

### Defeat Encroaching Development

First, by a proposed childcare center at Douglas and 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Second, by the proposed conversion of a duplex on 17<sup>th</sup> Street to a commercial venture abutting Coral Gate homes.

### Beautify Coral Gate

Musial Circle Entrance was constructed and landscaped. Tree-plantings continue in collaboration with Citizens for a Better South Florida. Next project: repaint the entrance to match the color scheme of the new wall.

### Establish Crime Watch

Current Board Chair Maria Doval began her involvement by streamlining Crime Watch and establishing an effective e-mail communication network. Block Captains have been established for various sectors and annual meetings with local police have led to improved reaction time to crimes reported in Coral Gate. Dr. Julie Hood is the current Crime Watch Coordinator.

### Increase Safety to Our Streets

The signal at Alhambra and Douglas was timed for the safety of Gate residents. We continue to seek a left-turn signal at Coral Way and Coral Gate Drive. The first phase, the "candlesticks" in front of Sears and the added turning lane in front of Boston Market, is already in place.

### Enhance Quality of Life

Our new wall is up! Since its dedication in May, 2010, residents have enjoyed increased security and quiet. The project was paid for by city of Miami funds raised by the transportation half-penny tax. A previous city street project included new curbs and bus stops on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Coral Gate will benefit by the next project: a new recreational building at Coral Gate Park.

*\*Special thanks to Mary Andreu, Wilma Dick, Maria Doval, the Bartling Family and Keidy Caldwell. All photos courtesy of the Bartling Family unless indicated otherwise.*



Keidy Caldwell is another resident who grew up in the Gate then moved back to raise her own family. Her parents still live here. Keidy bought into the Gate and her sister Irene also owns a house in Coral Gate. Photo: Keidy with her parents and sister in their original Coral Gate home.

# the wall!

by María C. Doval



In 2007, we had a big crime problem so we worked together to start Coral Gate's first ever Crime Watch group...

But despite many meetings and much neighborly participation, the problem persisted. Although crime decreased somewhat, the residents of Coral Gate were not happy.

Gloria thought we should consider building a new wall to replace the old, dilapidated one running along 32nd Avenue and 16th Street. We all agreed it would help with crime, trash, and noise and would make Coral Gate look better.

The residents that live on 18th Street and Coral Gate and 16th Street Barricade were having a serious Crime Issue. In fact, one of the residents on 18th Street, had his home broken into several times.

Mr. Regalado worked closely with us and Board Members went house to house with a document for the residents that abut those streets to sign. Every resident signed and a big project was started. We all called it and still refer to it simply as, THE WALL.

So we had an emergency Board Meeting at Gloria Xiques's house (who was a Board Member then) and invited Mayor Tomás Regalado, our City Commissioner at the time.

Francis Suarez, resident of Coral Gate and Board Member gave legal



All photos courtesy of Jorge Perez and Julie Hood.

Construction began on 11.3.09 and was completed on May 1st,

 2010



advice to the Board (Pro Bono), and working closely with us and the legal department of the City of Miami, helped us get an Easement signed by all 28 residents. The Board had a big meeting at Coral Gate with Mr. Regalado and CIP, and attorneys

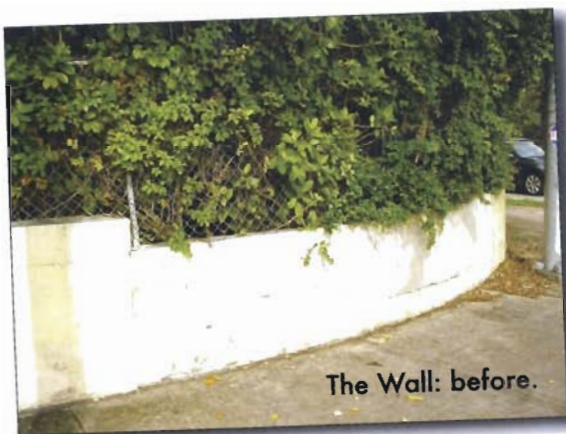
Bob Valledor, Grace Garrido and I met with the Fire Chief and the CIP Director and staff and were able to negotiate plan to keep the neighborhood safe and comply with the Fire Dept., however it needed to go to the Commission. It did and there was a unanimous approved vote to close 18th Street and 32nd Ave and 16th Street and Coral Gate Drive to pedestrian traffic with the new Wall.

The Wall was finally completed and the Wall Ceremony took place on May 22nd 2010, with Major Regalado, Commissioners Suarez, Sarnoff and Carrollo as well as many Board

Members and residents.

We like to thank all the staff, the Architect, José Puentes, Mr. Manny Mejido, Ms Danette Perez from CIP. The Metro Express staff that constructed the wall. They met with us all along, gave of the choice to choose the color and even the plants you see growing along the wall today.

All of us Coral Gate residents would like to end this note by thanking Major Regalado for all he has done for Coral Gate and support with the wall project as well as Commissioner Suarez.



from the City and residents of Coral Gate. This was the summer of 2008.

Mary Andreu and I went around and obtained the Easements to complete the legal part of the Wall project. The funds were obtained from the City's half cent tax and it was piggy backed to the Road Improvement and Coral Gate Park restoration.

Groundbreaking took place on October 10, 2009. Regalado, Francis and Sarnoff were present at the ceremony and we all had a chance to review the materials and plans.