



FLA 4A
BLACK



FLA 4A
CYAN



FLA 4A
MAGENTA



FLA 4A
YELLOW

on the web MiamiHerald.com

BLOGGING OUR BLOGS

DOLPHINS IN DEPTH

With Ricky Williams and Cam Cameron, you have a flower child and a Bobby Knight disciple talking, trying to find common ground.

CHANGING CHANNELS

NBC's Brian Williams took a lot of criticism for hosting *Saturday Night Live* a couple of weeks ago. But newscast viewers have responded.

DAVE BARRY'S BLOG

Dave and his readers have a merry time following the trail of Sgt. Podge, a cat who has an unusual nocturnal routine.

WORK/LIFE BALANCING ACT

Elsie Romero, mother of two and counsel for Restaurant Services, has this tip for working moms: Share the driving with other parents.

TODAY ON THE WEB

WHAT TO DO WITH KEN JENNE

Jail him? Give him a chance? See what letter writers are urging the judge, who will sentence Jenne on Friday.



SOUNDBYTES

READERS ON KEN JENNE:

• How can his wife say he never betrayed the public's trust when he has admitted to evading income tax?

READERS ON JOHN BECK, RICKY WILLIAMS:

- Play Beck. Suit up Ricky. . . . What's the worst that can happen, we lose?
- Beck and Williams, wow it's finally exciting to be a Fins fan again.
- I hope Beck does well, but Lemon was good. He does not make up the whole team.



MIAMIHERALD.COM VIDEO

- Farm Share and Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez give out Thanksgiving food to low-income families.
- Students compete at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in an environmental competition.
- Homestead's new mayor shares her vision for the city.

OTHER ONLINE GEMS

Wise words about water usage

Learn how to conserve water at my.sfwmd.gov - online home of the South Florida Water Management District. Did you know that brushing your teeth, showering or washing hands can use four gallons per minute?

Dolphin fans who need a boost, click here

Maybe John Beck will be "the next Dan Marino." Maybe not. Need a brief reprieve from all the losing? Go to profootballhof/multimedia and watch Marino throw touchdown passes to Duper and Clayton all over again. Good luck, Beck.

Thanksgiving road trip survival tactic

It's three hours to Grandma's house. For ideas on how to pass the time with the kids, go to roadtriplanning.com/road-trip-games Here's one: Invent stories about people in the next car.

TOP 5 WEB STORIES

- 1.....Latin pop star's suit reads like novella
- 2.....Jenne's wife pleads for mercy; deputies don't
- 3.....West's death revives plastic surgery concerns
- 4.....Recruits critical of UM
- 5.....Beck to start Sunday for Dolphins

Stay ahead with *The Miami Herald* and our media partners



TOPICAL CURRENTS, 1 P.M.: Environment friendly 'Catalog Choice,' Linda Gassenheimer on turkey



NEWS AT 11 P.M.: What happened to a hospitalized uninsured man, and what you need to know.

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN

Environmental challenge

*CHALLENGE, FROM 1A

poems, making hats from plants, defending the environment, growing vegetables and native plants, reappraising their self-image and discovering their talents.

The Challenge runs through May. After students' projects are judged, top-finishing schools receive modest cash prizes to apply to environmental programs.

Sunday, the plant and paper hats competition will be part of Fairchild's Ramble, the garden's annual fundraiser.

In six years, the Challenge has found the keys to getting teenagers involved in science and environmental issues: make it fun, make it an adventure and let kids speak in the language of their choice — debate, essay, painting or song.

MEANS OF EXPRESSION

Students like the challenge because it allows them to express opinions, says Caroline Lewis, director of education at Fairchild and the program's creator. "Nothing feeds a teenage ego like saying, 'My opinion. . . . They want a platform.'"

This year's competition is under way not only in Miami-Dade County but at botanical gardens in Chicago, Washington and Costa Rica. More than 30 organizations have received training in how to run the program.

Results are clear. "I felt it was one of the few times that I was doing something that mattered and made a difference," Moysidis said.

After his experience, he joined a theater troupe at UF that performs at patients' bedsides. "I know that my involvement with such activities will help me in having a better understanding and communication with my patients when I become a physician," Moysidis said.

Lewis, a former science teacher and school principal, created the program with Cyd Heyliger-Browne, who oversees science education for Miami-Dade County Public Schools. They started with high school students, but then middle school



ALL EARS: The audience listens to students read poetry on the theme 'Water in Words' at the Fairchild Challenge.

NURI VALLBONA
MIAMI HERALD
STAFF

IF YOU GO

What: Fairchild Challenge Plant and Paper Hats fashion show as part of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Ramble. The Ramble, with more than 18,000 plants for sale as well as books, antiques, art and food, is the garden's annual fundraiser.

Where: Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables

When: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Cost: \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, \$10 for children ages 6 through 17.

Info: 305-667-1651, or www.fairchildgarden.org

teachers clamored to be involved. An elementary pilot program began this year.

HOST OF ACTIVITIES

At Leisure City K through 8, children in the science club are using plants to make hats, interviewing Haitian and Hispanic seniors about how they use plants in their daily lives and designing T-shirts for the Challenge and Baynanza, Miami-Dade County's annual celebration of Biscayne Bay.

A 2007-08 category called Research Projects Showcase, for high schoolers, encourages sophisticated research in one of five areas: designing highway "skyways" for the Everglades, climate

change, green cuisine, solar inventions and seed germination.

Students receive Challenge T-shirts and garden passes, while the winning schools can come away with \$1,000, \$500 or \$250. Judges are experts in contest topics.

Debates will be held and opinion papers written. In February, high school students in the environmental immersion day will be mentored by scientists working in the Everglades, in college labs, in 22 real-life settings around the county.

Keanu Soto, 12, a science club member at Leisure City K-8, will participate in Sunday's plant and hat contest.

"We're going to get a hat made out of wood with holes in it to put flowers and leaves in it to look like a tree," he said.

At Gulliver Prep, they're creating solar-powered gizmos that will compete in a research showcase in April. Gulliver sophomore Kyle Kursner got an honorable mention last year for the scale model solar car he built for the Challenge.

"I'd say it really opened me to using alternative fuel resources," he said. "I designed the car that was more of a real design, what would be a regular car rather than having it awkward and going fast. It wasn't the fastest, but it completed the race."

The Challenge travels well, too.

"We brought the Challenge to Chicago because it

fits a gap in our curriculum," said Treenen Sturman, education outreach coordinator for Chicago Botanic Garden. "We didn't have anything that served the full gamut of high schools in Chicago."

"One of the reasons that it works is that it can be different things for different schools," Sturman said.

GETTING HANDS DIRTY

This year, the Miami-Dade program will cost \$920,000. Half is provided by local family trust, the Batchelor Foundation, and the rest by other donors. Adding an elementary school program will cost another \$528,000. The Challenge needs \$502,000 for training and setting up the satellite programs in other states.

"One of our goals is a garden in every school," Lewis said. "It's extremely important that these kids get their hands dirty. We put \$200 away to help 10 schools with the cost of garden supplies, yet 64 schools applied. Could we turn them down?"

Heyliger-Browne, who calls Lewis "the champ of the Challenge," says the Challenge meshes perfectly with the district's science programs.

"It does empower the students," Heyliger-Browne said. "They've taken hold of the world they live in. They're looking for solutions on their own. And when you empower students that way, there's nothing like it."

MIDDLE SCHOOL COMPETITION

MIDDLE SCHOOL WINNER'S POEM

Sruthi Narayanan from Herbert A. Ammons Middle School won the Fairchild Challenge "Water in Words" for middle schools.

Here is a verse from her poem, *Pollution in Me*:
"One day when I fell into a stream I got a scare
a horrible thing happened almost like a nightmare
pesticides from a farm flowed into the water
too bad for the droplet behind me
because the pesticides caught her."



SRUTHI
NARAYANAN

Performances extol importance of water

■ Middle school students sang, danced, recited and drummed the praises of water for the Fairchild Challenge.

BY GEORGIA TASKER
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They came, poems in hand and drum, to praise, dance and beat the drums for water in the Fairchild Challenge middle school competition, "Water in Words."

Performers from more than 30 middle schools stepped up to create original spoken-word performances with water as the focus.

Just before the appointed hour, makeup was applied, crib sheets gone over once more ("a tad more emphasis," said a penciled note above a critical line) and rules reviewed.

Time limit: 2 minutes. At 2 minutes and 5 seconds, sleigh bells would ring. Anything beyond 2 minutes and 15 seconds would mean minus points.

"We believe your voices become voices for the environment," emcee and education director Caroline Lewis told the performers. And for the next hour and a half, loud and appreciative applause followed each recitation.

Ahem. " . . . without water we wouldn't have trees. . . . " "I evaporate up and you catch me in a cup . . . "

"Do you know how many people are starving for water? Do you call yourself an animal lover? When we pollute, we cause loving animals to die. . . . global warming is

swarming."

"Do you want a dirty beach? Do you want to hear a dolphin screech?"

"Please take a shower in less than half an hour."

Forget the occasional forgotten line, the message came through loud and clear. The kids did their homework, faced down their nerves and ran with it.

Among those braving it alone on the stage were Demonte Partlow, from Arthur and Polly Mays Middle School; Brandon Arana, from Arvida; and Magda Pacheco, from Eugenia B. Thomas K-8.

Others brought percussionists — bongos were the drums of choice — and several included rain poles.

Dancers arrived from Miami Lakes and South Miami to add dimension.

And, as emcee Lewis noted, "now we have the entire eighth grade from Carrollton School."

Twins Leidy and Linda Villa, from Shenandoah, portrayed parrot fish. Glades Middle schooler Bryan Ocampo did a hands-down remarkable imitation of a synthesizer for fellow student Andres Rodriguez, who read *This World's Made Out of Water*.

Brandon Arrastia and Gabriel Amdee, from Lamar Louise Curry school, donned shades and matching T-shirts for their rap called *Water Jingle*:

*Water water water get some water in a click.
Once this earth runs out the only water will be spit.*