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THE VIRUS CRISIS



Dr. Natalia Echeverri conducts a COVID-19 nasal swab test on Silvia Stagg as others in Miami's homeless community line up to receive tents, masks and clothing on Friday. Echeverri, an obstetrician-gynecologist, is a volunteer.

'Not doing enough': The race to test, house Miami's homeless

As coronavirus complicates daily life for Miami's homeless, Dream Defenders and other advocates like Dr. Arren Henderson call for more action from the Homeless Trust, which is testing and housing people.

BY JOHN FLECHAS AND ALEX HARRIS
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A missing pad, a magenta blanket and a few pillows separate the Bachmanns from the concrete sidewalk on Southwest First

Avenue in Miami. The coronavirus pandemic has rendered this stretch of downtown quiet, save for a few vehicles through the day and the occasional pedestrian.

Anyone on foot can easily walk down the middle of the street.

Ashley Bachman, 34, has multiple sclerosis. Her 36-year-old husband Robert Bach-

man has epilepsy. The couple have been sleeping on their makeshift bed on the concrete near the intersection with South Miami Avenue for almost two months.

Ashley Bachman and her husband, fearful of contracting COVID-19, have been able to get into a Camillus Health program that allows them to get mental health evaluations and housing. But they are stymied by delays as shelters move people around in

SEE HOMELESS, 4A

Black Miamians dying at a greater rate than whites

Many cities have reported racial disparities among coronavirus cases. The same is true in Miami-Dade where the death rate of African Americans is significantly higher than that of whites. At least one expert predicts it will rise.

BY DANIEL CHANG
AND C. SHARAH SMALLE II
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African Americans with COVID-19 are dying at a higher rate than white people and others who have tested positive for the disease in Miami-Dade County — a key finding buried in the Florida health department's daily reports on the coronavirus pandemic, but one that experts say should help drive the state's response in minority communities.

In Miami-Dade, the county with the most confirmed COVID-19 cases in

SEE COVID-19, 5A

Fearing virus, more inmates plead for early release

Florida convicts in state and federal prisons do not have an easy road to getting released because of fears of the coronavirus. Most must first write warden, hoping to get released to home confinement.

BY DAVID DIVALE AND JAY WEAVER
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Miami's Rich Mendez, a successful Latin music executive, says he has been a "model prisoner" while serving a five-year sentence in a low-security federal facility — not for any violent crime but for fraud related to a time-share business a decade ago. Sentenced to the state pen for cocaine trafficking, Michael Rodriguez suffers from Type 2 diabetes and needs daily shots of insulin. Yadiris Wood embezzled nearly

SEE INMATES, 2A

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Florida suspends two nursing home administrators

Florida suspended nursing home administrators Mark Daniels and Sabrina Cameron for risking patient safety at Cross Landings Health and Rehabilitation Center in Monticello during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BY DAVID J. NEAL
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Nursing home staff members worked without masks while unmasked N95 masks sat in an office. Some resident rooms lacked hand sanitizer or gloves. A COVID-19 isolation area was placed in the area of least separation — a

main hallway to the cafeteria. And, when 39 residents were tested Tuesday, eight (22.9 percent) came back positive.

These snapshots from Cross Landings Health Care & Rehabilitation Center in Monticello, a town near Tallahassee, were from Friday's

SEE SUSPENSIONS, 3A

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JOBS AND CLASSIFIEDS: INSIDE THE NEXT SECTION



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Tropical Sunday

From virtual acting lessons to singing telegrams, South Florida has you



Photo: Children's Museum

ENTERTAINED

BY HOWARD COHEN
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We loved the train wreck "Tiger King" on Netflix and Phil's rallying new single "I Believe We Will Win (World Anthem)" as much as the next person.

But one also needs a little variety during this period of social distancing at home.

South Florida cultural arts and educational groups were quick to create virtual entertainment and programs we could live-stream while sheltering when orders to stay indoors began in March. Some of these offerings can still be streamed.

They haven't stopped.

Here's the next wave of virtual entertainment — South Florida style — you can enjoy from home. Like a tour of Wynwood's art and culture district.

Learning how to act or dance professionally on stage. Sending someone you love a video of a local musician singing their favorite song — personalized with "love and music."

THEATER

• **Miami's Adeline Arsh Center for the Performing Arts** debuted *Arsh@Home* to provide free entertainment and educational content on its arsh-center.org website.



Top, Artist Romero Brito joins with the Miami Children's Museum to bring fun and creative art projects to children and families through "Museum At Home," a virtual learning space available on the museum's website and through their social media platforms. Above, O, Miami, Miami Zine Fair in April 2018.

Watch Miami actors perform monologues written by Miami playwrights like Gabriel Salgado reading Michael Keever's "The Miamians."

Living Room Live features performances by local musicians, like pianist Shelly Berg, the dean of the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music at the University of Miami and an artistic advisor for the Arsh



Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre in Coral Gables is hosting Virtual Master Classes in theater and dance led by professionals via Zoom.

Center's Jazz Roots series. Then there's "The Art of Making," in which local teaching artists share ideas on how to write a poem, learn choreography, paint or make music using instruments you can find in your kitchen. Who knew?

• **Virtual Master Classes at Actors' Playhouse** at the Miracle Theatre can help aspiring actors and dancers learn the

craft with expert instruction, via Zoom, from experts like Theatre for Young Artists' Director Earl Maulding and professional dancer Keymer Reynolds.

Classes, at \$20 per session, are scheduled through May 31. Visit actorsplayhouse.org to register.

SOUTH FLORIDA NEIGHBORHOODS

• **The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau** says "Miami is ready to be explored — virtually, that is." So the organization is posting live webcams and virtual tours of Miami's museums, attractions, national parks, beaches and other offerings on its website.

• **Miami's Wynwood neighborhood** brings its art, food, entertainment, and wellness experiences to your home through the Wynwood Business Improvement District's new #WynHome virtual series on its @WynwoodMiami Instagram and @WynwoodMiami channels. You can see live videos, DJ sets, photo tours, stories and other never-before-seen content.

MUSIC, DANCE AND POETRY

• **The O, Miami Poetry Festival** will continue showing live readings virtually at omiami.org in honor of National Poetry Month through April. One of

SEE ENTERTAINMENT 2M

THE HOUSING SCENE

'Pocket listings' banned, but Realtors will still be able to cheat sellers and other real-estate professionals



BEN LEWIS SCHICKELMAN
Author of Miami Real Estate

and out of their house at all hours. Or possibly they have no desire to keep their place squeaky-clean and ready for showings.

At the same time, though, sellers — especially unsuspecting sellers who haven't a clue their houses are being held off the market — are not getting the full exposure to the market they bargained for when they signed their listing agreements. And pocket listings run against the cooperative nature of how houses are bought and sold. Agents of competing companies work together — one representing the seller, and another, the buyer — to sell millions of houses every year. But when an agent effectively keeps a listing in his or her pocket, the system breaks down.

Buyers' agents have benefited for years that they and their clients are not getting a fair shot at such listings, at least not right away. And the million-plus-member National Association of Realtors has finally agreed, concluding that off-MLS listings not only skew market data and reduce buyer and seller choice, but also undermine the commitment to provide equal opportunity to all agents.

So, under NAR's new "Clear Cooperation" policy, starting May 1, listing brokers and agents are required to submit listings within one business day of marketing the property to the public — in other words, within 24 hours of offering listings to a select audience. (The rule was originally set to take effect Jan. 1, but it was delayed to give local services time to make technology changes and educate users.) "We made sure that cooperation remains at the heart of organized real estate," said Denise Evans of the Council of Multiple Listing Services, which represents

these listings portals, to NAR's trade journal, Realtor Magazine.

But that isn't likely to put a stop to the practice, because agents can use another classification — "coming soon" — to hold properties out of the MLS and off the market.

Underhanded agents have always tried to game the system in one way or another. Some conceal listings that have languished on the market for months, and then rebrand them to make them appear fresh. Sometimes they change the wording of the address — say, changing "Drive" to "Dr." — to reset the number of days the place has been on the market. Or they drop the price a small amount to boost its standing on the service.

Some agents try these and other tricks at their own will; others, at the behest of their clients. Either way, it is a violation of NAR's Code of Ethics.

But saying a listing is "coming soon" is not prohibited under the new rules. Office exclusives and marketing to private networks aren't verboten, either. Remember, once a listing contract is signed, agents have 24 business hours to enter it into the MLS. So, an agent who wants to keep a property as close to the vest as possible can ask a client to sign the agreement late on a Friday night. That way, it won't have to be entered until Tuesday morning, leaving 72 hours to peddle the house on their own.

As with pocket listings, there can be good reasons for a "coming soon" listing. Some people need time to prepare their places for sale; others are waiting for their new homes to be completed. Others have to wait for a tenant to move out. A "com-

ing soon" listing tells the widest possible audience the house isn't ready to be seen just yet, but it is for sale and will be ready to be viewed on a "go-live" date.

But as long as the seller doesn't sign a listing contract, the house need not — actually, cannot — be entered into the MLS. Thus, an agent who wants to skirt the rules can shop the house to their own list of would-be buyers or those of agents in affiliated offices without consequences. Yes, without a signed agreement, there's a chance that another agent might swoop in and take the listing out from under them. But it's a chance some are willing to take.

According to a recent survey by the WAV Group, a research and advisory firm, "coming soon" listings are becoming more prevalent. "A 'coming soon' status is not only in high demand today," its recent white paper said, "but brokers believe that it will become increasingly important in the future."

Unfortunately, as the report points out, while many listing services have policies regarding such listings, the survey found they are "locally contrived" and far from uniform. Others, meanwhile, are still in the process of crafting their own policies of crafting their own policies to give sellers time to manicure their properties for optimal results.

Lee Schickelman has been covering real estate for more than 50 years. He is a regular contributor to numerous shelter magazines and housing and housing/finance industry publications. Readers can contact him at lschickelman@aol.com.

HOW DOES YOUR HOME COMPARE?



\$1,250,000

Sellers: Arnette and Manuel Dobrinjic
Buyer: Neerun Deora
Address: 2991 N. Prospect Dr., Coconut Grove, Yr. built: 1958
Bdrms: 3 Bath: 3.5 A/C sq. ft.: 3,119 Lot sq. ft.: 11,270
Date Sold: 3-20-20 Previous sale: \$564,000 in 2002.
Days on market: 31. Agents: Carole Swift, Compass Florida, LLC; Jean Claude Zorn, Keller Williams Capital Realty.



\$877,500

Seller: Isabel M. Esteso
Buyers: Jocelyn Troche and Encarnita Garcia De Jesus
Address: 1532 Dorado Ave., Coral Gables, Yr. built: 1952
Bdrms: 3 Bath: 3 A/C sq. ft.: 2,143 Lot sq. ft.: 10,000
Date Sold: 3-12-20 Previous sale: \$300,000 in 1996
Days on market: 140 Agents: Mauricio J. Barba, Compass Florida, LLC; Lourdes Grant, Elite Realty Partners.



\$380,000

Seller: Ada Navarro
Buyer: Andres Jofia
Address: 7304 SW 15th St., Miami, Yr. built: 1970
Bdrms: 4 Bath: 2 A/C sq. ft.: 1,541 Lot sq. ft.: 7,800
Date Sold: 2-20-20 Previous sale: \$250,000 in 2016
Days on market: 18 Agents: Taylor Corey, Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate; Alan Estover, Estover Properties.

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GARDENS

Miami's Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden offers plant delivery

BY CONNIE OGLE
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The Spring Plant Sale at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden has been a popular Miami event for 41 years and the garden isn't letting the current quarantine stop it.

There's a change, though, due to the coronavirus pandemic. This year, instead of picking up your plants from Fairchild, the "Safer From Home" Spring Plant Sale will

deliver rare and exotic plants to your front door. Through April 25, plant lovers can shop and make purchases on fairchildgarden.org/events. The plants will be delivered starting the week of April 20.

Members get 10 percent off any purchases. Deliveries are limited to 15 miles from the garden, located at 10901 Old Cutler Rd. Don't get any ideas, Key West.

Connie Ogle: 305-576-8649, @OgleConnie



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CARIBBEAN		CARIBBEAN	
7-Day Caribbean \$259* \$310 / \$460 / \$370 / \$440*	7-Day Caribbean \$279* \$370 / \$440*	7-Day Caribbean \$309* \$419 / \$420 / \$420 / \$460*	7-Day Caribbean \$329* \$420 / \$460*
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EUROPE		EXOTIC	
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7-Day Europe \$499* \$590 / \$600 / \$340 / \$100*	9-Day Europe \$619* \$879 / \$1249*	10-Day Hawaii \$689* \$879 / \$1299*	10-Day Mexico \$739* \$1080 / \$1180 / \$1190 / \$1300*

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