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FINAL EDITION

## TOUCH-UP FOR TV



PATRICK FARRELL/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

With a boost from owner Julie Lott, Willie ruffles the hair of race car driver Tony Stewart during a break while filming an episode for the A&E crime drama 'The Glades' on Tuesday at Homestead-Miami Speedway in Homestead. The capuchin and Stewart both appeared in the episode. The show, set in a fictional town outside the Everglades, has been renewed for a second season.

MIAMI-DADE

## Game on: 11 in race for Dade mayor

Nearly a dozen candidates are in the race for Miami-Dade County mayor, setting up a sprint toward the May 24 special election.

BY MATTHEW HAGGMAN  
Mhaggman@MiamiHerald.com

Facing widespread voter discontent and a looming budget crunch, 11 candidates jumped into the race Tuesday to lead Miami-Dade's sprawling county government. They seek to replace Mayor Carlos Alvarez, who was ousted last month in a historic recall.

The contest will be speedy and hard-fought. The special election is just six weeks away, on May 24, and early voting starts even sooner, on May 9.

The final field of entrants who met Tuesday's 5 p.m. qualifying deadline included few surprises in a race where several candidates have already hit the campaign trail and launched fundraising drives.

The one wavering candidate, County Commissioner Carlos Gimenez, who had said Monday he might hold onto his seat on the board, came off the fence and entered the contest Monday. He formally resigned his county post Tuesday, triggering a race for his vacated seat. The County Commission will

schedule that election on Wednesday.

Hialeah Mayor Julio Robaina also entered Tuesday, although he announced that he will not resign his current post until May 23, the day before the election. His decision to stay in office likely will prompt a legal fight.

The candidates represent a cross-section of Miami political and cultural life, though include none of the political veterans who had toyed with running, such as former Hialeah Mayor Raul Martinez — who said he's running for his old office — or former county Mayor Alex Penelas, who decided not to run.

The candidates who qualified include former drives.

•TURN TO CANDIDATES, 2A

**Recall fever:** U.S. mayors fight back, 3A  
**Florida House:** 4 vie to fill ex-state Rep. Bovo's seat, 4B

**MiamiHerald.com/miami-dade**  
Read more about the Miami-Dade mayoral race

NEWS ANALYSIS

## Fiscal fight nears for Obama

As President Barack Obama prepares to build support for his fiscal plans, he faces formidable GOP opposition.

BY MARGARET TALEV AND DAVID LIGHTMAN  
McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama, in a speech Wednesday, will tell Americans more about how he favors mixing tax in-

creases and cuts to Medicare and Medicaid to control long-term deficit spending.



OBAMA

But he'll be in for a rough time passing any such sweeping changes through a wary Congress before the next presidential election.

Republican leaders blast-

ed Obama's speech even before they knew what he would say. House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio called any tax increase "unacceptable and a non-starter," while Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Obama had to be "dragged into this discussion" on the fiscal crisis.

As if to prove McConnell wrong, Obama announced hours later that he was inviting bipartisan leaders from

the House of Representatives and the Senate to come to the White House for a Wednesday morning preview of his afternoon address.

But Obama made it clear he won't go as far as House Republicans, who have written a plan to make dramatic changes in Medicare, the federal healthcare program for seniors and some dis-

•TURN TO BUDGET, 5A

MIAMI-DADE SCHOOLS

## More than 200 jobs may be cut

Job losses would come from the school district's maintenance and construction departments.

BY KATHLEEN MCGRORY  
kmcgrory@MiamiHerald.com

The Miami-Dade School Board on Wednesday will consider cutting more than 200 positions as part of a reorganization that would save the district \$27 million.

It's likely to be just the beginning of a series of cuts that could end up affecting arts and magnet programs, guidance counselors and for the first time, even Miami-Dade teaching jobs.

The cash-strapped school district believes it will need to slash more than \$100 million from its \$4 billion budget over the next three months. That's on top of the \$180 million the nation's fourth-largest school district has already shed in the last two years.

In the proposal being discussed Wednesday, which focuses on the cap-

ital side of the budget, the lost jobs would come from the school district's maintenance and construction departments.

In addition, hundreds of maintenance workers would see their salaries cut by 20 percent.

School district Chief Facilities Officer Jaime Torrens called the cuts necessary at a time when capital revenue has been drastically reduced.

Because property values have continued to drop, the school system will get fewer dollars from county taxes.

Still, the proposal is meeting resistance from union leaders, who say the

•TURN TO SCHOOLS, 5A

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CINEMA



RAKONTUR

IN DOCUMENTARY: Prominent in 'Square Grouper' are Everglades City and tales of marijuana trafficking.

## 2 SAVOR FILM SUCCESS

Billy Corben and Alfred Spellman have made a career of bringing Miami subjects to the big screen. Their latest debuts this week.

BY SERENA DAI  
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Ask Billy Corben what he has learned since his first film, and he doesn't miss a beat: "Nothing. Absolutely nothing."

He and Alfred Spellman, both 32, started filming documentaries with their friend David Cypkin when they were in high school, Corben at New World School of the Arts and Spellman and Cypkin at North Miami Beach Senior High School. Now their formerly self-staffed

group rakontur employs six full-timers in their Miami Beach house-cum-office.

Even with that growing staff, it's hard to believe they've produced half a dozen award-winning feature-length documentaries, including *The U*, part of ESPN's 30 for 30 series. Or that the Miami premiere of their new documentary *Square Grouper* on Thursday is the first of five premieres set for 2011. Another

•TURN TO FILMMAKERS, 2A

NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

## U.S. looks again at nuclear risks

The United States begins to reconsider nuclear power in light of the crisis in Japan.

BY RENE SCHOOF  
McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON — As Japan struggles with radioactive contamination from one of the world's worst nuclear accidents, American nuclear experts are watching for clues on how to make U.S. nuclear power plants more resistant to the forces of nature or hostile attacks.

U.S. nuclear regulators continue to assure Americans that U.S. plants are safe. They cite a stringent regulatory program, redundant security systems and improvements since the 1979 Three Mile Island accident and the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Yet the problems at Fukushima in the wake of last month's tsunami have reopened questions about the risks of U.S. nuclear reactors, and especially the pools that store spent fuel.

On Tuesday, Japanese

authorities raised the severity rating of the nuclear crisis at the Fukushima Dai-Ichi power plant to the highest level on an international scale, on a par with the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. They reclassified the ongoing emergency from Level 5, an "accident with off-site risk," to Level 7, a "major accident." The re-assessment comes at a time when the International Atomic Energy Agency says the plant is showing "early signs of recovery" but is still in critical condition.

At a news conference in Tokyo, Hidehiko Nishiyama, the chief of Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, emphasized that

•TURN TO SCIENTISTS, 5A

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150TH ANNIVERSARY OF WAR'S START IS MARKED WITH SOMBER CEREMONY AT FORT SUMTER

**LOCAL & STATE, 1B**  
**CORAL GABLES PICKS NEW MAYOR**  
JIM CASON, EX-HEAD OF THE U.S. INTERESTS SECTION IN HAVANA, OUSTS MAYOR DON SLESNICK

**BUSINESS, 10B**  
**A NEW APPROACH TO HEALTHCARE**  
WEST KENDALL BAPTIST HOSPITAL WILL OPEN WITH A FOCUS ON FAMILIES AND OUTPATIENT TREATMENT

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