

MIAMI New Times

OUR FIRST
SEX ISSUE
REVEALS THIS
IS WHERE
THE MAGIC
HAPPENS.

COMING
MIAMI

NUKE UNDER
WATER

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IN THE 305

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AT BAYFRONT

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MIAMI BEACH WOULD BE
REDUCED TO OCEAN DRIVE (SHUDDER)
AS CELEBRITIES SCRAMBLE TO
SAVE THEIR STAR ISLAND MANSIONS.
SAME THING ACROSS THE BAY.
SAYONARA, CITY HALL.

TURKEY POINT BREAK

ALL WET

GEOLOGIST WARNS MIAMI MIGHT
BE HEADED SIX FEET UNDER.

BY MICHAEL E. MILLER

Warning: Global warming is a fact, and the results are already visible. Hurricanes are getting stronger; droughts and floods are more frequent. In South Florida, waters rose roughly six inches between 1930 and 1981. That might not sound like much, but it's just the tip of a rapidly melting iceberg. "We are the most vulnerable metropolitan area in the world when it comes to sea-level rise," University of Miami professor Harold Wanless says. And, the avuncular geologist adds, that's nothing.

"Another eight inches, and 65 percent of the county's water control structures will fail," he says. Salt water will seep across South Florida, destroying crops, corroding cars, and costing billions in damages. But eight inches is a drop in the bucket. Wanless expects South Florida seas to rise by at least four, probably six, feet by 2100. Still contemplating that beachfront condo so the grandchildren have a pad when your kids kick the bucket?

Consider: A two-foot rise would plunge 28 percent of Miami-Dade below water. Miami Beach would be reduced to Ocean Drive (shudder) as celebrities scramble to save their Star Island mansions. Same thing across the bay. Sayonara, city hall. Most worrisome of all, Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant would be an island in the newly created Sea of Homestead.

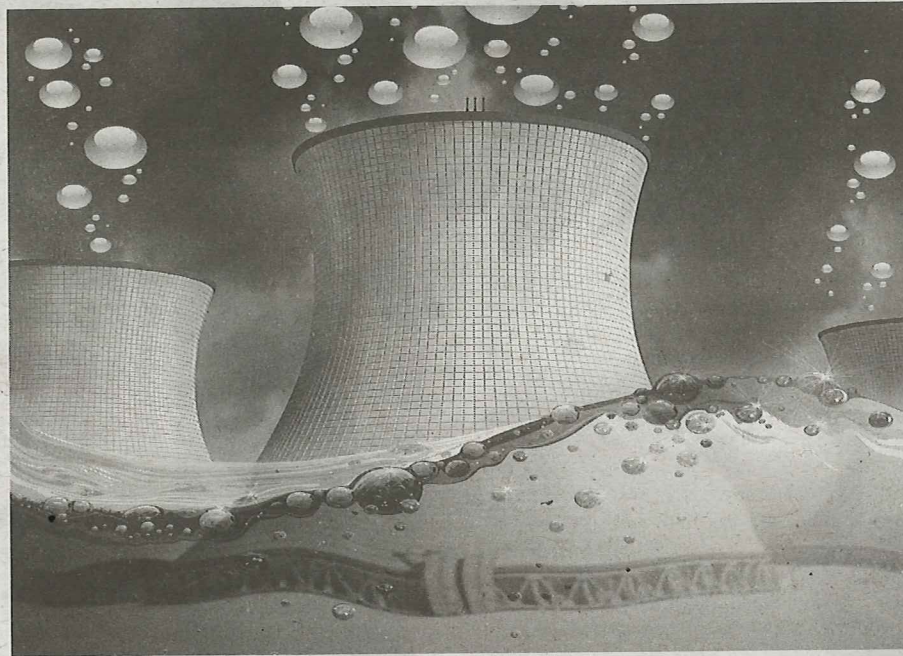
Although two new reactors at Turkey Point are being built at a higher elevation, Florida Power & Light has requested to keep the two current nukes running until 2035. Given that Hurricane Andrew almost inundated them in 1992, what will happen as oceans continue to rise?

"The standards will be 85 years old by then, and that's a problem," says Arnie Gundersen, a Vermont-based nuclear engineer and consultant. "If tidal waves knock out the water pumps" — as they did at the Fukushima reactor in Japan earlier this year — "you can have a meltdown."

FPL spokesman Michael Waldron says Turkey Point is safe and that the reactors are intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but "no one knows for sure what the climate change impact on sea levels will be 100 years from now."

A six-foot rise in ocean waters would be less dramatic than a meltdown, but almost as damaging, Wanless warns. Less than half of Miami-Dade would remain, and of the land

Riptide



still above water, 73 percent would constantly flood. "That's uninhabitable," he says. Eight feet higher, and Miami-Dade is an archipelago. At ten, it's Atlantis. But that's not even Wanless's worst-case scenario. If China and India continue to pump greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and Tea Party activists block environmental action, the seas could rise by an astounding 20 feet by 2100.

"It's not unforeseeable at all," Wanless says. "It's happened before."

Yeah, 130,000 years ago.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

STUMPED UMPs

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCIENTIST
CRACKS MLB'S UMPIRE CODE.

BY TIM ELFRINK

Next time you're six Buds deep at Sun Life Stadium and venting your rage at the ump about another wasted Marlins summer — "Hey, blue! Grow another eyeball and you'll be a f***ing Cyclops!" — consider this: The guys behind home plate have a pretty insane schedule.

To be more precise, they have to call balls and strikes at 2,430 games in 780 series spread around 27 big-league towns. Factor in all the rules about who can work which games, and creating an MLB umpire schedule every winter causes a major-league headache for a retired crew chief.

Or at least it did, until University of Miami assistant professor Tallys Yunes

cracked the code.

Yunes and a team of researchers have written a program that generates an ideal schedule for big-league umpers that works so well that MLB has used it for the past three seasons. Now a major scientific journal has published their background work.

"There's an enormous number of possible solutions," Yunes says. "The trick was teaching the program to choose the best one."

Yunes first confronted the umpire conundrum as a teaching assistant at Carnegie Mellon University with colleague Michael Trick. Trick owns a company that helps MLB write its game schedule every year, and the league had asked him to tackle the tricky umpire plan.

Yunes's class of grad students wrote a program, but it didn't work very well. There are scores of rules governing umpers' work schedules — they're not supposed to work the same teams too many times, for instance, but they also shouldn't travel too far. Unlike players, they get vacation days that must be factored in.

"There's all these contradicting demands," Yunes says. "You have to compromise a lot."

In 2008, after taking a job as an assistant professor of management sciences at UM, Yunes tried again. This time, with Trick's help, he got it right. MLB gave it a shot for the '08 season and hasn't looked back. It's "been significantly easier and more efficient," Thomas Lepperd, baseball's chief of umpire operations, says.

The real irony: Yunes is from Rio de Janeiro. Until he recently married an American, he knew next to nothing about the American pastime. "The whole terminology of baseball is still very overwhelming to me," he laughs.

FIRE ALERT

BURNING CROSSES

FIREFIGHTER CLAIMS TO BE
VICTIM OF A HATE CRIME.

BY FRANCISCO ALVARADO

This past August 28, shortly after Miami-Dade firefighter Miguel Rodriguez arrived for work at the Miami International Airport station, he found an unsigned note in his locker. In big, bold block type, it read, "H you fucking black Dominican monkey do come back to C shift nigger lover like you not deserve to have this job you did not get enough last time ?????????? If you come back to C shift we will finish what we started."

Rodriguez, who is married to an African American woman and was a corrections officer before becoming a fireman, alleges the note was authored by a co-worker on C shift.

It wasn't the first time the six-year firefighter has claimed harassment. Last year he reported several incidents, some involving a pair of blood-stained women's underwears in his clean linens. He even got into a fight with a co-worker, Lazaro Picallo, according to a police report. Though Rodriguez requires six stitches, the report lists him as the aggressor. Calls to the fire department last Friday and Tuesday seeking comment from Picallo were not returned. There were no arrests.

Last week, Riptide online quoted Rodriguez identifying his tormentors. Those names were quickly removed. The firefighters' attorney, Kendall Coffey, responded that day: "You quote an unauthenticated note and rely on nothing but rank speculation as to its creation." (Reached Tuesday, Coffey declined further comment.)

The latest incident was brought up during new fire Chief William "Shorty" Bryson's confirmation hearings in front of the county commission last week. "This stuff cannot be tolerated," said Barbara A. Dan, an African-American commissioner. It is a sensitive issue because Bryson, who is white, was accused of discriminating against African-Americans when he served as the City of Miami fire union president.

On Tuesday, Bryson told airport firefighters the note's author will be fired, according to two anonymous firefighters. Fire department spokesperson Griselle Marino declined to confirm that account but said, "The issue is currently under investigation. And the department is taking appropriate steps to ensure there are no further incidents of a similar nature."

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