

August 14, 2009

In the August 12th edition of the Miami Herald, there was an article featured on the possible mishandling of campaign funds by former Senator, Mel Martinez. The loose guidelines allow many candidates to do things with their funds that were probably not intended by their donors. Imagine if these same candidates could put some of their fund raising talents toward saving the Arts or gifting their left over campaign funds to the Art and Cultural Institutions in our community, how much better our lives could be enriched. Sports never seem to lack donors, sponsors, or support from very high profile individuals and they are the first groups saved when cut backs occur. From the beginning of time Art, Dance and Music have been present in every culture, even the most primitive. Why does every branch of government look to cut in these areas first? Do they not consider them important? The Arts are what separate us from becoming machines. The creativity that comes out of various art forms are limitless and yet we are poised to make art and culture only available to the affluent. How sad. If the politicians we elect could raise money to put them in positions of importance, they certainly can fund or help raise the funds to continue what is important in our society. Think of the children that are enriched and empowered by community programming in the arts? What would their lives be like if these programs were not available and subsidized? We would have more crime, more graffiti, and even lower self esteem in the poorer sectors of our community. It is a known fact that children who are active in art excel in their other studies. It develops a part of their brain that makes them more creative in everything they do. When are the people who can make a difference going to wake up? The economic impact of Miami-Dade County's Cultural Arts Industry is \$922 million dollars every year proving this would be a wise investment for politicians to make with their left over campaign funds. Imagine if just a few, even one candidate, would actually add saving and expanding the Arts to their political platforms. That would be a true win for all of us who realize the importance of Cultural Arts in our society.

Ray Breslin, president

Collins Park Neighborhood Association
c/o 255 West 24th Street, CU-6
Miami Beach. FL 33140
p:305 772-5665
email: rbreslin@collinspark.us