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SATELLITE IMAGE FROM NASA, HISTORICAL PHOTO FROM THE FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES AND MODERN PHOTO A FLORIDA WEEKLY IMAGE

THE MILLION MARK

Collier and Lee county population is about to reach...

BY ROGER WILLIAMS
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We've done it now. We've crossed the line, and there's no going back.

Forevermore, Southwest Florida's Gulf coast from Naples to Fort Myers can be defined as a center of heavy population — or we can call it a sprawl, a wedge, a mass, a fat dollop, or a swollen growth.

Sometime this autumn, the population of Collier and Lee counties together will likely hit the unofficial standard of an urban core: 1 million permanent residents. That prediction is based on numbers released last week by the University of Florida that show a total two-county population of about 951,000 18 months ago, on April 1, 2007, and a projected population of about 1.17 million 14 months from now, in 2010 (projected figures vary).

Don't worry about putting the big 1 million in lights; it already is. The refracted nightlight visible from space illuminates the sky for about 50 solid miles along the coast, from Marco Island in the south to Cape Coral in the north.

Five short decades ago, in 1958, roughly 60,000 people lived in the two counties, which together amass 2,830 square miles of land. Almost 55,000 of those people lived in Lee, much the smaller county, with 804 square miles of land. More than 5,000 people lived in Collier, most of them Naples residents — but Collier includes a whopping 2,025 square miles of land. Nowadays, 80 percent of that, about 1,620 square miles, is owned either by the

SEE MILLION, A8 ▶

Farmers markets are back in season

BY JUSTIN MULLIN
Special to Florida Weekly

We're waking up to cooler temperatures, conjuring up Halloween costumes and making up holiday wish lists. It must be time to start filling up on fresh produce from area farmers markets.

New to the local crop this year is the **North Goodlette Farmers Market**, set to open Saturday, Nov. 1, at North Naples United Methodist Church on Goodlette Road. "It's an outreach to the community from the church," coordinator Merida Hines-Tyler said about the market that will offer regular and organic produce every Saturday through April 25.

Farmer/vendor Isaac Gallegos Jr. will be there on opening day with his colorful harvest of tomatoes, cucumbers and all types of peppers. Although the recent chilly weather "has slowed everything down a little" in the fields, Mr. Gallegos said he

SEE MARKET, A14 ▶

INSIDE

Comparing spaces
Art and science meet in stellar 'NASA/ART' exhibition. **C1** ▶

Guest services
Back in 1889, 'First Sister' Rose Cleveland checked in to The Naples Hotel. **A10** ▶

'The Ross Show' returns
CBIA books Ross McIntosh to share his real estate insights for the 20th year. **B13** ▶

Bringing in business
Now's the time to court new companies. **B1** ▶

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COLUMN	A2	HEALTHY LIVING	A18	ARTS	C1
OPINION	A4	BUSINESS	B1	EVENTS	C6 & 7
15 MINUTES	A6	NETWORKING	B6 & 7	SOCIETY	C16, 19 & 21
NAPLES' HISTORY	A10	REAL ESTATE	B9	CUISINE	C23

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