

# NAPLES FLORIDA WEEKLY™

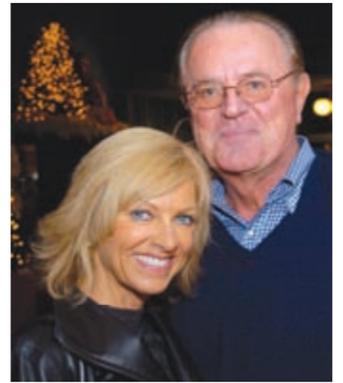
YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

WEEK OF DECEMBER 11-17, 2008

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**An Eden Florida affair**  
And other festivities around town.  
C19 & 21 ▶



**Second time around**  
Consignment and pawn shops  
enjoy a boom when the economy  
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**'twas 'Another Night'**  
Gulfshore Playhouse stages a new  
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**The good professor**  
Lisa Rice-McGarity of Edison State  
College sees the Light(house). A6 ▶

"If man could be crossed with a cat, it would improve man but deteriorate the cat."  
— Mark Twain

# RUMBLE in the JUNGLE

A SHOWDOWN IS BREWING OVER **BIG CYPRESS TOWN** THAT PITS DEVELOPMENT AGAINST NATURE ... AGAIN

BY ROGER WILLIAMS  
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Once again, it seems, it's that doggone cat. The big one, *Puma concolor coryi*, the Florida panther.

Already, it's brought Collier government to a near standstill from time to time; created an apparent mockery of the once universal truth that when you own land, it's yours to do with as you wish; and inspired huge bureaucracies of environmental red tape to swing into action.

The majority of big cats that remain on the planet — probably between 80 and 120 — happen to live in or near Collier County.

And unfortunately for Collier Enterprises, the countryside the Florida panther likes most is theirs. The company aims to build Big Cypress Town with a first phase of about 9,000 homes on 2,800 acres, from south of Oil Well road to south of Randall Boulevard in eastern Collier County, its managers say.

If they can get the permits. Once again, man and cat are about to go head-to-head, toe-to-toe, panther-to-shopping plaza, in a direct confrontation.

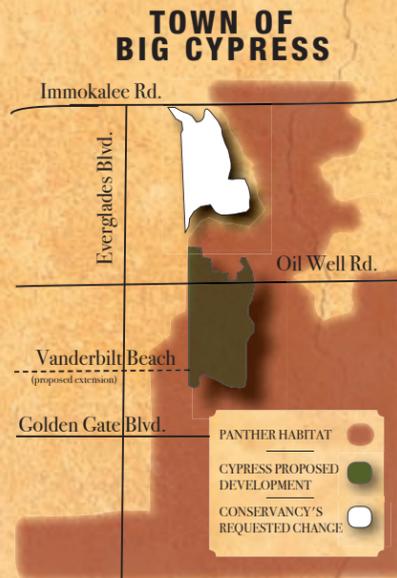
Here's how the opponents stack up.



In one corner of the ring of progress, the big cat represents what remains of wilderness and wilderness. Telemetry tracking has identified more than 60 "marks" across the proposed development land alone — places where panthers have been — and verified five panther "ranges" or home territories, where the creatures live and hunt.

And in the other corner, Collier Enterprises represents big development, but with a gentle touch that old Barron G. Collier himself, who first bought land in the

SEE RUMBLE, A8 ▶



FLORIDA WEEKLY

Moving Big Cypress Town's first phase of development outside of a higher panther traffic zone should be more conducive to preserving our wildlife, according to the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

## Edison State College curriculum evolves to meet changing demands

BY ARTIS HENDERSON  
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Like the five counties it serves, Edison State College is evolving. The college now offers four-year bachelor's degree programs at its Lee County campus, with similar programs planned for Collier and Charlotte counties. Edison College also

changed its name to Edison State College to reflect the expanded curriculum as part of the state university system.

Edison District President Kenneth P. Walker says this development will greatly benefit Edison students and the community. When college officials first considered offering four-year



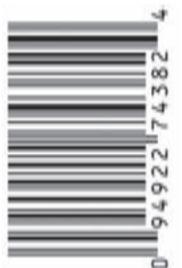
baccalaureate degrees, they polled students on the proposed change. Students overwhelmingly supported the move, with 89 percent of those surveyed saying they would remain at Edison to complete a bachelor's degree if given the opportunity.

SEE EDISON, A14 ▶

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