

# FORT MYERS FLORIDA WEEKLY™

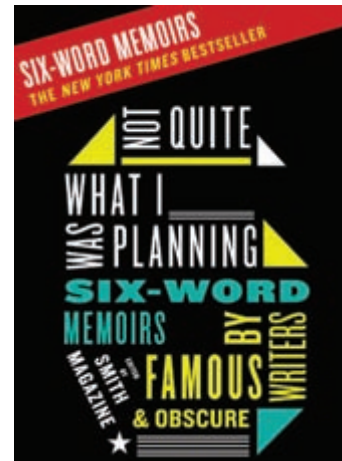
YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

WEEK OF JUNE 18-24, 2008

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INSIDE



### Instant memoirs

Six words, one idea, and an intriguing challenge. Describe your life in just six words. **C1 ▶**



### 'Barely A Chance' premier

And other events in Fort Myers' society. **C23-25 ▶**



### Bombs bursting in air

Blast in China may make July 4 fireworks hard to get. **B1 ▶**



### Big fish

Check out the results of the 19th Annual Caloosa Catch & Release fishing tournament. **A20 ▶**

## The short happy history of Bonita Springs:

BY ROGER WILLIAMS  
rwilliams@floridaweekly.com

Now where were we, again? Oh yes, the town that made millionaires of immigrants, the town that ground gold dust from sand and dust, the town that claimed "upscale community" status for the first time just north of Naples. The town that rocketed upward economically like a space shuttle fired from a shrimp dock, becoming a Petri

dish, in 1984, for Bonita Bay Properties (now the Bonita Bay Group) and its spawn.

The place where, if you built it they would come — to buy into it and live in it, or eat in it, or shop in it, or partner with it.

Where? The place called Bonita

SEE BONITA, A8 ▶



COURTESY PHOTO  
Above, Bonita Springs in the mid-20th century.



>>Inside:  
From humble beginnings a city grows with help.  
**A8**

Today, Bonita Springs is as vibrant and progressive as any city in Florida.

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

## 'Lost souls' find themselves at PACE

BY EVAN WILLIAMS  
Florida Weekly Correspondent

Mary Coe is like many teenagers. She's a little bit shy, sometimes serious and occasionally full of sudden smiles. She lives in Lehigh Acres, listens to Reggae and celebrated a 19th birthday last month.

Next week, she will graduate from high school at PACE center in Fort Myers, a school for at-risk girls, with a scholarship from Uncommon Friends Foundation, to pursue future education.



FLORIDA WEEKLY PHOTO  
Mary Coe, right, with science teacher Michelle Patterson. Coe is set to graduate this month.

A few years ago, Coe dropped out of Fort Myers High School after a death in the family. She was also left to help care for two younger siblings, 8 and 9 years old, and a brother close to her age, after they were kicked out of an apartment. Her parents couldn't pay the rent and the family was split up for a while. Graduation was a distant and unlikely goal.

"I didn't think I'd ever go back to High School," Coe said. "At first, I didn't

SEE PACE, A14 ▶

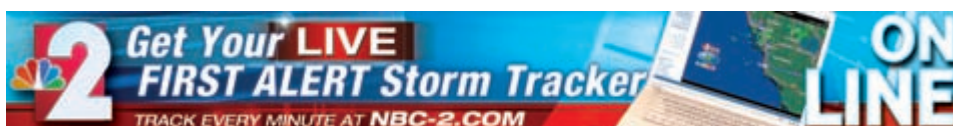
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ROGER WILLIAMS	A2
OPINION	A4
15 MINUTES	A6
OUTDOORS	A20

BUSINESS	B1
NETWORKING	B10&11
ARTS	C1
EVENTS	C6&7

SOCIETY	C19-21
CUISINE	C23
REAL ESTATE	D1
CLASSIFIEDS	D10-11



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