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Local News

Tribute

Local AIDS Activist Dies

David C. Fisk, of Fort Lauderdale, died on April 24, at Imperial Point Medical Center from complications from AIDS, the Sun Sentinel reported.

Fisk was born April 27, 1951, in Gloucester, Mass. During high school, he volunteered at a hospital and later attended nursing school. He worked in the medical examiner's office in Boston and later worked at M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston.



David C. Fisk

It was reported that Mr. Fisk was upset when Medicare ceased paying for immune globulin shots to help boost the immune systems of people with AIDS, which he said was beneficial to his condition. He also took the newest class of AIDS medications, which ultimately caused his organs to fail.

In 1996, Fisk wrote, "For the last several years, younger gay and bisexual men have been under the mistaken

illusion that HIV is an older gay man's disease. This is simply not true."

He went on to write, "I have seen firsthand the devastation that this disease has brought to parents, lovers, wives, husbands and children. I thought that just maybe the message had sunk in, but I guess I was mistaken."

He is survived by his sister, Pamela Hepburn Fisk, of Fort Lauderdale; his mother, Cynthia Fisk, and brother Brian Fisk, both of Gloucester; and his companion of 21 years, Michael Crawford of Fort Lauderdale.

Dade News

UM Dedicates Children's Medical Research Center

World's Top Researchers Seeking Cures Childhood Cancer and Pediatric AIDS

By Terry Spencer
Associated Press

MIAMI - Falcon Batchelor had cystic fibrosis, and when he was 14, doctors told his father, George Batchelor, the boy would be dead within three years.

The elder Batchelor, a wealthy airline owner, didn't believe them and took his son to see Dr. Robert M. McKey Jr., founder of the University of Miami's Cystic Fibrosis Center. The center's treatments kept Falcon alive for 20 years.

In gratitude, Batchelor donated \$10 million to begin construction of the university's Batchelor Children's Research Institute, which was dedicated Thursday. School officials believe the \$60 million facility will attract the

world's top researchers seeking treatments and cures for such afflictions as childhood cancer, pediatric AIDS, children's head injuries and premature births.

The eight-story building is part of the Jackson Memorial Hospital complex. The first of about 280 doctors and researchers are scheduled to begin moving in May 14.

At Thursday's ceremony, Batchelor announced he will be giving the school an additional \$5 million.

"I hope that one day these researchers will find a cure not only for cystic fibrosis but cancer and other childhood diseases," said the 80-year-old North Miami Beach resident, who once owned Western Airlines and Arrow Air.

Near Batchelor was Dr. Giovanni Piedimonte and one of his cystic fibrosis patients, Waydon Lapradd, a quiet 9-year-old from Homestead. The disease is caused by a genetic inability to process salt that leads to lung inflammation, excessive mucus buildup and potentially fatal infections.

Piedimonte, director of the school's Cystic Fibrosis Center, said that when Batchelor's son was Waydon's age, the median life span for cystic fibrosis patients was in the teens, while today it's in the 30s and getting longer.

"We have women (with cystic fibrosis) who are bearing children," Piedimonte said. The key to curing the disease, he said, lies in finding a way to repair the defective gene that causes it.

"If we can fix that, we can cure the disease and not just address the problems it causes," he said.

But until then, Waydon will take pills and inhale medications daily. He gets shots. His mother Donna said he's been remarkably healthy so far, but he currently has an infection that could put him in the hospital next week if it doesn't get better.

She said that when she looks at the Batchelor institute, she sees a better future for her son.

"Today I have hope, where yesterday I didn't," she said.



Business Spotlight

Bess and Weatherhead Form Partnership

Two prominent members of South Florida's gay community have announced that they have entered into a "new and exciting business partnership."

Randy Bess, the one-time General Manager of the old Club Cathode Ray and John Weatherhead, former long time Executive Director of CenterOne, Broward County's oldest and largest AIDS service and education agency, have pooled their talents to form Sandcastle Real Estate Services, "a unique and inexpensive way to sell your home."

Weatherhead stated, "I'm really exciting about teaming up with someone for whom I have tremendous respect and admiration. I was looking for an opportunity within the private sector which would utilize my marketing talents to their greatest potential, so when Randy presented me with just such an opportunity, I jumped at the chance to partner with my good friend."



Randy Bess and John Weatherhead

When asked what makes Sandcastle different from the thousands of other real estate agencies in South Florida, Bess explained, "usually when someone wants to sell their home they either try to do it on their own or they sign a contract with a real estate agency."

Four out of five homes are sold through the Multiple Listing Service. MLS is really the agents' bible.

"Our program gets your home listed in MLS for a flat fee of \$495," they said. "With its exposure to every realtor in South Florida, with Sandcastle you also

reserve the right to sell your house on your own, something you generally cannot do if you list with a traditional real estate agency. If your house sells through MLS, you only pay a 3% commission to the selling agent, versus the traditional 6% or if you sell your house on your own; you pay absolutely no commission."

Sandcastle is currently offering MLS listing in Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties. We

will shortly be offering this service throughout Florida. Plans are also in the works to add flat fee MLS service for both commercial and rental listings.

Bess and Weatherhead went on to say that "several investors have approached us wanting a piece of this venture but thus far we've not accepted any of the offers. We'll evaluate all proposals on an individual basis. For now we're on our own but, never say never."

For more information call Bess or Weatherhead at Sandcastle Real Estate Services at 954-522-4912.