

The third quarter of 2015 had WLRN Radio News staff addressing both local and international issues and events while also wrapping up a summer Youth Radio project.

Program Coverage: The Florida Roundup

7/10/15 - Carnival Cruises to Cuba, Uber Bids Goodbye to Broward

Today on the Florida Roundup, how Carnival Corporation got the go-ahead from the U.S. to cruise to Cuba and how it will affect the island. Plus, the ride-sharing service popular in Miami is not welcome in Fort Lauderdale environs.

7/17/15 - Oil In the Everglades? A South Florida company is asking for permission to [explore the Everglades](#) west of Broward for oil. Environmentalists say it's a bad idea and some experts argue that there isn't enough oil in Florida to make it worth the effort.

7/24/15 - A New Era of U.S. - Cuba Relations Begins

The Cuban flag was raised in Washington, D.C. on Monday, marking the beginning of a new era in normalizing relations between the island and U.S.

Secretary of State John Kerry and Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez held a press conference at the Department of State on Monday.

The two men acknowledged that there are still vast differences between the two governments -- one of those being the perception of human rights.

In Miami, some protesters gathered outside Versailles Cafe, to protest the opening of the embassy in Washington, D.C.

7/31/15 - South Florida Transit & Homeless Shelter Funding in Miami

As of Friday, Uber is no longer in business in Broward County, after the company called the county's regulations "onerous" this month. County commissioners drafted a lawsuit stating Uber has not complied with the state's background check and insurance regulations. Meanwhile, Miami-Dade's new transit director, [Alice Bravo](#), [told Miami New Times](#) she hopes Miami will move toward becoming "car-optional."

The City of Miami and the Homeless Trust is hoping to reach a deal Friday to fund a shelter program for the city's homeless.

8/7/15 - The GOP Presidential Debate & South Florida's Sons

The Republican presidential debate drew 24 million viewers on Thursday night, making it the most-watched presidential debate ever. Was the record viewership thanks in part to Donald Trump? Maybe. But Florida voters had two homegrown candidates on the stage, and issues like immigration and education were big talking points for both Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio.

8/14/15 - U.S. Embassy Opens in Havana Plus Protests In Miami

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry spoke at a small ceremony, speaking about the island's future and the relationship between the two countries.

"Cuba's future is for the Cuban people to shape," Kerry said.

Meanwhile in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, emotions ran high as critics and supporters of the move clashed at a street protest.

8/21/15 Hurricanes and Preparations

Last weekend hurricane Danny strengthened to a Category 3 major storm with winds at 115 mph. It's now [down to a tropical depression](#).

While Florida hasn't seen a major storm since Hurricane Wilma blew through in 2005, Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Bryan Koon says residents should prepare every year right around May.

8/28/15 - Who Makes Up The Hispanic Vote?

When Donald Trump [kicked Univision anchor Jorge Ramos out](#) of a press conference last week in Iowa, polls showed that Trump was lacking support among "Hispanic voters." What exactly does it mean to be a Hispanic voter, considering the vast differences between the groups that make up the Hispanic voter demographic?

9/4/15 - Oil In The Everglades?

Everglades National Park is finalizing a plan that's designed to update the way it is managed. Some key changes to how the park will operate include different zoning regulations, which in some cases have eliminated the use of airboats.

The park worked on these rules for 12 years. It'll be the newest set since 1979.

"There's been significant changes in the recent decades since the last plan," says Fred Herling, Everglades National Park planner. "Population growth, demographic changes, new technology, new exotic plants and animals."

9/11/15 - The Iran Deal & South Florida

South Florida Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz recently announced that she will back President Obama's Iran nuclear arms deal. The deal would lift the sanctions on Iran and, in return, international inspections would keep tabs on Iran's nuclear sites.

9/18/15 - White House Eases Regulations On Cuba On Eve Of Pope's Arrival

Just as Cuba prepares for its first papal visit in 17 years -- one laden with questions of human rights, religious devotion and the future of normalizing relations -- the Obama administration released a new set of trade rules Friday morning in an effort to further thaw in U.S.-Cuba relations. The rules will [take effect Monday](#), and aim to weaken the U.S. trade embargo imposed on the island nation since 1962.

9/25/15 - Police Body Cameras In South Florida

Miami-Dade Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol last weekend in Key West – and the traffic stop was captured on video via body cameras. Key West cops began using the cameras this summer. Miami-Dade County was recently awarded funds from the Department of Justice to kickstart the program. [West Palm Beach police](#) are using police body cameras and favor the cameras because for one, it shows their point of view. Proponents say it sometimes it even helps de-escalate situations when people are told they’re being recorded.

Program Coverage: The Sunshine Economy (TSE)

This program emerged from summer hiatus (July-August) in September with a look at one of South Floridians’ favorite complaints, traffic. TSE host Tom Hudson defined what’s up with transit here and asked is it going to get any better by next year?

9/14/15 - Transportation in South Florida

How South Florida gets around, or doesn't, is increasingly a matter of public debate. Climbing commuting times, more tolls and long-promised but never delivered public transportation projects like [BayLink](#) are pushing our collective patience. It costs commuters money and costs the economy lost productivity. As the region has grown across political boundaries, transportation planning has not kept pace. Graphs and charts posted on WLRN.org helped illuminate the problem. TSE asked Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Giménez, Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado and Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine: What improvements to transportation will be made in one year?

9/21/15 - How Much Housing Can South Floridians Afford?

As the market recovers from the housing collapse, housing affordability is increasingly a challenge in South Florida. Median home prices have jumped while household incomes have remained flat. That puts owning a home out of reach for many working South Floridians. WLRN used median county home values from the [University of Florida's](#)

[Shimberg Center for Housing Studies](#) along with median county income generated by the [U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey](#) to plot how much home South Floridians can comfortably afford. Graphs for each of the 4 South Florida counties revealed the affordability gap on WLRN.org.

9/28/15 - On The Edge of Adulthood

Becoming an adult holds the promise of new freedoms -- no curfew, driving, maybe living on your own -- but as everyone who has been a teenager knows, it comes with more responsibility, financial responsibilities in particular, whether you are ready or not. For the first time, WLRN led a summer program teaching six high schoolers how to tell their own stories through sound. Working with them provided unique insights into what they're thinking about their economic futures -- a future that is statistically challenging. TSE interviewed these high school students and graphed unemployment statistics for all young adults in the region as well as by minority youth to better illustrate the problem facing young Americans.

Program Coverage: The Latin America Report

Focusing on the nations of the Caribbean and Latin America, this report provides depth, data, analysis and sometimes opinion regarding the news and issues of a phenomenally large canvas, the southern hemisphere. As WLRN listeners can't help but know, what our neighbors to the south deal with daily eventually affects us.

7/6/15 - President Obama's announcement last week that the U.S. will restore diplomatic relations with communist Cuba on July 20 – and will open an embassy there a few days after – is angering South Florida lawmakers.

Their options to stop the Administration are limited. But they're moving against Obama's new engagement policy nonetheless, and it's shaping up as one of the summer's big political battles. The rhetoric from the Cuban-American congressional caucus is rising with the humid temperature in Washington, D.C.

7/8/15 - A web post with a small slideshow to warm the heart of our Peruvian residents: Standing just a couple of blocks from the U.S. Capitol, a group of Peruvian highlanders, draped in handwoven cloths and ponchos in all the colors of the rainbow, pray to Mother Earth, to the mountains, to the spirit of their ancestors. Their wish is that their alpaca "cover the earth like the grains of sand by the ocean." Alpaca wool — called fiber — is prized for its softness and warmth. It's woven into textiles and garments. Peruvians hold a traditional blessing ceremony, performed since before Columbus discovered the New World, which was re-created at the national mall last July for the annual [Smithsonian Folklife Festival](#).

7/9/15 - Pope Francis and the Communist Crucifix: Conservatives Should Look Harder
Commentary: During Pope Francis' visit to Bolivia yesterday – the second stop on the Pope's three-country tour of South America this week – left-wing President Evo Morales offered him an unusual crucifix that depicts Jesus nailed to a hammer and sickle. That is, Jesus laid out on the international symbol for communism.

Francis reportedly muttered to Morales, "*Eso no está bien.*" Translation: We are not amused. This pope isn't exactly the darling of the international right wing, whether it's Roman Catholics in the Vatican or Republicans in the U.S. They already consider him a commie in a cassock – thanks to his emphasis on social justice for the poor, income inequality between countries and the really green encyclical he published last month supporting climate change science.

Now, conservatives will most likely hold up the image of Pope Francis receiving Jesus the Revolutionary from Comrade Evo as prized proof of his Marxist bona fides. Only a shot of Barack Obama wearing a Che Guevara T-shirt would fetch a higher price on Planet Conspiracy.

On Planet Reality, neither Francis nor Obama is a socialist. Still, both religious and political conservatives should take a long hard look at the photo from Bolivia – because it speaks volumes not about Francis' radical flaws but about their reactionary failures.

7/13/15 - Can Haiti-Dominican Talks Prevent Mass Deportation?

Is the Dominican Republic's controversial plan to deport hundreds of thousands of people of Haitian descent on hold? Almost half a million people living in the Dominican Republic have Haitian ancestry. But the Dominican Supreme Court has ruled that anyone born in the D.R. after 1929 will have their citizenship revoked if their parents were not Dominican. That has set the stage this summer for the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Haitian-Dominicans.

7/13/15 - A Hate Crime Haunts Jupiter and Its Latino Community

Onesimo Lopez-Ramos immigrated to the U.S. from Guatemala -- one of the most violent countries in the western hemisphere. But even living in the quiet town of Jupiter, Fla., at the northern end of Palm Beach County, he couldn't escape lethal brutality. The 18-year-old Lopez-Ramos was killed this past April, allegedly by three young white men who said they were targeting immigrants -- or "Guat-hunting" as one of them told police afterward in a disturbing confession.

7/16/15 - U.S. Pushing Clean Energy in Fuel-Starved Caribbean

Now that Venezuela can no longer afford to subsidize cheap oil for Caribbean countries, the U.S. wants to step into the region's fuel future, and the State Department's point man was in Coral Gables Wednesday to promote that effort.

The poor and indebted island nations of the Caribbean rely heavily – too heavily – on expensive fossil fuel imports. Over the past decade, oil-rich Venezuela has helped them out with its Petrocaribe program. But with Venezuela’s economy now in ruins, the Caribbean desperately needs alternatives.

7/16/15 - From El Chapo to Chile, South Florida Pays for Latin America’s Corruption Eruption - Commentary

Once again, Donald Trump’s got it all wrong. Mexican immigrants aren’t the problem. Mexican *officials* are. Especially all the Mexican officials who live deep inside the pockets of Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán, the world’s richest and most wanted drug kingpin. Thanks to them, El Chapo, or “Shorty,” was able to waltz out of Mexico’s most secure penitentiary through a *mile-long* escape tunnel that’s already being called one of the country’s engineering marvels.

7/19/15 - Where Does Florida’s Cuban Consulate Belong? Hint: Not Miami, Not Tampa As the U.S. and Cuba re-establish diplomatic relations today – and open embassies in their respective capitals – all eyes are on Washington D.C. and Havana.

Except perhaps in South Florida. Here, all Cuban politics is local. So we care less about the hot air rising today in the Beltway (where U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez will meet) and in La Habana later this summer (when Kerry plans to visit and inaugurate a U.S. embassy there) and more about what this means for Miami-Dade, the Keys, Broward and Palm Beach.

7/21/15 - Will New Embassies Tamp Down or Ramp Up the U.S.-Cuba Spy Game?

When Cuba opened its Washington D.C. embassy yesterday, the moment wasn’t just historic. It also felt really ironic. Historic, of course, because Cuba was raising its flag over the U.S. capital for the first time in 54 years. When the U.S. inaugurates its embassy in Havana on August 14, it will be the crowning moment in the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two Cold War enemies. But this might be a *déjà vu* moment, too, because a big reason the U.S. and Cuba severed ties in 1961 was...embassies.

7/28/15 - Venezuela’s Out of Beer? Looming Cerveza Shortage a Reminder of Economic Collapse

We’ve gotten used to hearing about chronic shortages in Venezuela – everything from food to medicine to condoms. Those hit Venezuelans where they live. Now there’s a looming shortage that hits Venezuelans where they relax: *Cerveza*. Beer.

This is bad news for customers at Arepas, a Venezuelan sports bar in Miami Beach. They love ice-cold Polar – which is Venezuela’s most popular beer and a brand that’s well known outside the country as well.

7/30/15 - Deportation Cruelty is the Last Thing the Dominican Republic’s Cruel Image Needs - Opinion

You don’t need to be a detective to know that the Dominican Republic has already begun deporting Haitian-Dominicans. International media report this week that tent cities are sprouting up at towns like Anse-à-Pitres on Haiti’s side of its border with the D.R. This morning I spoke by phone with Mia Pean, a Haitian-American relief worker who lives near Anse-à-Pitres. Her organization just received a group of Haitian-Dominican youths who say they were deported from the D.R. a few days ago – even though they claim they were born there.

8/3/15 - Dissing the Diaspora: Why Can’t Haitian Expats Vote in Sunday’s Presidential Elections?

Five years ago today, Wyclef Jean – the Haitian-American hip-hop star whose 2004 hit song mused, “If I was President” – revealed [in an interview with me](#) that he was actually running for President. Of Haiti.

8//715 - Haitian Elections a Long-Overdue Chance to Foster Better Leadership

Opinion: [Last week I slammed the Dominican Republic](#) for risking its global image with an immigration policy that has unjustly made hundreds of thousands of Haitian-Dominicans targets for deportation....And while I stand by what I wrote about the D.R., I agree with them: The Haitian government’s administrative fecklessness – specifically, its inability to provide Haitian immigrants in the D.R. with adequate identity documentation that could have helped them secure legal status – is a culprit. In fact, even Haiti’s ambassador to the D.R. recently called his government’s ID document program a “failure.” (He is no longer Haiti’s ambassador to the D.R.)

8/10/15 - Ybor City Chamber Plans Havana Trip

The [Ybor City Chamber of Commerce](#) is using renewed relations between the Obama Administration and government of Cuba to re-establish the link between the “Cigar City” and Havana. Larry Wilder is chairman of the chamber. He said Havana and Ybor are a natural fit since the Cuban capital pretty much gave birth to Tampa’s cigar industry when so many cigar workers moved here in the late 1800s.

8/11/15 - American-Born Cubans Seek to End “Emotional Embargo”

They call themselves ABCs: American-born Cubans. Well before Cuba and the United States began to normalize relations this year, a crop of younger Cuban-Americans were working to engage the communist island.

Many Gen. X-ers, in particular, have challenged their parents and communities' wishes in an attempt to lift what [some artists and writers](#) have been calling the “emotional embargo” on Cubans on and off the island.

8/12/15 - Dark-Skinned or Black? How Afro-Brazilians Are Forging a Collective Identity

If you want to get a sense of how complex racial identity is in Brazil, you should meet sisters Francine and Fernanda Gravina. Both have the same mother and father.

Francine, 28, is blond with green eyes and white skin. She wouldn't look out of place in Iceland. But Fernanda, 23, has milk chocolate skin with coffee colored eyes and hair. Francine describes herself as white, whereas Fernanda says she's *morena*, or brown-skinned.

8/14/15 - U.S. Flag Flies Over Embassy in Cuba for First Time in 54 Years

Secretary of State John Kerry presided over a ceremony reopening the U.S. Embassy in Havana, including a flag-raising ceremony — an event that will mark the first time the Stars and Stripes have flown over a diplomatic compound there in 54 years.

Kerry, speaking before assembled dignitaries, remembered the strained history of U.S.-Cuba relations, including the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when the Soviet Union was discovered to be siting nuclear rockets on the island nation.

8/18/15 - Healing Honduras: U.S. Ambassador Sees New Strategies for Stemming Illegal Immigration

President Obama is asking Congress for \$1 billion in new aid for Central America — especially violence-plagued countries like Honduras. One big goal is to reduce the massive waves of illegal immigration to the U.S., which we're seeing in South Florida. While in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa last week, I spoke with U.S. Ambassador James Nealon about how the Administration hopes to make this plan work — and about Washington's growing realization that solving illegal immigration means improving conditions at its source rather than building walls at our border.

8/20/15- Miami Salsa Band Makes Obama's Playlist: Now How 'Bout a White House Invite?

Maybe you've never heard of the Miami salsa band Sonora Carruseles. But President Obama has. This week he put one of the group's songs on his summer playlist — and the Colombian-American ensemble is obscure no more.

8/25/15 - Danny & The Drought: How El Nino Left the Caribbean Parched
Remember Hurricane Danny roaring out in the Atlantic last week with 115-mile-an-hour gusts? When it reached Puerto Rico this morning it was wheezing. That's a big relief for the Caribbean islands – but it also reflects a big problem out there. The same abnormal climate conditions that helped deflate Danny are also responsible for the some of the worst drought the Caribbean has seen in two decades.

9/8/2015 The Central American Spring: After Guatemala, Is Honduras Next?
After Sunday's first round of voting, the leading candidate in Guatemala's presidential runoff election next month will be a former comedian. But the anti-corruption wave sweeping Central America is no joke – and has been spreading next door to Honduras. Guatemalan actor Jimmy Morales has never held elected office. But it's not surprising that an outsider candidate like him got the most votes. Guatemalans are so angry about corruption that last week President Otto Pérez was forced to resign and faces charges in a major scandal.

9/14/15 - Puerto Ricans Head to Central Florida At A Fast Pace for Climate, Jobs
In a small, crowded shopping plaza, the smell of mofongos drifts from Melao, a popular Puerto Rican bakery. A few doors down people eat plantains at Puerto Chino a Puerto Rican-style Chinese spot. Others buy books at libreria cristiana, a Spanish bookstore. This is Buenaventura Lakes, part of Kissimmee St. Cloud, where Spanish is the new lingua franca and Puerto Rican flags propped in windows is now a common sight. Janet Colon remembers less than ten years ago when the area was different.

9/16/15 - Memo to Pope Francis: Cuba Wasn't All That Catholic Even Before Castro
Pope Francis' visit to Cuba this weekend showcases the island's Roman Catholic recovery after half a century of communism. But that narrative is misleading. In reality, Catholicism wasn't all that vibrant in Cuba *before* communism.

9/20/15 - Pope Francis' Visit Means More Than Religion to Cubans
Pope Francis' arrival in Cuba was met at Havana's Plaza de la Revolución by 300,000 spectators who braved the heat Sunday morning to hear the Holy Father deliver Mass and talk about the need to serve.
"The importance of one person is always based on how they serve the frailty of their brothers," the pope told the assembled crowd. "In this we find one of the true fruits of humanity. Because, brothers and sisters, those who don't live to serve, do not have a life worth living."

9/22/15 -Cerasee or Asosi: The Cure-All Plant for South Florida's Caribbean Transplants - Nadege Green

I was born and raised in Miami, but my very Haitian mom always kept true to her roots — especially whenever I didn't feel well. Have a sore throat? Sour orange leaves can fix that. A tummy ache? Freshly picked mint from the backyard will ease the pain. She is a believer of *remed fey*, or bush medicine. My mom comes from a line of Haitian women herbalists from Gonaives, Haiti. She learned from her mother, who learned from her mother, who learned from her mother and so on.

Radio Newsroom:

Late June through July 15th, 2015

At the beginning of the quarter, a health-related series on HIV in Florida addressing the risks to straight black men, transgender individuals, and the push for a life-saving needle exchange program aired before politics, Cuba, the Pope and the rest of the South Florida scene swelled to claim more air time.

Memorable stories included an international ballerina inspiring youth in Miami Gardens, a troubled South Florida neighborhood (7/17/15); Confederate flags, monuments and protests from Key West north through Palm Beach County (7/13/15); and a Florida Keys man rescuing and racing pigeons (7/16/15).

The connection between the Bay of Pigs and the founding of St. Thomas University (9/20/15) was reported along with a builder's discovery and subsequent response to developing a segregation era black cemetery after remains were found at the Broward County site (9/10/15).

Those stories, plus Youth Radio productions (6 high school students productions starting the week of 8/10/15); ABCs (American Born Cubans) speaking out hoping to end the "emotional embargo" of Cuba (8/11/15); and mango donations to the homeless (8/6/15) provide more examples of WLRN's commitment to sharing the stories of our entire community.