

BITS AND PIECES

West Kendal resident publishes book

Well-known local activist, Hector Varela, has published his first book which will appear in stores and through Amazon.com in November or December. Hector was born in Puerto Rico and moved to Texas when he was 11. He served in the U.S. Navy and after a stint in Puerto Rico, returned to the U.S. in 1980. He was a Miami-Dade police officer. People in South Dade will remember him as a former member and Chairman of the West Kendall Community Council 11.

His book, *Affinity for Trouble*, is an autobiography of his early years in the poverty-ridden neighborhoods of Santurce, Puerto Rico. The precocious street-wise voice of a boy urchin introduces you to a spiritual struggle as he fends for survival. His complicated family includes the very best and worst characters imaginable. His violent and loving father, papi Guelo; his introverted egotistical mother, mami Letty; his macho amoral gang-chief, uncle Freddy; and his despot criolla grandmother, mami Provi. This story captures accurately the essence of an era through his eyes as he overcomes formidable odds in the 1940's and 1950's. From the ghetto to suburbia he resists all evil with the help of his magical dark and gifted step-sister, Paula, whose deep religious faith encompasses Christianity and the seven African Powers. Paula and Hector will keep you engrossed through culinary and musical descriptions, and mesmerize you with their magical rituals, culture and beliefs. It is a book every resident of this melting pot called America should read.