

A South Florida woman brings her community together with a book about her childhood neighborhood



Max and Jacqueline Gutstein. "The Westchester Kids" book author and her brother. (Courtesy: Jacqueline Gutstein)

WESTCHESTER, Fla. – Bird Bowl, Rockway Junior High, Coral Park Senior High, Frankie’s Pizza, Westchester Mall... If any of these places spark memories for you, you may have been a “Westchester Kid.”

Jackie Gutstein, author of “The Westchester Kids” grew up in the area in the late 1960’s and says she had such wonderful memories about her childhood, she wrote a book about it.

Gutstein started compiling stories from friends, family and social media groups in August of 2020. In all, she collected 31 stories, spanning from the 60’s to present day.

“Westchester was a great place to live and grow up. It had a real hometown feel, and everyone knew their neighbors and helped each other out. We played all afternoon and into the evening and once school let out, we were outside with our friends until Mom called us in for our baths, dinner, and homework.” said Elizabeth Diaz Rizo, contributor.



Ana Diaz Alvarez and Elizabeth Diaz Rizo. "The Westchester Kids" book. (Courtesy: Elizabeth Diaz Rizo)

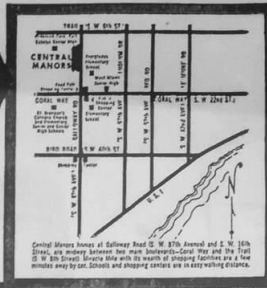
The author even shared some of her own stories.

“I remember when we purchased a wood paneled station wagon my Cuban parents would call ‘el pisicorre,’ meaning you step on the pedal, and it would go fast. Our house had the typical Floridian white pebble roof, wall air conditioner units, and terrazzo floors that were mopped using el ‘palo con trapo,’ the Cuban style wooden stick with a mop cloth,” said Gutstein.

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Advertisement for the first homes in Westchester, 1960's (Courtesy: Jacqueline Gutstein)

Westchester has been a Miami-Dade County Community since the late 1950's. "Back then, it was a post WWII development. My family moved into the Bel Mar model in 1967, a three bedroom, two-bath home that we purchased for \$17,500," said Gutstein.

According to Zillow, the average price of a single-family home in the Westchester area right now, is about \$500,000.

For a trip down memory lane and to read the stories, [click here](#).

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Veronica Crespo wrote for Local10.com and oversaw the Español section of the website. Born and raised in Miami, she graduated from the University of Miami, where she studied broadcast journalism and Spanish.