

Republican says news  
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## Powell shows a lighter side

President Bush's former secretary  
of state also discusses serious topics.

By ANNA MARIA DELLA COSTA

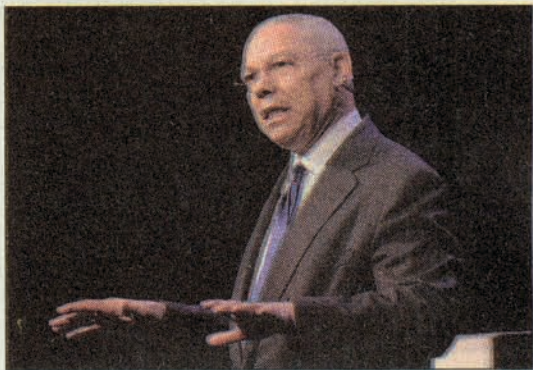
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SARASOTA — Meet Colin Powell, stand-up  
comedian.

While nearly 1,700 people at the Van Wezel  
Performing Arts Hall were awaiting a solemn  
speech about diplomacy from the former secre-  
tary of state on Tuesday morning, he showed  
them a lighter side.

"I knew that I was aging when Grand Maga-  
zine, a magazine for grandparents, named me

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STAFF PHOTO / THOMAS BENDER / thomas.bender@heraldtribune.com

Colin Powell spoke to nearly 1,700 people at Van  
Wezel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota.

## Former secretary of state shows lighter side at forum

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one of the 10 Sexiest Grandpar-  
ents in America," the 68-year-  
old said. "Where was that kind  
of attention 20 years ago?"

Powell, who stepped down  
as secretary of state in 2004,  
also talked about his new toy.

"I finally broke down and  
bought a Corvette," he said.  
"It's some kind of cool."

Powell was here for the final  
dual lectures of the 2006 Town  
Hall Lecture Series, a fund-raiser  
for the Ringling School Li-  
brary Association.

On the war in Iraq, he said  
that "whether you support the  
war in Iraq or not, we hoped  
for peace and didn't get it. It  
was necessary to go there."

Iraqis "don't want bombs,  
don't want terrorism," he contin-  
ued. "They want to vote for the  
leaders... Despite all of the anti-  
American rhetoric you hear, we

### On tap in 2007

The 2007 Town Hall Lecture  
Series will feature former New  
York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani,  
anthropologist Jane Goodall, Ehud  
Barak, the 10th prime minister of  
Israel, Grammy Award-winning  
producer-musician Quincy Jones  
and author Daniel Pink. A sixth  
speaker has not been announced.

For more information on the  
association and/or the 2007 Town  
Hall Lecture Series, call (941)  
925-1343, e-mail RSLATownHall@  
comcast.net. or visit the Web site  
[www.RSLAssociation.org](http://www.RSLAssociation.org).

still are a trusted nation."

He warned, "Difficult times  
are ahead in that part of the  
world."

But it was his funny bone  
that surprised those who ex-  
pected Powell the statesman.

"I couldn't believe he was so

funny," Francis Thayer said.  
"You always see such a digni-  
fied man, and he had us laugh-  
ing a lot of the time."

"I could have made a lot  
more money as a stand-up co-  
median than secretary of  
state," Powell quipped. "I'm a  
New York guy; all New York-  
ers are funny."

But things weren't so light at  
the 7:30 p.m. lecture where pro-  
testers in the parking lot tried  
to set the mood.

Graham Coreil-Allen, 23, got  
a ticket to the lecture from a  
couple who was kicked out for  
handing out anti-war materi-  
als.

After the lecture began, Cor-  
eil-Allen stood up and shouted  
at Powell that he had blood on  
his hands. A nearby audience  
member quickly grabbed the  
Selby Gardens employee, cov-  
ered his mouth and dragged

him out of the hall. Coreil-  
Allen said the man threatened  
to punch him.

"I thought it was important  
to say something to Mr. Powell  
about the war in Iraq," Coreil-  
Allen said. "I wanted him to  
know not all of Sarasota agrees  
with the way things are going."

Powell met with eighth-gra-  
ders at Booker Middle School  
and students from the Ringling  
School of Art and Design, be-  
fore appearing at the Van We-  
zel.

"At this stage of my life, it's  
good to be anywhere," Powell  
said. "You're a big shot, and  
then suddenly you're not."

"The kids loved him here,"  
said William Maher, principal  
of Booker Middle. "It's hard  
to keep the attention of 350 eighth-  
graders, but he did it with a  
sense of humor.

"He was very real."