

Republican says news
that he's running for
Senate isn't true

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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

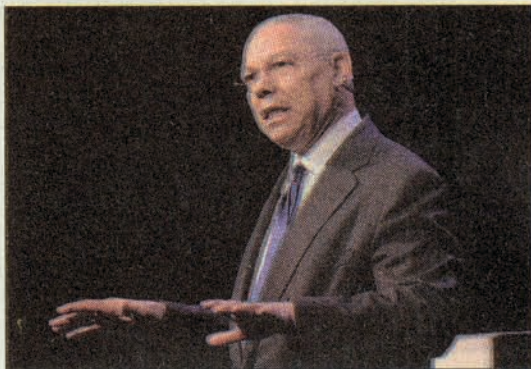
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SARASOTA — Meet Colin Powell, stand-up
comedian.

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.

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."