The Miami Herald

**The prowl — again**

Russia's entry into Georgia under the guise of protecting the "Russian minority" in South Ossetia sounds ominously like the 1938 Nazi advance into the Sudetenland of then-Czechoslovakia for the purpose of protecting the "ethnic German minority" of that region.

Of course, Russia's effort is designed to topple a pro-Western, pro-Democratic government that is a thorn in its side, particularly given that Georgia is a former republic within the now defunct Soviet Union, which Russia led into the ground.

The question is, Will the European Union and other western nations, including the United States, repeat the 1938 appeasement led by Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier in Munich by not doing anything meaningful and effective to assist a small country that was overrun by hostile forces?

-MARIO S. CANO, Coral Gables

**Wildlife in peril**

The Bush administration, not content with the moral and ethical destruction of a democracy, now has its sights set on destruction of the animal kingdom with an attack on the Endangered Species Act. It wants to brush aside 30 years of litigation and have the feds decide, with no oversight, what environmental standards will apply regarding construction projects in environmentally sensitive areas.

Bush's record is not that great from a humanitarian standpoint. At least people voted him in. God's creatures had no such vote. Let Congress know that this power grab by this buck administration is a criminal act against nature's laws.

- STAN BARNETT, Miami

**Lawmakers forget us**

Re the Aug. 12 editorial Take a stand for Florida consumers: These days, business has free rein, while the job of unprotected Americans is to prop up reckless investors and spend money into indebtedness. People lose homes while brokers illegally profit from it. The governor's lavish international business trip takes precedence over funding for the education of our youngest residents.

It's evident that the state's politicians serve at the pleasure of the insurance, construction, mortgage, utility, testing, building and banking industries, and at the expense of their constituents. Capitalism at its strongest, but democracy at its weakest.

- RACHEL L. LEBON, Miami

**Save Marine Stadium**

I recently have become a member of the Friends of the Marine Stadium, which supports refurbishing the stadium on Virginia Key so Miamians once again can enjoy it. I saw Jimmy Buffett and other great musical acts perform there, as well as watched a rowing competition and other sporting events.

In the last few years, we have approved bonds to build new museums and provide gathering places for the community. We have spent $500 million on a performance-arts center and more on the Miami International Airport. We are considering spending millions on a new baseball stadium.

Comparatively speaking, the money needed to refurbish the Marine Stadium and make it operational will be nominal, while the return to the community will be significant.

Most of the projects mentioned do not make Miami unique. They compete with facilities of other major cities. The Marine Stadium, on the other hand, is one of a kind in the amenities that it provides and in its architecture.

The stadium highlights what is wonderful about Miami: the ocean, boating and water sports. It separates Miami as one of the great cities of the world.

- DAVID A. PUYANIC, Key Biscayne

**Idling wastes gas**

I went to Starbucks recently to get a triple grande latte. I was in a hurry and planned to use the drive-through.

When I got there, there were already seven cars in front of me, so I thought it would be faster to go inside — there was not one customer there.

It seems that we are living in a time when the price of gas is higher than we could ever imagine, yet we will burn more and end up paying $5 when we should be only paying $4 for a cup of coffee. Americans' laziness and wastefulness never cease. Will we ever wake up?

- JEFF HALLER, Miami