

Committee: 3-day schedule has official name

MARIA CHERCOLES
Asst. News Director

A website and a new name for the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class schedule were on the top of the list for the Classroom Utilization Implementation Committee during their first meeting of the year.

During the Jan. 5 meeting, the committee members' main focus was communication, especially towards faculty and student concerns addressed to the committee.

To do this, a website will address frequently asked questions, follow the implementation progress and provide updates on the committee's decisions.

It will also allow students and faculty to ask questions via e-mail. The website will be accessed from FIU's homepage and is expected to start operating within one week.

"We are doing our best to try to anticipate faculty and student's questions before the website goes live," said Terry Witherell, associate vice president of External Relations and head of the committee's communication division.

To address students' concerns, the committee and the Student Government Association will work together to co-host forums to answer questions.

The first forum will take place Jan. 18 at University Park but there is no date yet for a Biscayne Bay Campus forum.

The committee also discussed creating guidelines to distribute to the different University's departments.

These guidelines, which Corinne Webb, vice president of enrollment services and president of the committee, called University Classroom Scheduling Guidelines, will include the scope of the implementation, its objectives, process and monitoring.

The committee also hopes the guidelines will address concerns and explain to the University community the schedule changes and how individual departments and professors can better take advantage of it.

During the meeting, Webb questioned the proper name for the new schedule.

"Three day schedule misleads students into thinking they will only have to come to class three days a week," Webb explained.

Witherell agreed with a name change. She added that "three day schedule" does not address the fact that the adjustments also involve space, capacity and classroom utilization changes, not just the fact that some classes will be offered thrice a week.

After discussing different names such as "new daytime schedule" and "new class schedule," the committee voted to officially name the program "New 3-Day Schedule" because of the term's wide-

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Living on-campus: a better bargain?

JOSE PAGLIERY
Staff Writer

Freshman Alex Suczewski is looking for a job off-campus to make ends meet.

Why?

Because housing prices are on the rise.

"It's crazy how expensive they're making it to live here," said Suczewski, now living at Panther Hall.

For some students, like Suczewski, the cost of living on campus may already seem too high – housing costs may increase five to seven percent in the Fall semester.

Still, this remains the lowest rate of change in the immediate area, and 2007 prices of three apartment complexes near FIU show that most dorm room rates still beat the local competition. However, the increasing rates may cost students something more than simply hundreds of dollars; added to the semester's bill: time away from academics.

"I don't approve," Suczewski said. "It costs me more to live here than it does to study here."

As of Spring 2007, rates at the dorms range from \$1,946 a semester at the UP Apartments to \$4,048 at Lakeview. Compared with nearby apartments at Summer Grove and Vista Verde, located across from FIU, the price can reach up to \$4,500 each semester. Because of the price difference dorms are usually the preferred choice for students.

As an added perk for living on campus, students avoid signing year-long contracts that carry along process fees, deposits and the occasional credit check.

Still, for Suczewski the cost remains too high.

"Commuter students that can afford to live at home might not have the same worries as those of us that live on campus," Suczewski said. "The cost of living [here] is so much higher. Even the food here is more expensive, and it's difficult to find a job that has decent pay and isn't cashing or bagging."

Suczewski, like many others on campus, finds himself juggling academics and work to sustain his college career.

But as prices on-campus continue to rise, living off-campus may be a more



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

NO PLACE LIKE HOME: Sophomore Antonio Tunidor moves back to Everglades Hall Jan. 5 after the break. He's been living on-campus for two years and doesn't plan on leaving.

viable option.

"I was not prepared to hear the prices they were asking," said Fabienne Estigene, while waiting in line at the Housing Office. "With that amount I could have gotten my own apartment."

Estigene may be right. A look at the price changes between 2005 and projected prices for 2007 show that a one-bedroom and one-bathroom apartment at Summer Grove, located about 5 minutes away from FIU, would actu-

ally amount to less than FIU's Bay Vista. Not including Summer Grove's required deposit, living at the apartment complex would cost \$316 less than living at Bay Vista.

When housing at UP is at capacity, students are moved to Bay Vista, which is a bus drive away. Students who share a two-bedroom and one-bathroom apartment could actually end up saving hundreds of dollars.

HOUSING, page 2

Celebrations begin for MLK Day

NICOLE ACOSTA
BBC Assistant

Robert Coatie, senior director of the Multicultural Programs and Services office, hopes the theme of the 16th Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 2007 Celebration will drive the FIU community, and the community at large, to grow a sense of "community" rather than "chaos."

"We live in a community and a world that is full of chaos," Coatie said. "So I think the question is: How can we find hope in the midst of the chaos? Without hope, one might have to question life and survival within the community."

The events scheduled for the MLK celebration, held at University Park and the Biscayne Bay Campus, will take place Jan. 9 through Jan. 13. A list of guest speakers includes Barrington Irving, a student at Florida Memorial University who is attempting to become the youngest and first African-American to fly solo around the world; Kemba Smith, a college student who was sentenced to 24 years in federal prison for being a first-time nonviolent drug offender and was granted clemency in 2000 by former president Bill Clinton; and Julian Bond, chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and an active participant in the Civil Rights movement.

The week-long events will take off with the MLK Youth Forum, which will take place at BBC's Wolfe University Center Ballroom at 9 a.m. The forum will feature Irving as the guest speaker, and he will talk to an audience of middle school and high school students, as well as the FIU community.

The Peace Walk will immediately follow, in which students, faculty and members of the community will walk around in a circle around BBC.

Ophelia Weeks, associate professor for the Department of Biological Sciences, as well as the co-chair for the MLK youth forum and Peace Walk planning committee, said the forum and walk are mostly geared towards

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THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • JANUARY 8

Welcome Back! Spring semester begins**Peer Advisor announcement ceremony:** 12 p.m., GC Forum**Panther Rage Meeting:** 4 p.m., GC 140**ASK ME Tables:** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., GC Forum

TUESDAY • JANUARY 9

SOC General Meeting: 5:30 p.m., GC 150**SPC General Meeting:** 3:30 p.m., GC 140**SPC Karaoke Night:** 7 p.m., Gracie's Grill

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 10

SGA General Meeting: 4 p.m., GC 150**Multicultural Programs and Services and SPC Films "Lackawanna Blues":** 8 p.m., GC 140

THURSDAY • JANUARY 11

Men's Basketball vs. Western Kentucky: 7:30 p.m., Golden Panther Arena**Order of the Omega Applications Available**

FRIDAY • JANUARY 12

**Academy of Leaders Application deadline
Intramural Pre-Season Basketball
Tournament Entry Deadline****SPC Film - Snakes on a Plane:** 7 p.m. & 10 p.m., GC 140

SATURDAY • JANUARY 13

MLK Day of Service: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*-Compiled by Reuben Pereira*Class studies *Da Vinci Code* symbols**MARTHA CASTILLO**
Contributing Writer

After the controversies brought on by *The Da Vinci Code* and its big screen rendition, an interest arose in the subjects touched by Dan Brown's fictional novel.

Both Christians and non-Christians were divided on what they thought was real and what they thought wasn't.

Based on this argument, FIU's Department of Religious Studies began offering a class called "Behind *The Da Vinci Code*, REL- 3490," for the last four semesters - next Spring semester it'll be offered online.

The main goal of the course is to help the more than 30 students that register every semester understand the issues discussed in the book.

"The story had so many twists and turns and touched on such interesting subjects

that it dawned on me shortly afterwards that it would be fun to deal with these issues in a course," said Erik Larson, a professor teaching the course.

Students begin the course by reading *The Da Vinci Code* and then spend the rest of the semester discussing the symbolism, questions and controversies it raises. Some of these subjects include the origins and history of Christianity and the women in Jesus Christ's life, including a deep analysis of Mary Magdalene, who the novel suggests was Jesus' sexual partner.

"This course explains everything and more; definitely all the questions I had about the book were answered. We really study each topic in-depth; it really helps you with any questions or concerns you have," said Leonor Anthony, a student enrolled in the course.

The course does not focus on *The Da Vinci Code*'s plot but instead analyzes the novel from the aspects of literature, history and art by studying Gnosticism; Gnostic sex and the view of women; the history of the Christian church; the Holy Grail; the mysteries surrounding the Knights Templar; the origins of the Freemasons and the Catholic order Opus Dei, which Dan Brown portrays in a harsh light.

"The goal is not just to end every class with a verdict about whether Dan Brown is correct about this or that view expressed in his novel. Instead, we use the book as a starting point to examine issues that are interesting in and of themselves," Larson said.

Students will also be able to study the art and life of Leonardo Da Vinci, the symbolism in his paintings and his relationship with the Roman

Catholic Church.

"*The Da Vinci Code* raised issues that matter to people. This course will help students understand and discuss those issues; generally it is a good thing when academics are responsive to the people whom we serve," said Professor Nathan Katz, chairperson of the religious studies department.

One of the main focuses of this course is to teach students how to judge the novel's declarations by carefully looking at the original sources and learning how to evaluate both, what is said in the novel and what is not, discussing their opinions and learning the truth behind the fictional novel.

"The intent of this course is to teach students the real controversy behind *The Da Vinci Code* - not making it just another sensational news story," said Christine Gudorf, department chair.

MyFIU links University community

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Staff Writer

Expected to launch during the Spring semester, the MyFIU is expected to change the way students use the PantherSoft system.

MyFIU is a new system that will be incorporated into the current PantherSoft system offering a wide variety of features to help them manage information, such as allowing them to check their FIU e-mail, register for classes and check class schedules.

"This will be a one stop shop for students," said Robert Grillo, executive director of University Technology Services.

Of the \$180,000 total cost of MyFIU, \$100,000 went to the PeopleSoft portal application, \$75,000 for hardware, and the remaining \$5,000 towards incidental expenses related to the project.

The University provided funding for the PeopleSoft application in 2004, and UTS, Enrollment Services and the University Graduate School funded the hardware, while the incidental costs were paid for by UTS.

Students will have two ways of accessing MyFIU.

The first will be to go to its website, my.fiu.edu and the second will be by logging into Panther.

It is important to note that students will not have to change their current PantherSoft password in order to log into MyFIU.

Essentially, MyFIU will be completely customizable in regards to what information students want displayed, according to John Cabarga, marketing coordinator for UTS.

"The most important feature of MyFIU is being able to customize your page," Cabarga said. "Basically you will be able to pull all the pages students use into one place."

For example, students could choose to have their financial information or current class schedule displayed at all times, rather than having to go through the PantherSoft system looking for what they want.

From the MyFIU page students will still be able to look and sign up for classes the same way they would using the current system.

And to further aid the selection of classes, Melissa Sabatier, Student Government Association's academic affairs chair, says MyFIU will also include its own version of RateMyProfessor.com, a popular website used by students to rate and review professors.

"I've been working to have the feature included on MyFIU," said Sabatier. "Students will be able to check professor ratings from there rather than having to go to RateMyProfessor.com."

Another important feature will be the "My Messages" feature. According to Cabarga, this will allow any department at FIU to communicate with specific students. For example, if the Office of the Registrar needed to inform select students that a class they signed up for has been cancelled, they could do it through the "My Message" feature.

While "My Messages" works like the FIU Webmail, many students do not check the FIU Webmail account often enough or know that any e-mails sent to that account can be forwarded to their personal

e-mail accounts.

After hearing about MyFIU, junior Yusiley Sierra had mixed feelings on the new site.

"I think its useful, but there are already sites with that information," Sierra said. "But it will be helpful to have everything in one place. As it is, I go to PantherSoft and get lost."

In addition, once MyFIU goes online, the Student Information Services website sis.fiu.edu will be taken offline. Instead, anyone who goes to that address will be redirected to MyFIU.

"It's become antiquated," Cabarga said. "Everything it has and more will be on MyFIU."

Once operational, MyFIU will only be available to students, but it's planned to eventually be available to faculty and staff as well. All of the technical modifications or improvements to the system will be handled by UTS, but due to MyFIU's broad use, the actual content will be managed by the University as a whole, depending on what department is doing what with its portion of the system.

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Off-campus housing an option for some students

HOUSING, page 1

FIU could make close to \$7,550 from two students living at the University Park Towers and sharing a 2/1, according to the 2007 housing price projections.

As a money-saving option, the same two students could share 2/1 and split the \$1,000 per month rent at Summer Grove. Total savings: \$3,549.92 in four months, not including the deposit. However, like all rental operations, contracts would bind the residents to the apartment for a limited time. Students would only capitalize on this option if they plan to attend three semesters in a row.

As a money-saving option, the same two students could share a 2/1 and split the \$1,000 per month rent at Summer Grove. Total savings: \$3,549.92 in four months, not including the deposit.

Additionally, the cost of a four-month stay anywhere near FIU is not only steadily increasing in price, but the rate of increase is rising as well. This housing increase follows the recent and sharp rise in the price of South Florida real estate.

Between 2005 and 2006, the rate of increase in the area near FIU averaged at 6.5 percent. The average projected rate of increase for 2007 could reach 7.5 percent, leaving students with higher bills and fewer places near campus to live at.

For some, paying anywhere between \$3,200 to \$3,400 a semester for a shared-room can seem daunting, but according to Kinson Deleveaux, his son Christian, an incoming freshman, would strongly disagree.

"He had the option to stay with his sister at her apartment but he said he wanted the 'dorm experience,'" Deleveaux said. "This is his dream school, so whatever it costs, I'll find the money."

Pino Center offers students entrepreneurial skills

GEOFFREY ANDERSON JR.
Asst. Life! Editor

A lone red door in the otherwise washed-out Viertes Haus building at University Park marks the entrance to the Eugenio Pino and Family Global Entrepreneurship Center. The color red, chosen as the center's signature color for symbolizing power, also plays a peculiar role in one of the center's prime events: The New Venture Challenge Business Plan Competition, where students showcase their business plans to entrepreneurs and investors to compete for start-up funding.

"Alan Carsrud, our executive director, wears red cowboy boots to the competition and tells the judges, 'I want you to leave blood on the floor, and I don't want to stain my boots,'" said Pino Center Associate Director Colleen Post. "We want our judges to be tough on students because we want them to be prepared to defend their ideas in the real world."

Preparing students interested in entrepreneurship for life after graduation is one of the goals of the center, which first opened

at UP in 2003 after FIU won a \$3 million grant that year for the advancement of entrepreneurial education. According to a December 15, 2003 press release from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, FIU was selected as one of eight U.S. universities to receive grants from the foundation after participating in the Kauffman Campuses competition.

In 2004, Chairman and CEO of Century Homebuilders Sergio Pino gave a multi-million dollar gift to the center, and the center was subsequently named in honor of his father, Eugenio Pino.

No specific budget information about the center's operations was given to *The Beacon* but the center is funded through the Kauffman Foundation as well as workshop dues, individual donors and event sponsors, Post said.

The College of Business Administration, the College of Engineering and Computing, and the College of Arts and Sciences also contribute, according to Post.

To incorporate entrepreneurship into different disciplines, the center encompasses a range of institutes and programs,

including the Entrepreneurial Academy and the Institute for Technology Innovation. Students seeking to learn more about entrepreneurship, the practice of starting up a new business, can take classes administered through the academy.

"Entrepreneurship is important because it's a way of approaching life," said Post. "If a theater major wants to open their own company, there really aren't any vehicles in place for that to happen, so educating students about entrepreneurship is essential."

The academy offers an entrepreneurship track for international business and management majors as well as an entrepreneurship minor and an entrepreneurship certificate program for non-business majors and other undergraduate students.

The Institute for Technology Innovation gives curious students another opportunity of learning and applying entrepreneurial ideas: the Technology Ventures Laboratory, where students work with on-campus research labs to come up with commercialization plans for technologies developed at FIU.

Other branches of the



COURTESY PHOTO

GOT SKILLS?: (Left to right) Starex Smith, Mark Sylvestre, Dwayne Caines, William Hatcher and Steven Benyard prepare business plans for the Pino Center's New Venture Challenge competition.

Pino Center include the Institute for Family Business, the Entrepreneurship Research Institute and the Institute for Community Innovation.

For students who want to make an impact on the standard of living in their communities, Students in Free Enterprise, a group formed under the center's Student Entrepreneurs Council, gives them that chance. Arlette Prats, Vice-President of SIFE, believes that the organization helps members apply entrepreneurship ideas and processes in the community.

"We focus on going to

companies and helping them with a variety of projects, such as helping with budgets," Prats said. "With SIFE, if you have an idea, it's not you by yourself, you have people to work with."

One of the most rewarding opportunities that the center offers students, however, is the New Venture Challenge because it lets students take part in a real-life situation (pitching a business idea in front of investors) to potentially win \$15,000 in cash and prizes for their new venture while offering good practice for the real world, according to Post.

"If there's a time and place to fail, it's here because it won't drastically affect you as it would in real life," she said.

Because of the money involved in the competition, the center has taken precautionary measures to ensure that competition winners don't take the money and run.

"The check is written in the name of the business, so it has to be used toward the business."

For more information on the Pino Center and upcoming events, visit VH 130 or www.entrepreneurship.fiu.edu.

New schedule should bring funds to improve classroom technology

SCHEDULE, page 1

spread usage among students.

"Who is the target?" asked Debra Sheridan, associate director of educational technology services. "If students are already calling it three-day schedule, we have to include a three in the name."

The committee discussed the creation, already in progress, of 20 e-classrooms, that is, classrooms with the latest teaching equipment.

This includes classroom monitoring from the media equipment office, which will be able to turn on and off the equipment from its office, help with problems, and monitor the number of hours the projectors are used.

E-classrooms will also include a digital document camera, which is a high-resolution projector, and speakers. Those e-

classrooms with more than 100 seats will also have a starboard interactive monitor and computer and a lapel microphone.

Distinguishing between e-classrooms and regular classrooms will allow for better space utilization by scheduling courses to the proper rooms based on technological needs.

By June 30, the committee expects 18 e-classrooms to be in full-operation.

However, the committee still has to work out some kinks before it can start determining how the new schedule will actually work.

One of first steps is updating the classroom information records, which is under the charge of Gloria Jacomino, director of academic space management.

Jacomino pointed out that FIU's classroom usage ranked very low when compared with other universities because many classrooms had a classroom code but were used as office space, lowering the usage rate.

Jacomino informed the committee on her work since the last meeting on verify-

ing and updating FIU's records on classroom capacity, classroom code, number of doors, square feet, etc.

The next classroom utilization implementation committee meeting will take place Jan. 19 at 1:00 p.m. at the Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) building room 451 at University Park.

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NEWSFLASH

Date moved for three-day schedule forum

A forum that the Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus had planned on holding Jan. 17 to address Fall 2007s Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday was rescheduled.

The forum was supposed to taking place from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Although the new date has not been announced, members of the Classroom Utilization Implementation Committee announced the change during a Jan. 5 meeting. They said the forum would conflict with the memorial planned for Tony Marshall, the School of Hospitality's first dean, who died during the break.

SPC hosts event to raise donations for Make-A-Wish Foundation

The Student Programming Council at BBC is sponsoring the Wish Givers Second Annual Casino/Jazz Era Night. This year's theme is Casino Royale.

The event will take place Feb. 28 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Wolfe University Center Ballroom, and is free and open to the public. The winnings a person earns from playing the games available at the event will be donated to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

For more information, call Zach Trautenberg, SGA Comptroller/Finance Chair at 305-812-1144, or call Vanessa Robinson, SPC-BBC vice president, at 305-919-5280.

- Compiled by Nicole Acosta

Flu season: It's not over yet



COURTESY PHOTO

Limited number of campus vaccines left

**ANA DAVIS AND
NICOLE ACOSTA**
Beacon Staff

With the flu season having begun in December and lasting through March, the Health and Wellness Center has started offering flu shots to aid in the prevention of the disease.

According to Pamela McGuinness, a registered nurse and HWC staff at the Biscayne Bay Campus, the flu shot has been available for the 2006-2007 school year since October 2006 but the number of shots available are dwindling.

"We now have 40 shots left. We will stop offering the shots when they run out," McGuinness said.

So far, 90 people consisting of BBC students, faculty and staff have been given the flu vaccine, McGuinness said.

The rush for a flu vaccination has mostly died off for the 2006-2007 school year.

"Most people tend to get their vaccines between October and December. It tapers off as December and January wear off," McGuinness said.

Elvira Velez, the center's director and health administrator, agreed with McGuinness.

"Sometimes there is a craze for the vaccine. There might be an outbreak early in the season and students rush for the shot. Not this year," Velez said.

The flu vaccine, which is offered at both University Park and BBC, costs \$12 for students and \$16 for faculty and staff.

McGuinness strongly recommends requesting an appointment prior to receiving the shot because they might have to wait a long time to be seen depending on the number of people with appointments that day.

"It's for the students' convenience that we mostly do this. On any given day and hour, it's hard to predict how many people are waiting to be seen for different kinds of appointments at any given time," McGuinness said.

According to McGuinness and Velez, it is important for FIU students to get the shot because it will prevent students from getting sick.

"If students are sick with the flu, their schoolwork will suffer. It's just not pleasant," McGuinness said.

"The Health Center offers this shot to prevent students from becoming ill. Prevention is an imperative factor of disease control; it is defi-

nately easier than to cure a bad flu," Velez said.

It is important to note that students, faculty and staff must be healthy in order to get the shot.

If a person is experiencing symptoms of any disease, they must wait until the disease has run its course before getting the shot, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the instructions for the shots listed by the vaccine manufacturers.

The flu shot is approved by the CDC every year because every year, a new vaccine is made out of the components of the three most common types of virus strains that give way to the flu.

These strains are not active, though, so are not contagious.

McGuinness said that the CDC conducts an extensive study every year in order to narrow the types of flu that most commonly affected people in this country and designed the vaccine to prevent it.

Velez said FIU offering the flu shot will give students "a fighting chance against the flu."

"Although nothing in this life is absolute, this shot will surely help," Velez said.

The flu, not to be confused with the common cold, is a combination of very strong symptoms that develop abruptly. These include high fever, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, among others. The disease can last from two to six weeks.

Other things can be done to prevent the flu aside from getting the shot, McGuinness said.

"Washing your hands frequently and not sneezing into the palm of your hands; if people do this they will pass on the virus when they shake hands with someone else. People should sneeze into their arm or even their T-shirt," she said.

The shot has been offered at FIU for the past five or six years. McGuinness said the shots ran out early on in the flu season last year.

"We had to narrow down students because the demand was so high. They had to fulfill a specific criterion in order to be eligible," she said.

McGuinness hopes to be able to administer the 40 shots left at BBC.

"Hopefully, we'll give out all of them. If not, the shots are thrown away because every year, there are new flu strains," McGuinness said.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

TUESDAY • JANUARY 9

MLK Youth Forum and Peace Walk: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., WUC Ballroom, Guest speaker: Barrington Irving

MLK Student Forum: 12:30 p.m., to 2 p.m. College of Law, Room 1000, Guest speaker: Kemba Smith, Sponsored by the FIU Law School

MLK Dinner at Faculty/Staff Dining at UP: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Sponsored by the Black Student Union

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 10

Movie and Discussion of "Lackawanna Blues:" 7 p.m., GC 140, Sponsored by the Counseling Center and SPC

THURSDAY • JANUARY 11

MLK Awards Reception: 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Faculty Club

FRIDAY • JANUARY 12

16th Annual MLK Breakfast: 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., Keynote speaker: Julian Bond

- Compiled by Nicole Acosta

Week-long events honor memory, legacy of MLK

MLK, page 1

middle school and high school students in order to "bring the students to FIU in order to expose them to [MLK's] ideals and dreams and to see the campus as well."

Both Weeks and Coatie said that Irving was an ideal speaker who would tie into the theme for this year's MLK celebration because he chose to rise above the negative influences of his childhood environment and realize his dreams

of becoming a pilot and breaking a world record.

"They may not become pilots but it might be that Irving's speech might unleash the seeds of greatness in one or more of the young people in attendance," Coatie said.

The Peace Walk began five years, the brainchild of Kimberly Atchinson, former coordinator of International Students and Scholar Services at FIU.

"The walk is supposed to be a tribute of global peace, and the

walk itself symbolizes the need for peace and unity among people everywhere," Weeks said.

Coatie said the Peace Walk is also symbolic of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

"In the days of the Civil Rights era, people marched to demonstrate for the freedoms they did not have. The demonstrations were about equality. The Peace Walk will symbolize this era," Coatie said.

The 16th Annual MLK Commemorative Breakfast will be held

Jan. 12 from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Graham Center Ballrooms. Bond will be speaking at the event about his background and position as Chairman for the NAACP.

Coatie said Bond is an essential part of the MLK celebration, because "he was of that era."

"His work back in the late 1960s and early 1970s made him one of the pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement," Coatie said.

Allison McComb, assistant director of the MPAS office, served

as Chair for the Keynote Speaker Committee and as Co-Chair of the Program Committee. She said those who participate in the week-long festivities will remember and be inspired by MLK and his deeds.

"The biggest thing is to commemorate the spirit that lives and to remind us of all the good that [MLK] did. I think students will be inspired to do great things," McComb said. "It's a reminder to students of how change can really come about."

OPINION

C. Joel Marino Editor in Chief • Christopher Necuze Production Manager • Christopher Cabral Opinion Editor

OFF TO THE RACES



AP Wire

OBAMAPALOOZA: Attentive reporters carefully cover the statements of possible 2008 presidential candidate Barack Obama. Some think the extensive coverage of the race at so early a date is excessive.

2008 election coverage premature

CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Production Manager

Nov. 7 was the date of the 2006 United States midterm election. The highly anticipated event could possibly change the balance of power in Congress, with all 435 seats in the House of Representatives, 33 seats in the Senate and 36 governorships up for grabs.

I awoke the morning of Nov. 8 and flipped on the TV, anxious to see which party had come out on top. According to the latest data provided to the news station I was watching, Rudolph Giuliani still had a slight lead in the polls over John McCain and Hillary Clinton's lead over the popular Barack Obama was still significant, but shrinking.

Notice anything odd? There is something terribly wrong with this picture and reasons are blatantly obvious.

These pundits and TV personalities were not talking about the results and possible consequences of the elections that had occurred the day before. Instead, they were discussing the possible presidential candidates for the 2008 election cycle.

Now you don't have to convince me that 2008 is going to be a pivotal year in the world of politics, but we're not in 2008 yet – we have just barely scratched the surface of 2007.

The 2006 elections were disastrous – at least if you are a Republican like me. You would hardly know it, however, by watching the news. With Democrats taking control of Congress, there will be plenty to talk about

in the coming two years.

While I will admit that I am eager to know who is going to be in the running to be my next president, I also think that the nation has issues that it needs to face right here, right now. We are a country at war and cannot afford to ignore the matters at hand.

That said, the only question that remains is why? Why would there be so much speculation about something so far away, something that, for the moment, the public has little or no control over?

Of course, nobody can stop prospective candidates from creating exploratory committees to test the waters before deciding to spend million upon millions of dollars on a campaign.

Yet there is something terribly wrong when news outlets spend more time speculating and gossiping than providing the public with actual information. The media treats politics like a professional sport of sorts. The impression they give is that of an entertaining and ultimately inconsequential contest, a game where the athletes, or politicians, gain or lose points

in order to hopefully score their name on the ballot come election day, the political equivalent of reaching the super bowl.

I understand that politics may seem like nothing more than a sport at times, but it's really not. Sorry to disappoint. A sport is solely about competition whereas in politics, winning is only the beginning.

By focusing largely on the competitive aspect of politics, news organizations are depriving viewers of the type of information that actually might come in handy when it comes time to cast their ballot.

The "news" media spends its time telling viewers irrelevant information like how much smack candidates are talking, how much money they are raising, spending, or what they did last weekend – they might as well be telling people the candidates' favorite colors.

One would think that responsible journalists would have more common sense, but alas, even journalism falls prey to economics – as the news industry has – becoming predominantly ratings driven and profit obsessed.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are your feelings about the way the media has covered the 2008 presidential race?

- It is definitely premature – we have more important things to worry about.
- It's never too early to start talking about who is going to replace Bush!
- Who watches TV anymore? MySpace is where it's at.
- The media's doing a wonderful job.
- What media? I get all my news from *The Beacon*.

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

QUOTATIONATION

The Best of 2006: Politics

"Let's give a welcome to Macaca, here. Welcome to America and the real world of Virginia."

– **Senator George Allen (R-VA)**, referring to a student of Indian descent working for his opponent's campaign. 'Macaca' is a term for a monkey used by some as a racial epithet. This gaffe helped contribute to his loss to Democrat Jim Webb.

"There are no good options in Iraq. There are bad options and worse options."

– **Senator Barack Obama (D-IL)**, on "Meet The Press," discussing the war in Iraq.

"I'm the decider, and I decide what is best."

– **President George W. Bush**, at a press conference defending his decision to keep Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense. Rumsfeld decided to resign after the midterm election.

"We have a lot of kids who don't know what work means. They think work is a four-letter word."

– **Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY)**, in a speech in May. She later apologized to her daughter, Chelsea.

"Any important Republican who comes out and says they didn't know me is almost certainly lying."

– **Jack Abramoff**, former lobbyist. His conviction for conspiracy and fraud and his long history of working with some Republican members of Congress helped make corruption a major theme of the midterm election.

"Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman."

– **Pope Benedict XVI**, quoting from a 14th-Century Byzantine emperor. This quote sparked controversy and violent riots throughout the world.

"You know, education, if you make the most of it, you study hard, you do your homework and you make an effort to be smart, you can do well. If you don't, you get stuck in Iraq."

– **John Kerry (D-MA)**, attempting to make a joke insulting the President. This remark led to a firestorm of criticism, as it was perceived as an insult to U.S. troops serving in Iraq.

"The Devil came here yesterday, and it smells of sulphur still today."

– **Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez**, referring to President Bush while speaking at the United Nations.

"I don't care what people are saying Uptown or wherever they are. This city will be chocolate at the end of the day."

– **New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin**, vowing to keep the city from transforming into a gentrified, "vanilla" city in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off in GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words.

Percussion, samples among elements on 2006 indie hits

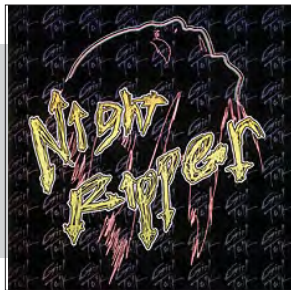
SAMANTHA QUIÑON
Staff Writer



Isobel Campbell & Mark Lanegan
– *Ballad of the Broken Seas*

This album of duets should be sold with a prophylactic. Mark Lanegan's husky, cowboy baritone and Isobel Campbell's ethereal Lolita voice will make the hair on the back of your neck stand up. The simple arrangements of pianos, guitars and strings let the duo's voices and sexual chemistry take command.

Download: "Revolver"



Girl Talk
– *Night Ripper*

This hip-hop/dance/pop album takes mash-ups to a whole new level: one that may induce seizures, if you can't keep up with all the songs that are sampled. And no song, decade or genre seems to be off limits. Some of the best samples include songs from Elton John, Notorious B.I.G., Pavement, Paul McCartney, 2 LIVE Crew, M.I.A., Ciara and Neutral Milk Hotel.

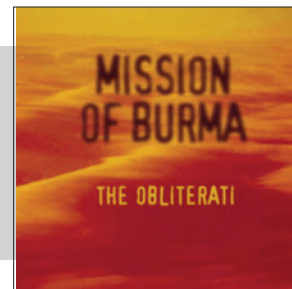
Download: "Smash Your Head"



Beirut
– *The Gulag Orkestar*

This album uses horns, mandolins, accordions and fun hand percussion, set to just enough rhythm from a synthesizer to keep it from sounding dated. The result is a genre blending indie-Eastern European Folk-Gypsy-Mediterranean-Byzantine-Mariachi sound underlying singer/songwriter Zach Condon's voice, which has the timbre and fullness of a French horn and the longing of his 19 years in New Mexico to actually see the Europe about which he's singing.

Download: "Postcards from Italy"



Mission of Burma
– *The Obliterati*

Back after a 23-year "break-up," the legendary Mission of Burma pulls through and releases material just as good as that of their underground heyday – only they rock it like the 50-year-old geezers they are, not wannabe versions of their '80s fantasies. If you haven't listened to pre-Nirvana underground rock, *The Obliterati* will be like seeing the Mona Lisa at the Louvre when you've only seen her on a postcard. Next time you listen to those posers from Interpol, you'll realize whom they're trying to copy.

Download: "2twice"

MUSIC, page 8

Pirates, Spidermen to seize theaters this year

REUBEN PEREIRA
Senior Staff Writer

For the most part, the year 2006 offered sequels, prequels and remakes. The last three months, however, were quite different with a lot of quality offerings. 2007 won't be much different from last year, though, with a record number of sequels and remakes clogging the first nine months of the year and the last three months offering highly anticipated Oscar baiting adaptations. Here are some of the films to look out for this year.

300 (MARCH 9)

Director Zach Snyder (*Dawn of the Dead*) brings the Battle of Thermopylae to life courtesy of the same technology that Robert Rodriguez used for *Sin City*. Gerard Butler leads the cast of Spartan warriors against the armies of the Persian Empire. Having seen the stunning trailers of the film, it's easy to guess that the film will contain plenty of blood and violence.

GRINDHOUSE (APRIL 6)

Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino collaborate to recreate the "grindhouse" theatre experi-

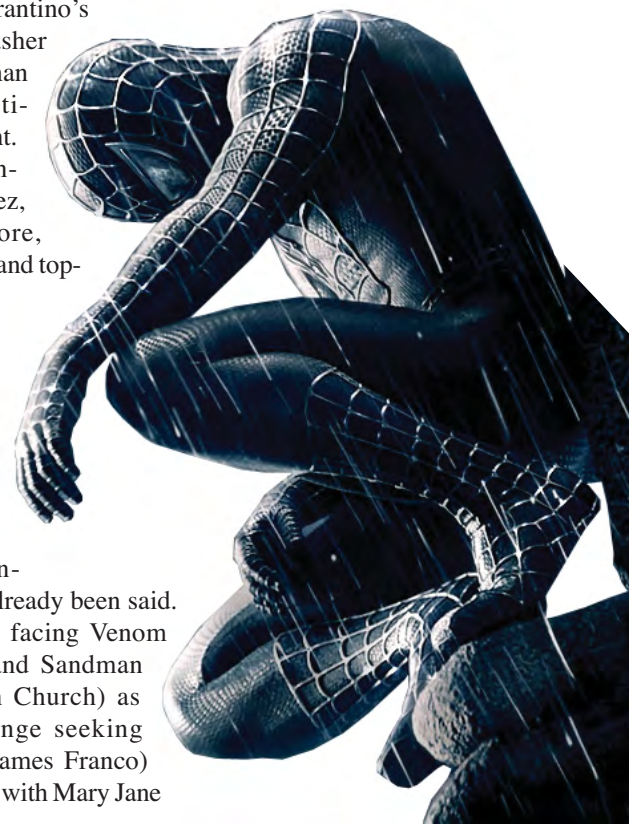
ence of the 1970s by presenting two feature length movies for the price of one. The experience will include fake trailers and an intermission as well to complete the experience of a "grindhouse" theatre. Rodriguez's movie will be a zombie flick with Rose McGowan starring as a woman with a gun for a leg. Tarantino's film will be a slasher film about a madman who stalks beautiful women at night. This being Tarantino and Rodriguez, expect lots of gore, fantastic dialogue and top-notch filmmaking.

SPIDER-MAN 3 (MAY 4)

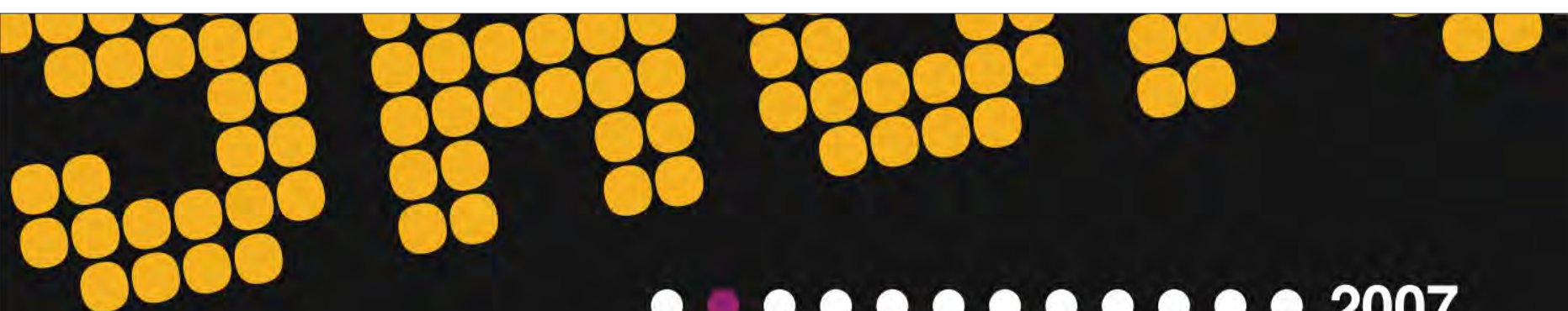
There's not much to be said about this third installment of the Spider-Man franchise that hasn't already been said. With Spider-Man facing Venom (Topher Grace) and Sandman (Thomas Hayden Church) as well as the revenge seeking Harry Osborne (James Franco) along with dealing with Mary Jane

(Kirsten Dunst), one thing's for certain – Spider-Man (Tobey Maguire) will have his hands full. This will definitely become one of the top three highest grossing films of the year, if not the highest grossing.

MOVIES, page 9



FROM 2007



2007 Annual Student Show

Presented by The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum and The College of Architecture + The Arts, Florida International University

Juried by renowned gallerist Fred Snitzer, this exhibition is a selection of the best works submitted by FIU students of all disciplines.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

The Annual Student Show is a juried exhibition open to all FIU students. All submitted artwork will be judged, and selected pieces will be exhibited at the Frost Art Museum. Submit your work for a chance to exhibit at the Frost Art Museum.

Submissions accepted at:

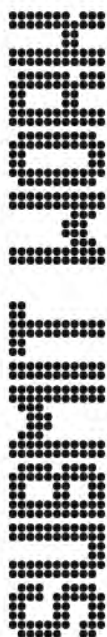
The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum
107 Ave & SW 8th St
University Park, PC 110
Miami, FL 33139

For more information:

Call 305.348.2890, or visit our website at
frostartmuseum.org

JOIN US

Join us for the awards ceremony, complimentary wine, hors d'oeuvres and music.
6:30pm • Frost Art Museum, PC 110



Important Dates

Submit artwork on:
Wednesday, Jan 24, 10am - 5pm
or Thursday, Jan 25, 10am - 7pm

Results announced on website:
Monday, Jan 29

All unaccepted works must be picked up:
Monday, Jan 29 or Tuesday, Jan 30

Opening reception and awards ceremony:
Friday, Feb 16, 6:30pm

Exhibition closes:
Sunday, Mar 11, 4pm

All exhibited works must be picked up:
Monday, Mar 12, 10am - 7pm

Eligibility

The Frost Art Museum invites all students who have been enrolled at FIU during the past year (Spring 2006 - Spring 2007) to enter. You must present a valid FIU identification and proof of academic enrollment.

All artwork must have been completed between January 2006 and January 2007. Artwork that has been previously exhibited at the Frost Art Museum is not eligible.

Each entrant may submit a maximum of two pieces, not limited to any one classification.

Awards

"Best in Show" Award will be announced during the Awards Ceremony on Friday, February 16.

There will be various prizes and merit awards.

The judge will have complete discretion as to the artwork selected. Their decision is final.

Entry Conditions

Entrants must provide all equipment necessary to exhibit work including but not limited to: DVD players, monitors, pedestals, bases, specialty hardware and electrical cords.

Two-dimensional works on paper must be framed and protected with Plexiglas® and wired for hanging.

If not, the work will be secured to the wall with either staples or tacks. Two-dimensional work on canvas or other material should be framed and mounted on stretchers. Work must be wired and ready for hanging. Absolutely NO wet paint will be accepted.

No artwork containing food, animals, feathers or materials deemed hazardous will be permitted.

Entrants must provide clear installation and orientation instructions.

Please provide a complete entry form for each artwork submitted. For paintings, drawings, and photographs, forms should be attached to the back upper right hand corner of the work. For

sculptures, the label should be placed on the most visible area of the sculpture.

Entrants whose work is accepted MUST attend the awards ceremony on Friday, February 16, 2007.

Winners will be announced at the ceremony. Awards will be voided if the recipient is not present; NO exceptions.

The Museum is not responsible for works not picked up on the designated date. Works will be removed from Museum premises and discarded immediately after the designated date and time. NO exceptions.

If you are unable to collect your work on the designated date, complete the "authorization to collect work" section on the entry form.

1 Entry Form (please complete parts 1 and 2 of this form and submit to a museum official)

name _____

phone # _____ student ID # _____ major _____

mailing address (include zip code) _____

email address _____

title of work _____ year completed _____

medium _____ dimensions in inches (height / width / depth) _____

for sale (circle one): yes / no _____ selling price: _____

I have read and understood the exhibition requirements and agree to comply with all the rules for participation.

signature _____ date _____

2 Acknowledgment to Collect Work

I will pick up my artwork on the designated date. I acknowledge that my artwork will be removed and discarded if it is not picked up on the designated date.

signature _____ date _____

OR

Authorization To Collect Work

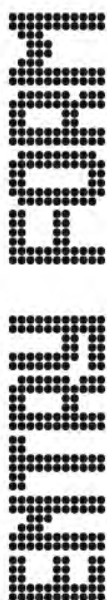
If you are unable to collect your work on the designated date, print the name of the person you wish to collect your work and attach a photocopy of your FIU ID. The person you authorize will not be able to collect your artwork without these two documents and their ID.

By signing below, you give the Frost Art Museum permission to reproduce your artwork in any media for educational and promotional purposes.

I authorize: _____

To collect my artwork(s) on my behalf during the designated date and time.

signature _____ date _____



Lack of masculine reading material common at jury duty



Commentary

Geoffrey Anderson Jr.
Asst. Life! Editor

Instead of leaving town for the holidays, I spent my first day of Winter Break in court. No, I wasn't arrested for exposing myself – I had jury duty. I was originally scheduled for it in early October, but midterms forced me to postpone it. In retrospect, I should have made a lame excuse to get out of it, but I thought, "Hey, it might be a cool experience." It wasn't. At least I wasn't alone – my friend Robert Ramirez, a junior at FIU, was also chosen for jury service that same day.

We arrived at the Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building by 8 a.m., the time stated on our summons, and were surprised that several people were sporting FIU shirts. Apparently, I wasn't the only student who had the pleasure of delaying his service until the first day of vacation. We ended up filling out a questionnaire that asked us questions regarding whether we knew any cops or had been arrested for a felony; the

questionnaire needed to be turned in to the bailiff when we were called to a case.

After sitting down, Robert and I waited until a woman walked into the room and announced how jurors were going to be called. She also announced that movies would be shown and that books were available while we waited. The list of movies included the masculine *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* and *Just Married*. The library (aka 3-foot bookshelf) failed to entertain, too: bare-chested men riding stallions graced the covers of the faded romance novels lying on the shelves. This was going to be a long day.

Halfway through *How to Lose a Guy*, the movie was paused (the men rejoiced), and jurors were selected at random. I wasn't picked.

I reached the third round before my number came up. Along with 29 other victims, I followed the bailiff and walked to the assigned courtroom. When we entered, everyone in the courtroom, including the judge, stood up out of respect for us. I sat down and looked at my fellow jurors – one was playing PacMan on her Game Boy Advance and the other one was either sleeping or praying, I couldn't tell.

Our case involved an attempted robbery.

“The library (a.k.a. 3-foot bookshelf) failed to entertain, too: bare-chested men riding stallions graced the covers of the faded romance novels lying on the shelves.”

Before we were interviewed, however, the judge called for a lunch recess. When we returned, the case was over – the defendant had accepted a plea bargain. “Great, I can go home now,” I thought.

I was wrong. We had to report to an aggravated assault with a firearm case. And this time, we actually got interviewed. Well, I didn't. The whole time, the attorneys avoided asking me questions. The only time I spoke was when the attorneys asked about people's feelings toward guns. I said, “My mom was shot by two black men when I was five.” Silence ensued. I had written the same response on the questionnaire.

Once the questioning ceased, the selection began. 10 jurors were chosen – I wasn't one of them. The chosen ones stayed behind while the other jurors exited. Once outside,

I received a certificate that excused me from jury service for a year. I looked at my watch; it was 6 p.m.

Despite spending 10 hours in a depressing courthouse with nothing to do except wait, I learned a lot. The judges taught me about the workings of a trial, and I learned how the interview process is used to select impartial jurors. I believe I wasn't chosen because of the answer I gave regarding my mother's experience with firearms – the defendant in the case was black, and the attorneys probably thought I would be biased. Then again, I'm glad I wasn't chosen – one day is enough. Be warned: if you have a driver's license, you can receive a summons just like I did. I'm just glad I don't have to watch *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* for another year.

Last year's releases reach from psychedelic to mysterious

MUSIC, page 6



Asobi Seksu
– Citrus

Citrus is hard to classify. Reviews of the album use diverse and contradictory words like “shoegazer,” “dream-pop,” “Blondie,” “fuzzed out,” “psychedelic,” “My Bloody Valentine” and “New Order.” And all of them are right. This Japanese girl group is light-hearted and fun with sugary vocals and great baselines.

Download: “Thursday”



The Format
– Dog Problems

This album is pure indie pop. With playful girl problem/growing pain lyrics reminiscent of Weezer's *Blue Album*, The Format uses horns, pianos, very percussive drumsticks (and drums), accordions and synthesizers to create a versatile sound centered around layered vocal harmonies. The highlight is a cabaret-style lament/vengeance song in which he spells out his ex-girlfriend's name in a sort of musical acrostic.

Download: “Dog Problems”



M. Ward
– Post-War

In composition and performance, Ward displays an ear for the distinct hallmarks of so many American music genres. On this album, he blends them all together into a personality of his own. The emphasis is on Ward's unique singing voice, his transcendent guitar playing and his skill at writing melodies that last. His singing has a presence to it that brings to mind jazz vocalists, but also the grittiness of a deep-South bluesman. No one else sounds exactly like him.

Download: “Chinese Translation”



Elvis Costello & Allen Toussaint
– The River in Reverse

Inspired by Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans mainstay Allen Toussaint and the eclectic Elvis Costello collaborated to make this soulful album. Costello sings relatively familiar fare from Toussaint and a few obscurities, and Toussaint supplies his distinctive piano and horn arrangements with Costello's Imposters serving as the rhythm section. But the gems are the new material, including the title track and five new Costello/Toussaint compositions that have Toussaint's signature sound and Costello's creative contributions.

Download: “The River in Reverse”



Mew
– And the Glass Handed Kites

Like an opera, *And The Glass Handed Kites* is something you listen to in one sitting. Each track floats together to create a dramatic guitar and piano rock orchestra, songs laden with octave-shifting layered vocals and sprinkled with dainty silver bells. The final result is somewhere between Radiohead's *OK Computer* and Sigur Ros's *Takk*.

Download: “Seething Rain Weeps for You (Uda Pruda)”



El Perro del Mar
– El Perro del Mar

This is the album of the year. Sarah Assbring's gentle, bouncy vocals are tinged with melancholy and mystery on this self-titled debut. Intriguing the music with bittersweet contrast, heartbreaking lyrics like “Is it so hard to see?/I don't want cause more trouble/I just want to be a part of you” are set to Phil Spector girl group harmonies, darting guitars and other '60s pop elements.

Download: “Party”

Another semester has begun.
We'd like to welcome you back to Life!



Comfort, confidence a must in Spring fashions

LEONCIO ALVAREZ
Staff Writer

Spring fashions are here so it's time to splurge all of your financial aid money on clothes. Well, maybe not all of it, but at least a good portion of it.

FLASHBACK: The first thing anyone should know about what's hot in 2007 is that in order to look forward in fashion, you must look back in time. Bellbottoms, capris, leggings, neon-colored headbands – all trends that have been seen over and over again.

So when you're wondering whether or not that shirt goes with that belt, just look through your mom's high school yearbook and see what was going on back then. You'll be very surprised when you find *Tia Martica* wearing your favorite jeans.

JEANS will never going out of fashion – just stay up to date with what's going on with them. Tapered jeans seem to be making a comeback for both men and women this season, while ripped jeans seem to be heading on a hiatus.

Paired with flat shoes and a white top, these sometimes-too-tight-for-comfort pants aren't that expensive at your nearest Gap.

VESTS are definitely in. If you want a look of style mixed with a little casual touch, find a cool patterned vest or one with a solid color.

Vests are a good addition for women who want to look more professional at

work or for a man who just wants to be a bit more stylish when walking down Lincoln Road.

Whatever you do, find a vest that is \$30 off whatever price. As long as something is \$30 off, you can say it's a bargain.

COLOR coordinating your accessories is always a plus, especially when accented correctly with the rest of your ensemble.

Believe it or not, mixing brown clothing with black accessories is acceptable; just don't over do it. A tan brown jacket along with black accessories and brown boots looks amazing.

THE HOODIE: Do you want to look both fashionable and comfortable at the same time? Then your best bet is an American Apparel hoodie. Comfortable, color variety and a hood to keep you warm – sounds like perfection to me. Hoodies are good for an early class, after gym use or for just lounging around a friend's house.

SHOES can either make or break an outfit. Converse have been around for four decades and can now be found in almost any color or pattern, which makes them very useful when color coordinating.

Converse.com offers a very cool customization section where you can customize your own converse to the tee. You can even add you initials on the outside of the shoe.

No matter what you decide to add to your closet this season, make sure you feel comfortable in what you wear. An outfit won't work unless you don't feel confident in it.



Prequels, sequels mark upcoming year's films

MOVIES, page 6

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END (MAY 25)

Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) and crew return in their third voyage. Although no official premise has been announced, the film should kick off where the last film left off with Will Turner (Orlando Bloom), Elizabeth Swan (Keira Knightley) and their crew of misfits heading off in search of Sparrow to the world's end. Asian superstar Chow Yun-Fat joins the cast as a Chinese pirate as well as Keith Richards as Sparrow's father.

RATATOUILLE (JUNE 29)

A Pixar film is always anticipated and this one is no exception. Director Brad Bird, who also directed Pixar's *The Incredibles* – arguably the studio's best work – is back in the director's seat.

Ratatouille's (pronounced rat-a-too-ee) hilarious teaser trailer featuring a talking rat in Paris stealing a piece of cheese was enthusiastically received when it debuted in front of Pixar's last film, *Cars*. The film deals with a rat living in Paris who loves good food and dreams of becoming a chef while avoiding getting killed.

HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX (JULY 13)

Harry Potter and pals return to the big screen after a year of absence. Joining the ever growing cast in this installment are Oscar nominees Imelda Staunton as the hateful new teacher Dolores Umbridge

and Helena Bonham Carter as the evil Bellatrix Lestrange.

The film will be directed by renowned television director David Yates, who will be making his film directional debut. Potter fanatics will flock to theatres in droves hoping to see Harry battle Lord Voldemort as well as witness the death of one of the series' most beloved characters.

AMERICAN GANGSTER (NOVEMBER)

Director Ridley Scott, Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe team up in what looks to become one of the year's finest films. Frank "Superfly" Lucas (Washington) was the biggest heroin dealer through the '70s shipping heroin in the coffins of Vietnam veterans.

Narcotics detective Richie Roberts (Crowe) was the man who ultimately brought Lucas down. The film will chronicle the events leading up to Lucas' arrest. The anticipation of watching Crowe and Washington together on screen is worth the price of the admission alone.

SWEENEY TODD (DECEMBER)

Tim Burton and Johnny Depp team up for the sixth time in this adaptation of the highly acclaimed Broadway musical about the demon barber out to avenge those who wronged him.

Sacha Baron Cohen (Mr. Borat himself) will be starring opposite Depp as his adversary and Helena Bonham Carter will co-star. Just the thought of watching Depp and Cohen dueling each other and singing under the direction of Tim Burton will be a sight to behold.

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Erica Charles
M.B.A. Candidate




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JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

RECORD BREAKER: Sophomore swimmer Sara Giovannoni holds the FIU record in the 100 and 200 breaststroke. She also competed with the Italian National team in 2004.

Swimmer's success reaches beyond the water

XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Copy Editor

Before she began setting school records at FIU, sophomore Sara Giovannoni was faced with one of the most difficult decisions in her life: give up the sport she loves or postpone getting a degree.

"I knew that I could do something else and I need a degree," Giovannoni said. "But at the same time I didn't want to quit swimming, because I was doing pretty good and I knew I could do it for a few more years."

After graduating from high school in Italy, her native country, Giovannoni enrolled at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in early 2004. Soon thereafter, she found out how difficult it was going to be to balance classes and practice.

Not only was she studying industrial engineering, she was also driving 40 minutes to school everyday from her home in Modena.

In Oct. 2004, Giovannoni competed with the Italian National Team in the 7th International Swimming Federation Short Course World Championships held in Indianapolis, Ind.

"I was missing so many classes, and in Italy the universities don't really care about sports – even if you're on the national team," Giovannoni said. "If it's not soccer, they don't care."

Giovanonni began swimming when he was 5-years-old with her brother, Andrea, because she was told to do so by doctors. Andrea, who is two years older, was diagnosed with scoliosis and doctors told the family swimming would help him.

By the time she turned six, Giovanonni was already competing in and winning every event except the backstroke for the club team N.C. Ghirlandina, which she continued competing for until she arrived in the United States.

Despite the amount of time she's been swimming, her parents, Dimer and Cosetta, have been fully supportive and have never pushed her to do anything she didn't want to do.

"They had fun," Giovannoni said.

“ Sara Giovannoni, sophomore swimmer

I knew I could do something else and I need a degree. But at the same time I didn't want to quit swimming, because I was doing pretty good and I knew I could do it for a few more years.

"They were cheering with the other parents [and] meeting other people, but they really didn't [push me]."

Her parents' support encouraged her to attend FIU.

In Jan. 2005, Giovannoni attended the Coral Springs Swim Club training program headed by Michael Lohberg.

"It was for the experience abroad, to learn English a little better and, obviously, also to improve my time and see a different work out," Giovannoni said.

Lohberg, a six-time Olympic swim coach, also happens to be good friends with FIU's swimming and diving coach Noemi Lung-Zaharia and spread the word along about Giovannoni's talents.

That summer, Giovannoni competed again with the Italian National Team in the Mediterranean Games in Almeria, Spain, and won the silver medal in the 200 breaststroke.

On Dec. 27, 2005, Giovannoni stepped foot on the FIU campus in order to begin practice with the team and prepare for her classes in the Spring semester.

Once the season began, those around her saw just how good she was.

"She had a huge impact; her back-

Championships.

This season, Giovannoni has picked up right where she left off, breaking her own school records at the Indiana University Open Invitational in November.

Giovannoni beat her record in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:04.99 and her record in the 200 breaststroke by nearly two seconds, touching the wall at 2:15.68. Her time in the 200 also makes the NCAA "B" Standard.

"I'm really happy about the time," Giovannoni said. "I was supposed to do this time probably [in the Sun Belt Conference championships], so I already achieved this goal [earlier than I expected]."

Even though her time gives her a good possibility of getting into the NCAA Finals, Giovannoni still wants to improve to an "A" standard time of 2:13.65 or faster – an attitude that she applies to her school work as well.

"I'm a really ambitious person, so I'm trying to do everything the best – like have the best grades," Giovannoni said. "And I'm really strict to my stuff, too. I just want to improve my time again and see if I can make the 'A' cut. I really really want to go to the NCAA's this year."

Lung-Zaharia would like to see her swimmer continue to improve, but is confident her time will be good enough.

"Nothing is official until the end of February, but I think she's going to be invited," Lung-Zaharia said. "Plus, she's going to prove that between now and then as well."

"I think for the first time ever in the history of FIU we will be going to the NCAA's."

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WOOT!

Recruiting, assembling staff top priorities for coach

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Q: Even though we're in the dead period of recruiting, how has it been going so far and how are you selling the program to kids?

Kids have been waiting for a long time for FIU to take off. We live in Miami and people want to stay home. The word is out: FIU is committed to becoming a big time, prime time program. Everything is in the works: the modern stadium, the beautiful field house, and new weight room. I've been around UM for most of my life. I've been fortunate enough to make some great contacts with all the local high school coaches extending as far as the tip of Florida. They're going to come into play. Those relationships are strong. They know we're going to hire great people and they want the players to be around great people. You want to make sure these kids are

going to be in good hands.

We're making sure that we do not contact or visit recruits. We were making sure we claim those spots on the official visit so we could get these players on campus to see what we are about and see what FIU is about.

Q: Now that you're here, it adds a little more excitement to the UM vs.

FIU game. Are you and the players looking forward to the game?

You can't even think about that. FIU has to focus on FIU.

There are several things between now and opening practice that we need to do to put ourselves on course to become a great football team.

Q: Defensive assistant Bernard Clark is your first hire. What made him stand out? What prompted you to hire him first?

I think we all know what kind of coach and person he is. He is one of the top coaches in the entire country.

I know him personally as well as a former teammate.

I don't have any children now; if I did, he's the type of person I would completely trust my children with. These are the kinds of coaches we want here: knowledgeable, intense, charismatic.

He's an energetic guy that lives and dies for the program. He truly believes in the vision this year and he's going to do everything

he can to make it happen.

Q: What are your immediate goals for the team?

Obtain the highest G.P.A. possible, to be accountable to each other, to be a team that has complete respect for each other as a teammate and as a person. Everything else will take care of itself.

SO YOU KNOW

Full Name:

Mario Manuel Cristobal

Born:

September 24, 1970

Hometown:

Miami, Florida

Education:

B.A. in business administration, University of Miami (1993); M.A. in liberal arts, University of Miami (2001)

Coaching Career:

2006: Florida International University (Head Coach)
2006: University of Miami (Assistant Coach, offensive line)
2004-05: University of Miami (Assistant Coach, tight ends)
2001-03: Rutgers University (Assistant Coach, tight ends /offensive line)
1998-2000: University of Miami (Graduate Assistant)

Player Highlights:

1992 First-Team All-Big East Conference (offensive tackle)
Offensive lineman with NFL's Denver Broncos (1994 pre-season camp)
Four-year letterman as an offensive lineman at the University of Miami



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JOURNEY TO GREATNESS

Women's Basketball coach Cindy Russo wins 600th game



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

LEGEND: Coach Cindy Russo is ranked 13th overall in Division I women's basketball coach all-time win list.

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Editor

It's 1963 and Sister Elizabeth Marie demonstrates the mechanics of a lay-up to an 11-year-old girl in Portsmouth, Va. The St. Paul's Elementary sixth-grader soon becomes captivated by the game of basketball.

More than four decades later, Sister Marie's pupil stands by the sidelines of a game coaching her own basketball team, clapping hands and rallying at the top of her voice.

On Dec. 23, Cindy Russo – Sister Marie's pupil and current coach of FIU's women's basketball team – achieved her 600th victory after her team defeated Central Connecticut 73-51, despite trailing by as many as 15 points in the first half.

Cindy Russo began her coaching career at her alma mater, Old Dominion, in 1975 as an assistant. Two years later, she would accept the part-time head coaching job at FIU. She departed from FIU the following fall, but returned for the 1980-81 season as a full-time head coach.

She has coached every FIU women's basketball game since her return.

No other coach in FIU women's basketball history has had a winning season. Russo has accounted for 560 of the school's 578 victories.

"My first goal was to build a basketball program. They gave me the opportunity, so I wanted to come in here and build a good program for them," Russo said.

Despite her success, the odyssey to 600 victories required tedious commitment.

Her off-seasons include rest and relaxation along with a healthy dose of basketball preparation.

"I don't know if there are off-seasons anymore in women's basketball," Russo said. "We run camps, recruit and take a little time off."

Russo's 600th victory is an achievement

that acknowledges all her former and current players and coaches.

"[The win] signifies a lot of people who got me there," Russo said. "This is not something you can do as a single coach. Good assistant coaches and the players are needed."

Russo, had to conduct practices under less than perfect conditions in the infamous Tim Gym, an airport hangar used as a practice facility at University Park during the 1970's and mid 1980's.

She makes sure to remind her players of the struggles of those who have preceded them.

"She talks about the past players and what kind of challenges they have had and it helps me a lot," said senior center Lasma Jekabsone.

Russo motivates her players to trust each other and play together using any means necessary.

She even agreed to get a permanent tattoo if FIU beat Miami.

"If getting a tattoo is what it takes, then she would make another deal just to make us win," Jekabsone said. "She would do anything just to help us out."

The decision on what type of tattoo coach Russo will receive is still pending.

Though Russo considers the 600th victory a milestone, she did not make the win the focal point of that night's game.

"Honestly, she never mentioned it. Personally, I didn't know. She is not here to get the accolades; she's just here to win every game," said junior guard LaQuetta Ferguson.

Russo is ranked 13th on the all-time NCAA Division I women's basketball coach win list due to her work on the court.

She hopes to work with her players just as hard off the court.

"I'd like to think I made a difference in young women's lives not only on the basketball court, but in real life as well," Russo said.

New head football coach looks to lead team into unfamiliar territory

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Editor

Q: Have you had any mentors teach you and guide you?

I think the guys I've worked with have been great mentors. I think Butch Davis did a phenomenal job when he got to Miami. When I went to Rutgers with Greg Schiano, he took a program that had not traditionally done well. He did a great job changing the culture, making them buy into the program and his thoughts and beliefs. You see the result of that. You get a place that becomes a winner and that's what we're going to do at FIU.

Q: What type of identity do you want the team to have?

It's going to be a team of intensity, it's going to be aggressive and it's going to have great character. We're always going to make sure we do things the right way. The game of football is a game of emotion. It's a game of passion. At the same time there are some lines there. You do have to demonstrate great sportsmanship. You do have to do it in a classy way. You can do whatever you need to do at the highest level and still uphold the integrity of the game.



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

NEW LEADER: Mario Cristobal addresses the media at his first press conference after he was hired to coach the Golden Panthers on Dec. 19.

Q: Do you know what type of offense and defense the team will be running?

It'll be exciting. For years, living in South Florida you see these great athletes. You have to implement a couple of systems that are going to take advantage of those

athletes. It's going to cater to what you can bring to the program. There's not going to be any limits or handcuffs on either side of the ball.

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