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with SGA presidential and vice presidential candidates

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

Every year, students at the University Park and Biscayne Bay campuses prepare themselves to vote in the Student Government Association elections by reading flyers and signs, attending debates and discussing the choices with friends.

Bombarded by a host of ideas and speeches, those who vote may get so involved with the election process that they forget that the candidates who spurt promises and beg for votes, are students just like them.

Through exclusive interviews with *The Beacon*, the presidential and vice presidential candidates decided to share a little bit about their interests, plans and passions.

ALEX PRADO (UP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE) AND CHRISTINE DENTON (VP CANDIDATE)

Alex Prado and Christine Denton seem to have a lot in common: They both like cookies and cream ice cream. They laugh at the same jokes. Their best times on campus have been those spent working for various FIU organizations. When together, they can't stop smiling, and at times, they even finish each other's sentences.

"It's hard work but fun, running together for something we both believe in," said Denton.

Prado is majoring in international business and is a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha social fra-

ternity. Relocating several times throughout his life because of his father's government job, he has lived in Peru, the Philippines and Honduras.

Prado hopes to enter law school after graduation and plans to either manage his own restaurant or have a career in the state legislature.

When he has time, Prado likes to relax in his room or in the Graham Center piano lounge, listening to whatever music the students are playing.

"I'm always thinking," he said. "Sometimes its good to just sit down and daydream."

Denton, who is majoring in nursing, says nurses need patience and compassion to do their best job. When her sister was sick with cancer, she'd go to the hospital to spend time with her. That is where she met a nurse who inspired her to follow her career path.

"She was real caring, and it showed me that one person can work to help others," Denton said.

She plans to earn her Master's Degree after graduation, and, although she plans to continue her nursing career, Denton stated she wouldn't mind becoming the CEO of a hospital one day.

AURELIO "P.J." RIVERA (UP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE) AND CHAZ-LIT DROGUETT (VP CANDIDATE)

Chaz-Lit Droguett did not

See CANDIDATES, page 3



VOTE FOR ME: Alex Prado (top) and Aurelio "PJ" Rivera (right) campaign during the final days before elections, which will be held April 5 and 6. Both candidates are running for SGA President. Prado's running mate is Christine Denton and Rivera's is Chaz-Lit Droguett.
HARRY COLEMAN / THE BEACON



SGA discusses raise of activity and services fee

By CRISTELA GUERRA
Staff Writer

Faculty and student Government members met on March 29 in the Graham Center at University Park to hear and discuss students' opinions on whether the activity and services fee should be raised by \$1.38. The cost of both the Biscayne Bay Campus Recreational Center and the UP Recreational Center would be covered by an estimated 70% if this increase passes.

The raise would increase the fee from \$9.14 to \$10.52 and would be per student fee and hour fee.

Two SGA, two faculty members and the S & A finance committee would vote

on the decision. If passed, it will be taken to the president of FIU where it would be reviewed and decided on by the Board of Trustees. The A & S fee covers the majority of student's fees for facilities as well as recreation and athletics.

According to Chuck Tinder, senior director for the College of Finances, the last increase of the A & S fee was three years ago, and it was increased by \$1.09.

According to Tinder, FIU's A & S fee is far lower than that of other universities. If this fee is raised, it would allow for an extra \$1,084,000 to be allocated toward the Recreation Center's development.

According to Rob Frye, director for Recreation Services, the money will be allocated toward different needs.

"Operation of building, utilities, staffing and equipment," said Frye, of the university's plans for the money. "[This does not] include programs which usually come from a different fund, regular allocation toward the increase in sizing will cause the utilities' cost to go from \$10,000 to \$200,000."

The UP Recreational Center, which was originally scheduled to open last fall, will include twice the amount of studio space for classes than the Student Fitness Center as well as a 12,500 square foot fitness and workout area. It will also include larger locker rooms and an indoor basketball court. It should be open by the end of this month.

The A & S fee at BBC will be used

to fund utilities of its new recreational center.

Elias Bardawil, assistant director for Campus Life, Orientation and Recreation at BBC calls the renovation a "mega recreational complex." It will expand a 10,000 square foot facility by 50,000 square and connect to the Wolfe Center.

"The money will be going to facilities that are much needed for the students and they will be able to see the effects of where their money is going through these tangible results," said SGA President Jorge Rosario. "SGA can tell the students what each cent is benefiting and they can see where extra money is being allocated, so they may enjoy these new resources and facilities."

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS**MONDAY • APRIL 4**

Panther Rage Meeting: 4 p.m., GC 140

TUESDAY • APRIL 5

Student Government Association Elections: All Day, GC Forum

Golden Panthers Softball hosts Barry: 6 p.m., University Park Softball Field

FIU School of Music presents "Percussion Ensemble": 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

SPC Campus Entertainment presents Karaoke Night: 8 p.m., Gracie's Grill Honors Council Meeting: 4 p.m., GC 150

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 6

Student Government Association Elections: All Day, GC Forum

Multi-Faith Council Catholic Mass: 12 p.m., GC 150

Women's Center Mentoring Program End of Semester Celebration: All Day, GC 243

Golden Panthers Baseball at Florida Atlantic University: 6 p.m.; Boca Raton, FL

Felix Gonzalez Torres, Artist in Lecture Series presents Alfredo Jaar: 7 p.m., Frost Art Museum (PC 110)

FIU School of Music presents FIU Symphony Orchestra: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

THURSDAY • APRIL 7

Speed Networking at Coconut Groove: 7 p.m., Oxygen Lounge

African New World Studies and the Women's Center present "Rape as a Weapon": 7:30 p.m., DM 100

FIU School of Music presents FIU Big Band and featuring Carla Ramirez (vocalist): 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

FRIDAY • APRIL 8

SPC Comedy Connection: 8 p.m., GC Ballrooms

FIU School of Music presents Collegium Musicum – Renaissance and Baroque Music of England: 9:30 a.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

Golden Panthers Baseball hosts South Alabama: 7 p.m., University Park Baseball Field

FIU School of Music presents Choral Concert: Concert Choir & University Chorale: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

SATURDAY • APRIL 9

Golden Panthers Baseball hosts South Alabama: 1 p.m., University Park Baseball Field

FIU School of Music presents Collegium Musicum – Renaissance and Baroque music of England: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

FIU School of Music presents A Recital of French Piano Music: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

SUNDAY • APRIL 10

FIU School of Music presents Faculty Piano Recital: 4 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall

Golden Panthers Baseball hosts South Alabama: 1 p.m., University Park Baseball Field

FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

– Compiled by Reuben M. Pereira

Lost police uniforms found in university garbage dumpster

By **RODOLFO R. ROMAN**
Staff Writer

According to a police report obtained by *The Beacon*, officer Andres Falcon reported that on Feb. 13, he found eight FIU Public Safety logo shirts in an open green dumpster.

In addition to the shirts, which were still pressed and on hangers, one yellow FIU police raincoat and a pair of dark blue uniform trousers were found.

The police report states that the items were strewn about in the dumpster among the discarded files and office content of Jesse L. Campbell, assistant vice-president and director for the Department of Public Safety.

Falcon stated that the discarded property represented a "clear and present danger" to the safety of the university community and members of

the Department of Public Safety, because anyone could have gained access to the clothes and disguised himself or herself as an FIU officer.

Florida statute 812.014 states that "a person commits theft if he or she knowingly obtains or uses, or endeavors to obtain or to use the property of another with intent to, either temporarily or permanently appropriate the property to his or her own use or to the use of any person not entitled to the use of the property."

Falcon noticed the property when he returned to the station at the end of his shift.

Sergeant Doug Ochipa said the Department of Public Safety gives each of its officers five sets of pants and shirts with the FIU emblem.

"Old-timers don't have their names patched on the uniform. An officer who

has been here for a while will use the metal plate name-tag," said Ochipa.

The items found are valued at \$315.

The suspect(s) allegedly placed the uniforms in the dumpster along with Campbell's discarded files and office content. Once an officer is fired, retired or laid off, he is no longer affiliated with the department and becomes a regular civilian. There is a procedure where the officer has to return the department's property to the property custodian.

Lieutenant Alphonse D. Ianniello says that Campbell didn't follow the proper procedure of turning FIU property in correctly. He also states that the department is fortunate that no one else got a hold of the uniforms.

According to Florida statute 812.155, a fail-

ure to redeliver hired or leased personal property may result in being convicted or found guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, unless the value of the personal property or equipment is a value of \$300 or more.

"[The improper dumping of the uniform and files] is not a criminal act because it is not a theft. However, it is a policy issue, not a statute issue," said Ianniello.

As of press time, Human Resources confirmed that Campbell is still on FIU's payroll and would receive a check on April 1 even though he retired in February. This information could not be further verified at this time.

Marcos Perez, vice-president of administration for Public Safety, couldn't be reached to confirm Campbell's case.

POLICEBEAT**MONDAY • MARCH 11**

On March 11, a student reported that his bicycle was stolen from Panther Hall at UP. There are currently no suspects.

MONDAY • MARCH 14

On March 14, a student reported to The Department of Public Safety that her professor Thomas Pitzer, advised her not to bring her purse into the classroom while taking a test. Thus, she left her purse outside room AT100 at the University Park Campus. After taking her test, she returned to pick up her purse, and it was not there. Inside her purse was a Metro PCS silver cell phone, a Coach wallet, a Coach wristlet, an Everglades Hall dorm key, Armani sunglasses, a social security card and an FIU identification, all valued at \$586.

TUESDAY • MARCH 15

A student reported that his black 1998 Ford Ranger was stolen on March 15 at the University Park Blue Garage. Upon returning from class, his car was gone. A check of the area was conducted, but no suspects have been found. The male student said that he was not having any problems with anyone and was unable to pinpoint any suspect(s). The car, with the tag number H56XMB, is valued at \$13,000.

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 16

On March 16, a student reported that his blue Toshiba laptop, worth \$1,200, was stolen from the Research Carrel room in GL 318-C at UP. No suspects have been found.

A student reported that her black book bag was stolen from PC 426. The bag is valued at \$125 and included a driver's license, identification card and home and vehicle keys.

– Compiled by Rodolfo Roman

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THE BEACON

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Candidates offer insight on personal lives, discuss goals

From CANDIDATES, page 2

originally plan to run with Aurelio "P.J." Rivera. However, after Robert Suarez, her first SGA running mate, decided to step down due to family reasons, Droguett approached Rivera because she felt that he had more knowledge of the school's workings than anyone else, having been president of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and an SGA representative.

"Our personalities are different, but they balance each other out," said Droguett. "He has the experience, and I know that will help out a lot."

Rivera, who is majoring in public administration, states that he's running because he feels SGA needs change and expansion, something he thinks has been lacking in the organization during the last few years.

"SGA can do so much, and yet it doesn't do enough. It has the power to make students' life so much better, but it has been moving slowly this year," Rivera said. "That needs to change."

Both candidates live on campus and work as resident assistants in the Housing Quad.

They both describe change as a major part of their lives.

"My first day of school

was horrible. I lost my keys, it rained [and] I couldn't find my classes. This made me see how lost students can get. I didn't want that to happen to anyone," Rivera said. "I decided I was going to be out there, making myself known and getting to know more people."

Away from home for the first time in her life, Droguett, agreed that her first weeks living on campus weren't the best ones.

Her routine consisted of attending classes and spending time mostly in her room.

It was while working as a desk assistant in Panther Hall that her perspective on FIU changed.

"I got to see what FIU has to offer, and there were people helping me out. I knew I had made the right decision in coming here," said the elementary education major.

Rivera, whose favorite books include "Lord of the Rings" and "The Da Vinci Code," sees himself working in the future for a non-profit organization like The Red Cross or The United Way.

Droguett plans to continue a career as a full-time teacher, becoming "a mother to children who often don't get enough love at home."

ALINA BALEAN (BBC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)

School spirit at BBC—or the lack of it—is something Alina Balean feels strongly about. Since her start with SGA as the youngest speaker of the house, Balean has tried to increase activities and cheer around the campus.

"The atmosphere is not of a school – we need school spirit! I want to see signs and panthers and FIU [decorations] everywhere!" she said.

Having been a part of her high school chorus, Balean says she loves to sing, especially retro 80's songs.

Because she's of Romanian descent, she'd love to karaoke to the now famous "Dragostea Din Tai." Within the last few weeks the song has become known in the United States as the "Numa Numa Song" after an avid fan video taped himself lip syncing and sent it throughout the Internet.

Balean counts her first day of orientation as one of her happiest experiences at FIU and, if the elections don't go her way, she said she will count April 7 as the worst day.

When stressed, Balean likes to sit and take a break in the fresh air of her favorite part of campus – the

Biscayne Bay shore.

Balean, who is majoring in advertising, plans to one day open her own advertising and real estate agencies.

LEMAR LINTON (BBC VP CANDIDATE)

Unlike candidates who emphasize their socializing and people skills, Lemar Linton considers himself somewhat of an introvert and a quiet thinker. Though he has not had experience with SGA, Linton hopes his planning and vision will be enough to get him elected.

"My motivation to run ... stems from the strong interest that I have in student affairs," he said. "BBC is a beautiful place but I feel that there is a lot more [that] can be done to improve the quality of the services being offered to students on campus."

Linton describes his job as peer advisor in 2004 as the favorite experience, making his time at FIU a positive one.

By majoring in accounting, Linton hopes to follow in the steps of his mother, an accountant for the past 25 years, whom he says has supported him in his choice.

The rest of the BBC candidates did not respond to attempts to interview them.



VIGIL FOR HOPE: On March 31, "Take Back the Night" an event intended to raise awareness about violence against women took place at a march around the whole UP campus. Graduate student Korrin Stanek and faculty member Dixie-Anne Belle distributed candles that signified bringing light to the world-wide issue. JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON



THIS WEEK AT BBC

MONDAY • APRIL 4

SPC Deejay and Carnival: 12 p.m., WUC Panther Square

SPC Belly Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 155

TUESDAY • APRIL 5

SPC Music Day: 12 p.m., WUC Panther Square

SPC Salsa Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 155
African New World Studies Presents "Black France, Black America: Diaspora, Difference, Dialogue" by Dr. Tyler Stovall: 6 p.m., Kovens Conference Center

Vendor Fair: 10 a.m., WUC Panther Square

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 6

CCC Impact Wednesday Lunches: 2 p.m., WUC 245

Student Government Council General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 159

SPC "Dating Doctor" Lecture: 7 p.m., Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre

THURSDAY • APRIL 7

International Students Club Movie Day: 11 a.m., WUC Ballroom, Side B

SPC Music Day: 12 p.m., WUC Panther Square

Catholic Student Association Weekly Mass: 12:30 p.m., WUC 157

Student Health Advisory Council presents Oscar Loynaz: 3 p.m., WUC 155

SPC Belly Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 155

Biscayne Bay Dramatics: Open Microphone Night, 8 p.m., WUC Panther Square

Student Programming Council Comedy Show: 9 p.m., WUC Ballroom, Side A/WUC 245

FRIDAY • APRIL 8

WUC Student Affairs Meeting: 10:30 a.m., WUC 159

White Orchard Theatre Performance: 6 p.m., Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre

Alpha Phi Sigma General Meeting: 8 p.m., WUC 245

SPC Spring Fling Concert: 7 p.m., WUC Ballroom Side B, WUC 155, 157, 159

– Compiled by Reuben M. Pereira



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OPINION

POWER! TO THE PEOPLE!



The Beacon RECOMMENDS SGA Elections



ON THE TRAIL: University Park campus Student Government Association presidential candidate Alex Prado and another campaign volunteer pitches their campaign platform to a student in the Graham Center. On Monday and Tuesday, students will vote to elect a number of candidates for SGA positions.
HARRY COLEMAN/THE BEACON

For a group of about 40 eager students, springtime at FIU brings a lengthy two weeks of hard work and preparation for one of the most important events of the year – Student Government Association elections.

Each year, *The Beacon* recommends the candidates it feels are best qualified. These recommendations are based on the responses candidates gave during their interview with *The Beacon's* editorial board, as well as their answers to a questionnaire we asked them to complete. Candidates were judged on their experience with leadership and finances, how well researched and realistic their platforms are and whether or not we believe they can and will effectively implement their goals. Candidates who did not return their questionnaires or participate in an interview are ineligible for

our recommendation.

Following our recommendation, we will examine some of the points of each candidate's platform and explain how these points shaped our decision. Since all of the candidates have strong ideas, we would like to encourage the winners to consider their opposing candidate's best platform goals.

The Beacon would like to extend good luck to all of the candidates who have worked hard on their campaigns. We honor and appreciate a fair election and are confident that these candidates will uphold the rules set by the SGA Elections Code. Regardless of our suggestions, we hope whoever wins the election will take their job seriously and live up to the expectations that serve the FIU student community.

– Beacon Staff

The Beacon recommends

UNIVERSITY PARK

PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

Alex Prado and Christine Denton

Other candidates: Aurelio "P.J." Rivera and Chaz-Lit Droguett

We recommend the Prado-Denton ticket because they have the most realistic goals and thoroughly researched platform. Based on their interview, it appears they have what it takes to actually implement their ideas. Above all, their combined experience handling finances within SGA and other organizations ensures that they will handle the over \$7 million annual budget more responsibly and fairly than the less experienced ticket. There are several points about the Prado-Denton platform we want to address.

The Prado-Denton ticket knew exactly how to answer our questions about the presidential dis-

cretionary fund, which is the roughly \$10,000 the SGA president may use his or her discretion. Prado promises to end the year with a zero balance in the fund by giving aid to organizations that needs additional funding to help benefit FIU students.

The Prado-Denton ticket also wishes to eliminate the automated answering service and replace it with a student-operated customer service call center. This plan will replace the automated system with a staff of paid students who will answer and direct questions. The funding for this project is already in place. Prado and Denton promise to push it into action. We believe this

is an excellent idea that will solve many of the bureaucratic problems associated with this campus.

Additionally, the Prado-Denton platform includes plans to implement a shuttle-bus system, based on systems in place at other Miami universities, which will transport students to and from the greater Miami area (Coconut Grove, downtown, etc.) from the University Park campus. The funding for this project would be minimal and would be provided mostly by the shuttle company. The shuttle system also is realistic enough to be completed within a relatively short period of time. It will be very useful for housing students and commuter students alike who want a safe ride to their weekend destinations.

The Prado-Denton ticket has several other goals, many of which we believe should be reconsidered or completely rethought.

Their plans to push for an international student wing in the campus housing facilities will only serve to further isolate international students from other FIU students. Although we support Prado and Denton's goal of a friendly community for homesick, international students, we believe that an integral part of an international student's experience is integration with different people and a different culture.

Another issue we hold with reservation is their plan to address faith-based groups. Their ballot sounds like blatant favoritism, which is unfair to the other groups and organizations that deserve equal treatment. It may be noble to consider the religious groups and organizations on campus, but we feel that there are more important issues at stake, and that while facilitating the religious groups with a small office is helpful, it is

unnecessary, especially considering the needs of other organizations on campus.

Candidates have talked about an off-campus meal plan for several years now, and the Prado-Denton promises to implement this long-sought after goal. However, with the upcoming renewal of Aramark's contract (the food service provider for FIU) there is still a lingering uncertainty about this project. We question the benefit of spending money on this project; the number of students who would use the off-campus plan to its full extent is simply not sufficient enough to merit its immediate attention.

Both the Prado-Denton ticket and the Rivera-Droguett ticket promise to turn SGA into an organization that will reach out to meet students' needs more than ever before. Both tickets mention plans to make the existing SGA website and Panthersoft a powerful

tool in student communication. They both also promise to lobby and fight for important issues such as Bright Futures Scholarships, fair online class fees and accelerated graduation programs.

We do not recommend the Rivera-Droguett ticket, because we think that while they have several interesting goals that would help the FIU community, they lack the experience and researched knowledge to ensure these goals are feasible and beneficial to our student body. There is also concern that Rivera and Droguett have only a limited knowledge of finances. When we questioned them about the presidential discretionary fund, they had less objective goals than Prado and Denton did. There are several other points we want to discuss about the Rivera-Droguett platform.

See VOTE, page 5

EDITORIAL

SGA elections depend on non-Greek voter turnout

The upcoming SGA election is a vital event that all FIU students, whether they are housing, commuter or international, should take seriously. Even though not all candidates seem to have qualifications to lead our university, everyone should vote.

Not only do students rely on student government representatives to spend the \$7.2 million budget allotted to SGA every year, but students forget that voting is the only way to make sure the money is appropriated properly. When elected, these student representatives are given the unique opportunity to allocate funds, speak to administrators about student issues and even to change the face of this ever-growing university.

Unfortunately, in most cases and for most students, it all comes down to money. The biggest issues range from where is the money going and who is in charge of spending it. Yet, now that elections are upon us, some of the positions at both the University Park campus and Biscayne Bay Campus are still unrepresented. The candidates that are running have ideas that are unfeasible, not researched or a complete waste of time and energy. This could easily be fixed if candidates won based on their platforms and not on their affiliation with Greek organizations, which make up the largest percentage of student voters at UP and BBC. This alone, should anger students and unite them in getting involved, but apathy keeps many from acting.

When it comes time to vote, many students opt not to and later complain about events with low turnout rates. What do students expect? Voting is right around the corner, and it is safe to say, based on past elections, that the average student could not care less who is elected and who isn't.

When the elections come around on April 4 and 5, non-Greek affiliated voters can change the final outcome dramatically. Represent your university by picking up a ballot and doing what the community needs you to do – vote.

– Alejandra Diaz, Editor In Chief
Leoncio Alvarez, Life! Editor

From VOTE, page 4

The Rivera-Droguett ticket promises to hold monthly roundtable lunch meetings with any FIU student interested in attending. At these meetings, students will have the opportunity to speak with the SGA president and vice president to discuss any problems or concerns at FIU. This is an excellent idea, better than any suggested by Prado and Denton, and would promote a more open SGA.

The other powerful item on the Rivera-Droguett ticket was a plan to amend the SGA constitution to allow an international student voting representative on the student council. With the right planning, the international presence can be a viable asset, giving international students a voice that deserves to be represented. Rivera and Droguett also plan to upgrade the dining services and

to add ATMs to the engineering campus – relatively low cost ideas that would serve engineering students well.

Like several other candidates running for SGA positions, Rivera and Droguett wish to extend the hours of the Green Library's first floor during the academic periods. This is a reasonable idea because it offers an additional study area that is significantly less noisy than the Graham Center and has computers available for Internet access. However, our major concern is that this goal will be met at the expense of the current 24-hour GC. Rivera and Droguett are willing to sacrifice the 24-hour GC in exchange for the library, which is unreasonable considering the limited space in the library and the amount of time it took to achieve a 24-hour GC.

There were other items on the Rivera-Droguett platform

that struck us as unrealistic. The "24/7" medical staff they proposed would ideally be available to administer medicine or aid in an emergency situation. Rivera and Droguett have yet to determine how exactly they are going to staff or fund this program. An interesting idea in theory but it is redundant, considering the current procedures for after-hour medical emergencies.

The Rivera-Droguett ticket places a strong emphasis on technology. They want to add more laptops to the library (about 30) and expand the campus-wide wireless network. These are good ideas, but once again, the funding for these plans is dubious. The Rivera-Droguett ticket expects monetary support from University Technology Services, who they claim will provide most of the funding and planning for these programs. This is an unlikely expectation.

REPRESENTATIVE AT LARGE

Alfonso "Alfie" Leon

Other candidates: Mari Cabrera, Omer "Bill" Buchanan, Morgan NeCole Darity, Ray Morgan, Robert Suarez

Of the six candidates running for representative at large, only two answered *The Beacon's* questionnaires and participated in the interviews. Therefore we will only discuss the two candidates who presented their platforms.

While Leon's platform shares many goals with the Rivera-Droguett ticket (which we discussed above), we recommend Leon because his experience surpasses any of the other candidates, and because he presented very well-researched plans of action. Like the other candidates he is committed to protecting Bright Futures and fighting against tuition increases. He also proposes to create more quiet study areas, achieve better promotion for campus events, increase funding for clubs and subscribe to an online service that would allow songs and movies to be downloaded legally. Though the online downloading service is feasible and would be pleasing for stu-

dents, *The Beacon* questions what effect it will have on the campus network, which already has problems with overuse.

We are confident Leon will fairly and justly represent students and fight for their concerns and problems.

We did not recommend Mari Cabrera because of her poor choice of goals and overall lack of knowledge about how to achieve these goals. While her experience as a lower division representative this year seems sufficient, her platform is weak and unrealistic. Apart from the goals that almost all of the candidates have in common (24-hour library, Bright Futures protection, etc.), she plans to increase the number of student lounges, to institute a delivery pizza service from The Breezeway Café to the residence halls and to reopen the game room. All of these goals are particularly unnecessary. We believe there is plenty of room for students to

lounge. It is overkill to build or allocate more space for lounging areas. The Breezeway tried a pizza delivery service when it first opened, so we know that didn't work. It is a bit excessive to go through the trouble of finding golf-carts and hiring extra staff simply to spare students a short walk. The game room has been closed for sometime, and although it would be nice to see it reopen, at this time it is impractical because of other issues in GC which must be attended to.

The most ambitious points of Cabrera's platform include her goal to create a system to evaluate academic advisors and her plan to fight for the proposed new grading scale. Cabrera calls for a system that will allow students to evaluate their advising sessions and the advisors themselves. The new grading scale would do away with the plus and minus system currently in use at FIU. While these ideas have potential, Cabrera presented very little information to suggest she actually knew how to implement these goals effectively and quickly. They were simply ideas.

The recommendations for lower division representatives and other groups and organizations are available with the full story, online at www.beaconnewspaper.com.

PRESIDENT'S ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Preside over the SGC meetings and make all necessary arrangements for those meetings, including setting the agenda and conducting the business of the meeting in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order and all provisions of the SGA Constitution and Bylaws. He/She will vote only in case of a tie.

- Represent the interests of the SGC to the administration and faculty of his/her campus.

- Fulfill all duties and responsibilities of the SGC President in regards to the

SGA University Council.

- Serve on and/or nominate students to campus governing bodies and recommend names for appointment to University committee.

- Convene special SGC meetings, provided there is at least 48 hours notice of such meetings.

- Appoint assistants, as needed, subject to majority approval of the SGC members in attendance at a regular meeting.

- Authorize any disbursement of SGC funds in the absence of the Finance Committee Chairperson.

The Beacon recommends

BISCAYNE BAY

President

Alina Balean

Other candidates:

Natkisha Jean-Baptiste

We recommend Balean because of her experience in SGA despite the fact that some of her answers were unresearched and Balean was unable to answer key questions. Some of these questions related to the availability of funds for a continued beautification project, how to unify UP and BBC and she also demonstrated a limited knowledge of the steps needed to keep food vendors open later at night. Notwithstanding the obvious obstacles

that stand in Balean's way, some of her ideas were concrete and she was able to decisively answer how she would achieve such goals. According to her platform, Balean promises to better promote SGA by implementing a "bring a friend day." The plan calls for each SGA member to bring at least one friend to the weekly SGA meetings. This idea is not only creative but insightful. It demonstrates Balean's understanding of what SGA has been working toward for years – increased student participation. Balean also hopes to address students'

needs for cleaner facilities throughout the BBC campus.

We do not recommend Jean-Baptiste because we feel that her experience as a lower division representative has not given her the knowledge needed to carry the presidential position. During our interview with Jean-Baptiste we were able to detect that Jean-Baptiste lacks the understanding of how SGA works and her ideas were not as concrete as expected out of a presidential candidate. Although Jean-Baptiste has plans to beautify BBC by continuing the beautification project and paint-

ing the outside of the Bay Vista Housing complex, she was unsure as to where the funding needed for such a project would come from. The platform also included a daycare service program and a plan to increase the presence of FIU Athletics at BBC so that students feel more inclined to give support. While these ideas are good in theory, the practical application of these goals is clearly dubious and we question whether these are services that would actually benefit a large number of BBC students.

Vice President

No candidate is recommended for this position. Not only did Casey McClendon and Lemar Linton not participate in the interview process but the answers to the questionnaire were less than apt to achieve a recommendation for these candidates. Each of their platforms neglected to satisfy the actual needs of BBC students and many of their ideas focused on the larger problems that FIU. McClendon sited a desire to create a new "proud to be at BBC" attitude but her questionnaire gave no conclusions as to how this could be accomplished.

Linton's platform promises increased unity between UP and BBC, improvement of advisor services and more courses being offered at BBC, but these ideas are unclear and Linton's ability to execute such an aggressive platform seems doubtful. Both McClendon and Linton's SGA experience is also limited and not suited for the leadership need in a vice presidential candidate.

Michael Hepburn did not submit a questionnaire or participate in the interview process.

No other BBC candidates responded to *The Beacon's* questionnaires.



GRAPHIC BY LUIS NIN/THE BEACON

“Hair: The Musical” gives new light to anti-war and religious topics

By **BETSY MARTINEZ**
Assistant Life! Editor

Flashback to the '60s with “HAIR: The Musical,” the most recent production to come to the University Park Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

“HAIR,” originally subtitled “The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical,” has changed musical theater forever, as it reflects a generation dominated by drugs, sex and war.

“Although Woof tries to hide his flamboyancy, it always comes out. My character is in love with Berger (Roger Benavides), but Berger is in love with Claude,” said senior Jonathan Gonzalez whose character is torn between his religious beliefs, sexuality and drug use.

The show includes such memorable characters as Claude (senior Aaron Millis) and Woof (Jonathan Gonzalez), who epitomize the '60s hippy-teachings on war, theology, authority and sex.

The musical, written by Jerome Ragni, James Rado and Galt MacDermot, is directed by FIU professor of acting and theater movement, Wayne E.

Robinson, Jr.

“It’s not just an anti-war play as much as it is a pro-love play,” said Robinson.

This story of love and war comes at a momentous time in our society, because like the youth of the '60s young Americans today are becoming more aware of the issues that concern them.

The audience follows the tribe of politically-active, long-haired ‘Hippies of the Age of Aquarius’ as they fight against the Vietnam War’s draft in song and dance.

“The Age of Aquarius is unification and awareness of reality, man, the world and the human state. It has nothing to do with labeling; it has to do with acceptance,” said Millis.

Among the members of the long-haired tribe are Claude and Berger a pair of friends battling against Claude’s draft notice, and Sheila (Sarah Brohee), who is in love with both of them. There is also Jeannie (senior Minette Perez) who is always protesting about something, and together with several other characters, they sum up the hippy days of the '60s.



FEELING GROOVY?: “Hair: The Musical” will open April 7 and will continue running until April 17. General admission is \$12 but with FIU ID, the cost is \$10. COURTESY PHOTO

“Jeannie is the mom of the group. Her whole deal is love, and everything she does is to that extreme,” said Perez, who is so passionate about her character that she has been growing the hair on her armpits and legs since Christmas break.

The production’s songs address subjects like masturbation, fellatio and marijuana.

They include songs such as, “Aquarius,” “Let the Sunshine In,” “Easy to be Hard” and the title song, “Hair.”

Opening night is April 7 at 8

p.m., and the show will continue to run until April 17.

Ticket prices start at \$10 for FIU Students, and \$12 for general admission.

For more information contact the FIU box office at (305) 348-3789.



Downtown Miami club pops to life



INTO THE SCENE: Poplife offers club-goers three rooms in which different styles of music are played to satisfy everyone's taste in music. **COURTESY PHOTO**

By **JOCELYNN RON**
Contributing Writer

“ **Greicy Carvajal**, Sophomore

It was different but it was good because it's not what you usually hear, music-wise, and people are different but really nice and open.

When South Beach's effect wears off and nights get too expensive to enjoy, looking for new things to do can become a scavenger hunt.

Sophomore Greicy Carvajal was bored with the South Beach scene and she wanted a place to hang out with her friends when she heard about Poplife, a dance club located at 30 NE 14 St. in Miami, (three blocks west of Biscayne Blvd. on 14 St.).

“[Poplife] was different but it was good because it's not what you usually hear, music-wise, and people are different but really nice and open. You just have to enjoy the atmosphere. It has a little bit for everyone,” said Carvajal.

Poplife introduces new bands to the music scene almost every weekend and comes to life each Saturday night in what is usually known as I/O Lounge. The difference is the music.

It is comprised of three rooms. The first room, known as the Bar Room, contains a huge flat screen TV hanging from the ceiling, where movies are played according to the night's theme.

Walls decorated with stars and

psychedelic patterns sparkle and enhance the scene.

People mingling and talking across the bar and carefully placed sofas seem happy and relaxed, sharing the space with dancing folks going in and out of the room.

Michael Jackson, Prince and Madonna, among many other '80s singers, are standards for DJs in the Bar Room, but anything goes, and sometimes break-dancers have a field day there. If mingling and alcohol is not enough, the Dance Room offers a disco ball and enough space to spark up a bit of action.

It is in this room where the bands usually play and where things get interesting.

With a stage, another hanging screen and an additional set of sofas, the Dance Room gets packed with people who love to dance to all kinds of alternative dance classics from the '80s until today.

Even Justin Timberlake can

bang out a song or two, followed by something as remote as an oldie from The Cure or something more unconventional from The Strokes.

In this place, professional dance moves don't really matter. If dancing becomes too tiresome, the Garden is always available.

With low down tempo music and a nice set of chairs and tables all around, it is the perfect place to share a drink and a nice conversation without having to shout or strain your hearing abilities.

“My favorite room is the Garden, because you can chill and meet new people without having to shout,” said junior Adi Dardik.

Poplife appeals to anyone that wants to find something different.

“Poplife draws a more intellectual and open minded crowd that likes art and underground music – a nice variety of people all over,” said student Diego Lopez.

Poplife is open to anyone over 18. It costs \$7, but is \$10 for those under 21 years old.

LIFE!

5

SOME FAVORITE THINGS
BY ANA SANCHEZ –
BBC EDITOR

1. BLOGGING

I love to blog ... about anything, especially randomness. The best part of blogging is getting a reaction from my readers – a laugh, a thought, a sigh. Sadly, no one has cried yet.

2. DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

How else would I survive long bus rides? Throughout the years, bands come and go, but Dave remains. Even if they never existed, I would miss them.

3. BELLE

She is clearly the best Disney princess of all time. She's the only princess who reads books, and if there were to be a Disney princess with a degree, she would be it.



BELLE **COURTESY PHOTO**

4. REFRESCO COUNTRY CLUB

This Dominican soft-drink is actually pronounced “Contri-Clu,” and you must drink it directly from the bottle. This is the only thing that makes me feel like an authentic ‘Dominicana’.

5. UNO CARD GAME

I am the queen of Uno, and I challenge anyone to a game of it. Even though I have not been playing for a long time, I consider myself a pro. The blank cards get on my nerves though. I always wonder, do they bother anyone else?

DID YOU KNOW?

During every NFL football game the home team must provide the referee with 24 footballs. If the team does not provide the balls, the game will be postponed by the referee.

– www.kellys.com/know.html

Women's Studies conference gives new meaning to feminism

By **YAHNILET COLON**
Contributing Writer

What comes to mind when you hear the word “feminist”? If your response is bra-burning, male-bashing or butch women you probably wouldn't be in the minority.

Many people believe these radical stereotypes represent all feminists worldwide. It was these kinds of stereotypes that the Fourth Annual Women's Studies Student Conference tried to dispel.

This year's conference, held March 29 in the Graham Center Ballrooms at the University Park campus, was a full day event co-sponsored by the Women's Studies Student Association, the Women's Studies Board of Advisors and the Women's Center.

Comprised of various sessions, all dealing with a different aspect of the female experience in modern society – as well as women in literature, film, history and social policy – the conference brought together a range of FIU students and members of the community interested in advancing the equality of women in today's society.

FIU students and alumni

were welcome to put together presentations, write papers and create posters that dealt with women's issues and the representation of women in various areas of study.

“I'm hoping the Women's Studies Conference will inspire students and the community to become more involved and concerned with women's issues,” said senior Loraine de la Fe.

After a light breakfast, the conference commenced with discussion and presentations regarding gender and social policy.

Common myths of women being innately non-violent were challenged by presenter Ian Morris, who graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in history and women's studies from FIU in 2004.

Morris read from his paper titled “Sugar Spice,” which cited various studies which proved, among other things, that white, privileged women were more likely to kill in anger than non-white men.

Lara Goldsmith, a senior majoring in women's studies who hopes to go into a medical field specializing in women's health, discussed the current conflict between midwifery and



I AM WOMAN, HEAR ME ROAR: Master of Fine Arts students Anjanette Delgado, Andrea Dulanto, Kathy Curtin, Laura McDermott, Elizabeth Miller and Diane Mooney read original poetry and fiction on topics ranging from abortion rights to aging strippers. **INGRID CAMPBELL/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

obstetrics.

“Women have lost the feeling of empowerment in regards to the birth process, particularly in America.

There is even word of current legislation in Florida threatening to not have midwifery covered by Medicaid.

It's important because many of these women on Medicaid are already limited; [such legislation] only increases that limit,”

said Goldsmith.

In the conference sessions that followed, students also discussed gender and literary and film analysis, as well as the importance of oral history in women's studies.

Members of Professor Karen Garner's U.S. Women's History course presented the class's oral history project in which they interviewed many of the founders of the Women's Studies Center, which was established in 1982.

They also discussed the different approach that many feminists take in interviewing other women.

Unlike the typical male model of interviewing which emphasizes an objective approach, the feminist model encourages a bond between the interviewer and his or her subject.

The conference also discussed the need to reclaim feminism and what it really means to be a feminist.

“Feminism is a state of mind,” said junior Rebecca Lubin, who is majoring in women's studies and is president for FIU's chapter of the National Organization for Women.

She encourages women to wear “This is what a Feminist looks like” t-shirts to promote the diversity of those interested in the equality of women and people in general in our society.

The shirts are available through various political websites such as *northern.sun.com* and *coyotescorner.com*.

In addition to the various presentations and panels, there

was a brief poster and buffet lunch session.

The poster-makers were available for questioning about their work which ranged from posters on diseases that affect pregnant women to cohabitation and marriage, as well as the continuing campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Scholarship and award announcements were also presented, most notably for the Elaine Gordon Scholarship, which is awarded to one student per semester by a committee of Gordon's adult children.

Gordon was one of the first trail-blazer feminists in the state of Florida.

Megan Kelley, a junior majoring in women's studies and health services, received this prestigious award.

“I'm honored that the Elaine Gordon Committee believes that I hold the same values Elaine Gordon held, because her values were important for all women,” said Kelley, upon receiving the award.

Kelley hopes to go into the public health field to promote the right of women to know about their bodies and to have control over them.

Guests of honor and members of the women's studies Founding Board of Advisors, Roberta Fox, a lawyer in Miami-Dade County and former Florida senator, and Marjorie Adler, Employee Relations director for the city of Coral Gables, left the crowd with words of wisdom as they encouraged women to become involved in government and their community.



WALL OF FAME: Student-made presentations ranging from features on faculty to a history of the women's studies program were displayed around the GC ballroom. **INGRID CAMPBELL/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

THE SCHOOL YEAR IS ALMOST OVER! (It's about time!)



Things are winding down around school but at *The Beacon*, we're just getting geared up for next year. **The Life! section** is always looking for talent and there's no better way to get the Summer started than with a batch of new writers.

Stop by our offices in GC 210 or WUC 124 for an application or e-mail
Recruitment Editor C. Joel Marino at beaconrecruit@yahoo.com.

Pope John Paul II leaves legacy after death

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

Thousands of spectators knelt in prayer on the pavement of St. Peter's Square in Rome after Vatican officials announced that Pope John Paul II, leader of the Roman Catholic Church for the past 26 years, passed away April 2 due to complications from a urinary tract infection.

Vigils began around the world following reports on March 31 that the pontiff contacted blood poisoning from the infection, which resulted in kidney and heart failure.

The 84-year-old pope, who battled with Parkinson's disease for the last years of his life, had been weak and unable to speak since last Easter Sunday.

"This evening or this night, Christ opens the door to the Pope," Angelo Comastri, vicar general for Vatican City, told the praying crowd a day before the death, according to the Associated Press.

From Africa to Asia to South America, world leaders wrote condolences and offered prayers.

In the White House, President Bush and his wife made statements of admiration for the Pope during the man's final hours, stating that the universal grief was "a testimony to his greatness."

John Paul II was born Karol Joseph Wojtyla in 1920 in the town of Wadowice, Poland to a former

army officer and a school-teacher.

During the Nazi occupation of Poland, Wojtyla studied poetry, philosophy and theology in secret, hoping to one day become a priest.

His ordination took place in 1946, the same time the Iron Curtain fell across Eastern Europe and communism became the main government through the influence of the Soviet Union.

After climbing the hierarchy of the church, Wojtyla was elected to the highest position of Catholicism in 1978 following the short term of Pope John Paul I.

Taking his predecessor's name in his honor, the 58-year-old cardinal became one of the youngest church rulers and both the first Slavic pope in history and first non-Italian pope in over 400 years.

Also considered the most traveled pontiff ever, John Paul II is remembered for his trips to communist-ruled countries during the Cold War. These trips are credited with helping to bring about the fall of the Iron Curtain.

"Fifty percent of the collapse of communism is his doing," Lech Walesa, founder of the Polish Solidarity Movement that toppled communism between 1989 and 90, told the World Press Friday.

An assassination attempt in 1981 by a Turkish radical was at first



A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS: The world mourns Pope John Paul II's death and awaits any news of his successor.

COURTESY PHOTO

said to be done on orders from the Kremlin, but these accusations have not been proven. The Pope forgave the assassin after his recovery.

Despite taking such liberal actions as issuing 16th-century astronomer Galileo Galilei an official church apology in 1992 and attending a Jewish service in Israel (the only

pope to have ever done so), John Paul II was also decidedly conservative about issues like homosexuality and abortion, which he considered to be grave sins. He also stood fast in his refusal to ordain women as priests or abolish celibacy.

"In some areas he was very forward-minded. In others, however, he was

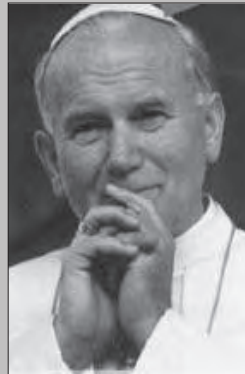
an extremely traditionalist pope," said Giovanni Ferro, editor of the Italian Catholic magazine *Jesus* in a CNN interview. "He maintained all sorts of opposing currents in the church, with the result that his successor will probably be faced with a great crisis of direction."

Cardinals from all over the world will convene in

Rome within the next few days to hold a period of mourning.

They will then gather to elect a successor following stringent rules last updated by John Paul II himself.

A mass attended by world dignitaries was held April 3. The Pope's burial will take place after 15 days of mourning.



Pope *John Paul II* 1920 - 2005

Throughout his pontificate, Pope John Paul II broke barriers and set many records. His 1978 election as the 246th pope was seen as a surprise victory after he became the first Slavic church leader in history and the first non-Italian pope in 455 years. Throughout his reign, The pope made 170 visits to 115 different countries. He beatified and canonized over 1,300 saints, the most for a single pope. As the cardinals meet to elect a successor, experts agree he will have big shoes to fill.

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FORE! The FIU women's golf finished in a tie for sixth place in the 2005 Baylor-Tapatío Spring Shootout. Freshman Angela Ricaurte (above) finished tied for 52nd with a total score of 246. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

Lineup and defense make Marlins a threat

GONZALEZ, from page 12

Bonds will be out until possibly mid-season.

But just like we disregard the fact that Randy Johnson gave up six runs to a Triple-A team, we should overlook the Marlin's sub-par record.

Now let's get into what's really important.

In 2003, when the Marlins won their second World Series, they were 17th in the league in hitting and 25th in pitching. How'd they win? Defense!

The Marlins have had one of the best defenses in the majors for years now. Shortstop Alex Gonzalez has one of the surest hands in the game, and Mike Lowell is consistently solid at third base. Luis Castillo and Juan Pierre seem to be able to get to any ball hit, and few people know that Juan Encarnacion didn't commit a single error in 2003.

If you have watched the Marlins for the last three years, you would know there is only one piece missing in the puzzle: a left-handed power hitter.

Well, this is no longer the case, because Carlos Delgado will be mending first base for a long time to come.

We all know that Delgado will belt his usual 30 homeruns in the clean up spot, but just think of what he will do for third batter Miguel Cabrera.

Pitchers will be forced to pitch to him out of fear of putting runners on for Delgado. Expect Cabrera to have a career year.

The Marlins lineup is intimidating from top to bottom. Our one and two hitters, Pierre and Castillo, are the fastest and arguably the most productive in the game. Even our eighth batter, Gonzalez, can hit his 20 homeruns when it's all said and done.

We all know that pitching is a key in winning a title. So even with the loss of Cy Young Award candidate Carl Pavano, the Marlins' pitching rotation is solid from one through five.

With promising young pitchers Josh Beckett, A.J. Burnett and Dontrelle Willis rounded out by veterans Al Leiter and Ismael Valdez, nobody is going to want to face these guys on any given night.

Our bullpen is arguably the best it has ever been. Thanks to Antonio Alfonseca, Todd Jones, Guillermo Mota and Tim Lincecum, we have four pitchers that can potentially be closers. Add them to veteran long relievers Matt Perisho and Jim Mecir, and the bullpen seems to pose no problems.

I believe every aspect of this Marlins team is perfect: Our lineup has a deadly combination of speed and power. Our defense is still one of the best in the game, and our pitching can hold up against any team in the National League.

Still the desperate Braves are the favorites to win their respective division. But that's OK; we sort of like it that way. We are the true underdogs of Major League Baseball, and because of the overemphasis on Spring Training. This image will probably never change.

Marlins still have many question marks

OREKHOV, from page 12

Beckett has a continuous blister problem that has put him on the injured list every year he's been in the majors. He has never pitched 30 games in a season, which is the season average for major league pitchers – and his career high in wins in a season is nine, when he went 9-8 and 9-9 in 2003 and 2004, respectively.

As for Burnett, his story is nearly identical. In five-plus seasons with the Marlins, Burnett only started 99 games, a lousy average of about 18 games per season.

Burnett is a sub .500 pitcher (37-38) for his career. He recorded only 12 wins in 2002 – his career high in a season. He missed nearly the entire 2003 campaign due to an elbow injury, which he says still feels sore occasionally.

If those are not big enough concerns, how about the fact that the highly profiled addition of Leiter is not actually as glamorous as it seems when it's broken down into numbers? Leiter is old and he's on his way out. He never reached the seventh inning in a game, averaged just over five innings per start and only won 10 games for the Mets last season.

Also, the rookie sensation that took Miami by storm in 2003 has just as many uncertainties as the rest. Dontrelle Willis might have hit a wall last season, and it will be interesting to see if he's able to get out of the sophomore slump.

After having a great first season, which earned him the Rookie of the

Year honors, nothing is guaranteed, as he finished below .500 with a 10-11 record in 2004.

Pitching is the key element of a winning formula in baseball, and with all the unanswered questions facing the Marlins' current pitching staff, it is way too early to start ordering the bubbly for the post-season celebrations.

Now, despite all the changes, improvements and acquisitions the Marlins made, the team currently holds the worst spring training record (9-19) in the majors.

Many fans will say that Spring Training is only practice, that the team's Spring Training record doesn't matter, that the Marlins will improve their play come the regular season, and that there is nothing to worry about.

Well, hopefully those optimistic fans – who are surely overwhelmed by the team's recent spending spree and the team's pre-season playoff hopes – are correct.

It is not practice that makes perfect, but rather perfect practice that makes perfect. And the Marlins are lacking that, as they have not shown anything to be optimistic about this Spring.

Also remember, nothing is guaranteed, and no matter how good a team looks on paper, games must still be played to decide the champion.

Money, hype and potential become useless terms when it comes to championships. The New York Yankees proved that for the past four years.

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Sprinter hopes to go professional after FIU

BROOKS, from page 12

sided. They say one thing at a certain time and then, at another time, they say something else.

Q: What is Manchester, Jamaica like?

Manchester is on the hill. It's cool, nice climate. Everyone wants to go to Manchester. It's not as good as Ocho Rios, because that's where all the tourists go. [But] there's a lot of entertainment and the crime is nothing like in Kingston.

Q: What are your thoughts on the steroids scandal that has been a black cloud over the sport of Track & Field for many years?

I don't think we should be taking steroids and [other performance enhancers]. You're not gonna feel the side effects now, but you'll feel them later on. I don't think [track & field athletes] should be going that way. You can perform much better without taking steroids. All you have to do is train hard and eat right.

Q: You are offered a completely legal magical pill that shaves one second off your average time, but it also shaves five years off your life. Would you take it?

No, I wouldn't take it. I'm cutting my lifespan [for something I can get] if I get the right program and train really hard.

I don't have to take a pill to do that. I don't care if it does it in an instant. Give me the hard training and I'll do it to cut the time off.

Q: You are offered \$10 million in exchange for ability to run as fast as you do. Would you accept the offer?

It's not worth it. This is my life you're talking about. You can get that money other ways, because if you win a Euro-

pean meet, you can make a lot of money. So those \$10 million will be nothing when you get older.

Q: What are your plans with Track & Field after FIU?

Hopefully, I'll go professional in the 100-meter and 200-meter [outdoor] events. I'll still do indoor events, but the outdoor events are where you're recognized more.



RUN THAT TRACK: Brooks is hoping to shave milliseconds off her time in order to pursue a pro career after graduation. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

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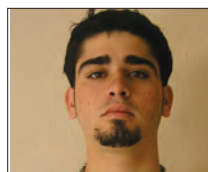
GOOD TIMES: Marlins hope to relive the success of their 2003 season. COURTESY PHOTO



DOWN TIMES: The Marlin's Spring performance shows signs of trouble. COURTESY PHOTO

Will Marlins overcome Spring slump?

YES



By **ALDEN GONZALEZ**
Staff Writer

Let's get one thing out of the way: Spring Training is completely insignificant. Analyzing a team based on how well it does with a split squad and half of its minor league system is completely ridiculous.

It seems as if writers are running out of ways to bring down the Marlins every time they have a chance at making a run.

If we were to really take spring

training seriously, then we would take into account that Gabe Gross (who?!), reserve outfielder for the Toronto Blue Jays, has held eight homeruns in just 24 games.

If he keeps this pace into the regular season, he will finish off the year with 55 homeruns. That would be more than Sammy Sosa, Adrian Beltre, Troy Glaus, Manny Ramirez and everybody else. There he is ladies and gentleman - Gabe Gross. MVP, MVP!

The only other thing that needs to be taken into account from Spring Training is injuries.

We now know that the Chicago Cubs starting rotation will not be the best in the National League with Kerry Wood and Mark Prior out.

We are almost sure that the Giants will not win the NL West since Barry

See **GONZALEZ**, page 10

NO



By **NIKOLAY OREKHOV**
Staff Writer

So the Marlins acquired the biggest free-agent name in franchise history with Carlos Delgado, picked up veteran Al Leiter and revamped their entire bullpen for another potential playoff

run in 2005. However, anyone who has any sense about sports, and baseball specifically, knows that nothing is guaranteed.

It is true that, on paper, the Marlins are stacked with potentially the best and

most versatile offensive lineup in the National League.

From top to bottom, they are well balanced with speed and power. And the addition of Delgado really gives them the left-handed power-hitter the team sorely needs to plug in between Miguel Cabrera and Mike Lowell.

Now with that in mind, there are still plenty of concerns that need to be addressed.

The team's starting pitching may seem solid and potentially overpowering on paper, but they will be manager Jack McKeon's biggest concern this season.

I mean, let's face it - Josh Beckett and A.J. Burnett have arguably the best stuff of all pitchers in baseball when they're healthy. And staying healthy has been a major problem for both of them throughout their careers.

See **OREKHOV**, page 10

Track star adapts to new country and lifestyle

By **XAVIER VILLARMARZO**
Sports Editor

When you think of sprinter Sheri-Ann Brooks, the first thing you'll think of is her speed, velocity and endurance.

In the NCAA Indoor Track & Field Championships March 12, Brooks earned All-America honors for the first time in her career, after placing seventh in the finals of the women's 60-meter dash with a time of 7.32 seconds - just .11 seconds off the FIU school record.

But despite her prowess on the track, this Manchester, Jamaica native misses her home-cooked meals and would never take a shortcut to reach the top of her game.

Q: You compete in both the indoor 60-meter dash and the outdoor 100-meters. For you, what is the biggest difference between them?

For me, I'm tall, so there's a disadvantage in the 60, because in the 100-meter, you have more ground to cover. If you make a mistake in the 60, that's it. You cannot cover any ground after.

Q: How does it feel to have been awarded All-America honors for your performance in the NCAA indoor track championships?

It felt good, but it was not what I expected. In the 60-meter, on my third step I stumbled. I was supposed to be in the top three but



FLASH: Brooks hopes for a top three finish in the NCAA Outdoor Championships. GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

I ended up in seventh. So I was upset.

Q: Would you rather win a race than receive

All America Honors?

Not really, but it would be better if you win and be an All American than to

come in seventh and be an All American. That's the biggest difference.

Q: What is the biggest difference with the way Track and Field is handled in the U.S. compared to the way it is in Jamaica?

We didn't have these facilities in Jamaica. To me, the training in Jamaica is better. I did more stuff based on my needs but here, the program is general. In Jamaica, we think about Track & Field in a variety of ways. We don't just think about training. We think about it nutrition-wise, training [and] making sure you get your rest and all that stuff. They don't just think about training, you have to do

your work,' all that and so forth.

Q: What is the biggest difference between Miami and your hometown of Manchester, Jamaica?

I think it's more fun [in Jamaica], probably, because all my family is there. But here, you have to meet new people or just try to fit in. In Jamaica you have your family and friends so everything is normal. Back home I'm used to my real rice and chicken. [Also], people's approach to things here is much different. In Jamaica people are straight up with you and [they] say what they have to say. Here, people tend to be two-

See **BROOKS**, page 11