



GAME OVER: The Portis Davis Game Room located in the Graham Center, has not opened this spring and has left students with limited options for campus entertainment. The now empty Game Room has been entirely shut down (above) and the pool tables are covered with plastic sheets (right).
LUIS NIN/THE BEACON



ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

Game Room closure angers students

By **CRISTELA GUERRA**
Staff Writer

FIU students, particularly commuters, used to have a place to go after an extremely long day of school. Many, however, don't notice the little corner in the back of the Graham Center as they rush past it to go into Gracie's Grill.

Because several offices in the building moved, the former Porter Davis Game Room has been closed since the summer of 2004. It is now spring 2005 and various students are speaking out about the fact that the school has not gave them back their hang-out.

"This was a place for many students to enjoy the different games and other activities the game room had to offer. The pool club [met there] as well as all the students who always play dominos. That was their place to go after class," said sophomore Gilbert Torres, a main activist for what he calls a "very important student cause."

Torres has given various petitions to friends and former game room workers to hold Graham Center building officials accountable for not keeping their promise in completing the new GC area.

"We have at least five to six hundred signatures, but our goal is to reach 2,000 signatures and then bring [them] to Student Government Association, so they can help us take it to [the personnel in charge of reopening Game Room]," Torres said.

However, according to the GC staff, the ends justify the means. Though the construction progress has been slow, the Graham Center Atrium, as well as many of the new offices, are up and running. However, like many buildings on campus, GC does not have enough space to temporarily place offices while they continue putting the finishing touches on the atrium.

"This building is being worked on in phases," said Ruth Hamilton, director of the Graham Center, "Recently we are just now finishing the atrium, and now the other challenge we have is the old third floor [Panther Suite], which needs to meet the fire safety regulations and have sprinklers installed ... We cannot move to another building. Now we need to relocate the third floor offices to the game room, so they can finish the entire sprinkler system."

If students would like to see what the game room used to look like, the Portis Davis Game Room website is still a part of the Graham Center website.

Many are still dissatisfied with the "replacement" game room currently set up next to Gracie's.

"A lot of people were really upset the game room shut down, especially when after six to seven months, dominoes gets pretty boring [outside the Game Room]. I like to play pool. It also is hard for people trying to watch the televi-

See **GAME ROOM**, page 2

Health and Wellness Center promotes AIDS awareness

By **ANA RIBIERO**
Contributing Writer

Alison Gertz from New York City had her first sexual experience at age 16. Six summers later, right after her college graduation in Manhattan, she became mysteriously ill. Doctors performed every test except the one for HIV – until a month later, when all other disease possibilities were eliminated.

The HIV test brought a surprising revelation: Gertz, a white heterosexual woman from a well-off family, had AIDS. She had, indeed, contracted HIV during that first sexual encounter, a one-night stand six years before. However, the virus had been dormant in her system until the life-changing summer of 1988. Gertz dedicated her final years to promoting AIDS awareness among young Americans. She died in 1992. The health

“Elvira Velez, Student Health and Wellness Center

Most students do not perceive themselves at risk for being infected by the HIV virus.

professionals at FIU hope to educate students as well, in order to avoid cases like Gertz's.

"Most students do not perceive themselves at risk for being infected by the HIV virus," said Elvira Velez, the associate director for FIU's Student Health and Wellness Center. "Part of it is because they see [the AIDS patient] as someone outside their social milieu ... They see [them] as people who may be in the streets, poor people who are drinking and boozing all the time ... [or as] gays, lesbians, and people from other countries ... It just takes one encounter, the right time, the right conditions, and

you could be infected."

The financial support for the Health and Wellness Center comes from the \$54 health fee added to each student's tuition every semester. This ensures students won't need to pay for their visits to the center. Also, at reduced prices, they have access to various types of medication, tests and procedures. For example, a female student only has to pay \$19 for a Pap Smear, a gynecological procedure at the clinic for detecting the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), a leading cause of cervical cancer.

Informing students about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, as

well as about their rights and benefits in the healthcare system, is an important concern for Velez and the nurses she oversees at the Health and Wellness Center. Since the law protects people over 18-years-old from having their health information divulged to anybody, even their parents, the clinic is a safe place for students to talk about any health-related problems.

According to Velez, she and her staff have a non-judgmental attitude and will do their best to "explore what [students] can work through," referring them to specialists if needed.

The Health and Wellness Center also offers prescriptions and works closely with both the psychological counseling and victim advocacy centers. In fact, many students go to the Health

See **AIDS**, page 3

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS**MONDAY • FEBRUARY 14**

Men's Basketball hosts Arkansas State: 7:30 p.m., Pharmed Arena

Women's Basketball vs Arkansas-Little Rock: 8 p.m., Little Rock, AR

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 17

Softball team at San Diego State Tournament: All day, San Diego, CA.

Swimming and Diving Sun Belt Conference Championship: 9 a.m., Little Rock, AR.

FIU Theatre presents Marisol: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 18

Tennis Team vs. University of Miami: 1 p.m. Coral Gables, FL.

Baseball team hosts La Salle: 7 p.m., UP baseball field

Softball team at San Diego State Tournament: All day, San Diego, CA.

Swimming and Diving Sun Belt Conference Championship: 9 a.m., Little Rock, AR.

FIU Theatre presents Marisol: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 10

Tennis team hosts Steston: 12 p.m., University Park tennis courts

Woman's Basketball hosts South Alabama: 7 p.m., Pharmed Arena

Men's Basketball vs. South Alabama: 8:05 p.m., Mobile, AL.

Softball team at San Diego State Tournament: All day, San Diego, CA.

Swimming and Diving Sun Belt Conference Championship: 9 a.m., Little Rock, AR.

FIU Theatre presents Marisol: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center

Commuter students face another semester without game room

GAME, from page 1

sion, if the video games are being used and even worse for people trying to study," said sophomore Pedro Cortez, who frequents the game area.

Torres is also asking for help from various honors councils and SGA to distribute the petition and then return it to the Honor's Council secretary, sophomore Alejandra Serna, a former game room regular.

"It was kind of a watering hole for our little group as well as various other cliques, so when it closed, everyone kind of dispersed, and it makes it even more difficult to see one another," said Alerna.

SGA president George Rosario also backs Torres's efforts to bring the students back their room.

"We support their endeavors, and our role is to be that voice that allows the link between the students and the administrators," said Rosario.

Commuter students were especially affected by this change. This was an area for all students, but particularly for those who did not want to drive all the way back home just to come back to school.

"Not everyone is in a fraternity or sorority or certain other organizations on campus and yet, these were the ones participating in tournaments of chess, pool and ping pong ... For some this was the only de-stressing moment they had to relax and just hang out. It almost feels like we've truly now become a commuter school without this community," said Lisa

Alvarez, the former game room coordinator.

The game room also participated in the ACUI regional tournaments. This organization is known for the activities they offer schools who are active members. In past years, FIU has received first place in many of their game room competitions such as chess, pool and table tennis.

According to Hamilton, there hope that the game room will reopen.

"We envision [the] game room being open for the fall term, and hopefully then, our next project will be looking at the needs of the students regarding improvement on their indoor recreation to bring it up to par with other universities," she said.



EMPTY GAME ROOM: All that is left inside the Graham Center's Portis Davis Game Room are abandoned pool tables and cardboard boxes. **LUIS NIN/THE BEACON**

WEATHER**MONDAY**

Hi/Low
76°F/62°F
mostly sunny

TUESDAY

Hi/Low
77°F/62°F
sunny

WEDNESDAY

Hi/Low
76°F/60°F
mostly sunny

THURSDAY

Hi/Low
76°F/61°F
sunny

FRIDAY

Hi/Low
75°F/61°F
mostly sunny

SATURDAY

Hi/Low
75°F/62°F
mostly sunny

SUNDAY

Hi/Low
75°F/61°F
mostly sunny

Courtesy of www.weather.com

CORRECTIONS

In the "Halting of program results in protest" story, the names should have read: Lemmietta McNeilly and Eliane Ramos.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.



VAGINA MONOLOGUES: The FIU Women's Center presentation of Eve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues" opened on Feb. 11 at the Green Library. The benefit performance gave the testimonial of young women and their violent struggles. All proceeds from the events will be donated to centers in our community working to end violence against women. **ISIDRO PENTZKE/THE BEACON**

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RE DISCOVERED

AFRICAN-AMERICAN LUNCHEON HONORS PAST HEROES

By **CHESTER ROBARDS**
Contributing Writer

Florida International University was presented with a new treat on Feb. 9 when the African New World Studies Department along with the Black Student Association held FIU's first African American History Month Luncheon entitled "Discovering Past Heroes." The affair took place at the Wolf University Centre Ballroom at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

The luncheon kicked off with a few welcoming words from the vice provost of BBC, Dr. Raul Moncarz.

Then performing arts student Larissa Lockhart sang the Black National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing".

Following the anthem, Dr. Carol Boyce Davies, Director of African New World Studies program, promptly took the microphone and thanked the individuals and departments that came together to make the luncheon possible.

She then introduced the afternoon's first guest speaker, Ed Williams, a host and announcer on the public television network WPBT. Williams surprised the guests with a sneak preview of a new WPBT show entitled "Slavery and the Making of America."

The short clip, narrated by Morgan Freeman, captivated the luncheon audience with a look at post-Civil War reconstruction.

Williams invited everyone to watch the program's debut later that night and assured them that it would be "a riveting time in television."

After that, guests adjusted their seating positions and leaned forward to fully absorb the Afro-Brazilian dance performance of the BrazDance Theatre, coordinated by Augusto Soledad. The performers, Mama De Victory (percussion) and Willy Brown (dancer), put on a heart-pounding show with a world class drum beat. Soledad's dance style, which he describes as Afro Fusion, is the newest addition to FIU's curriculum. "Afro dance has been hidden in modern dance," said Soledad.

He also expressed his desire to help his students develop their creativity.

"I hope to bring forth the strong presence of African culture in dance, with an eye for freedom to create," he said.

As guests sat down to lunch, acclaimed actor Larry Robinson gave a short performance. It was supposed to be the grand finale, but technical



BLACK HISTORY: Actor Larry Robinson portayed George Washington Carver and Louis Armstrong at the African American History Month Luncheon. COURTESY PHOTO

problems (mostly from malfunctioning audio equipment) plagued it from the start. Nevertheless, Robinson went on with the show.

Robinson used the performance to educate his audience about various African American heroes by becoming each hero on stage.

"About 80 persons out of an expected 100 attended the luncheon,"

said program coordinator Rosa Henriquez. "The departments were very responsive to our invitations."

The African New World Studies program is one of the only of its kind in Florida and is also one of the only to offer a Master's degree.

"I invite students to take advantage of African New World Studies," said Davies.

Free condoms and HIV testing stir up AIDS awareness

AIDS, from page 1

and Wellness Center first when they feel depressed or have been sexually assaulted.

In Velez's opinion, a lot has changed since the 1980s.

"Students are much more likely to use barrier protection [now] than they were [then]," she said. "Students wouldn't come near a condom. We had to teach them how to have some comfort level with condoms, how to handle them, to play

with them, because that's part of it."

Velez said that in the 1980s, when the Health and Wellness Center was still restricted to a little room in the Wolfe University Center at the Biscayne Bay Campus, women would come in and refuse to talk about their sexuality partners, or "what was in their genitals." A patient's main concern was pregnancy.

The Student Health and Wellness Center periodically organizes events around the university to

Elvira Velez, Student Health and Wellness

Students wouldn't come near a condom. We had to teach them how to have some comfort level with condoms.

address the issue of AIDS and other STDs.

This week is their Sexual Responsibility Week at BBC. The kick-off was Feb. 10, when Wellness Center assistants Melissa Michel and Christine Anderson gave away 50 free "sexual health kits" in front of and inside the library. The package

consisted of a condom, instructions on how to use it and 10 tips on how to have "smart sex."

Casey Hill Graver, the Wellness Team Leader at the center said that the purpose of the event is to promote awareness about safe sex.

"We want to let students know that it's okay

to have sex as long as they do it in a healthy way. We want to make sex less taboo," said Graver.

On Feb. 14 there will be an activity named "Sexual Health Jeopardy," from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Panther Square. Winners will receive prizes with a Valentine's Day theme.

Meanwhile, free condoms continue to be given out, along with information on healthy sex and relationships. Sexual Responsibility Week ends Feb. 16.

The Student Health

and Wellness Center offers free male and female condoms year-round, and free HIV-testing on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It even offers free 10-minute massages to relieve stress.

Besides Sexual Responsibility Week, the center will host its annual exposé, with more special activities and resources, March 15 and 16.

For more information on the events, including this week's, students can go to www.fiu.edu/~wellness.

THIS WEEK AT BBC

MONDAY • FEBRUARY 14

International Student & Scholar Services presents a Valentine's Day Discussion: 12 p.m., Panther Square, WUC
Valentine's Day baking competition: 12 p.m., Panther Square
SPC Belly Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 155

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 15

Health and Wellness Center presents HIV testing: 10 a.m.
International Student & Scholar Services presents an Immigration Attorney Session: 3:30 p.m., WUC 363
SPC Salsa Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 157
Biscayne Bay Society Film Series: 7 p.m., WUC, Mary Ann Wolfe Theater

WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 16

Student Government Council Meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 159
Free Massage: 11 a.m., Panther Square

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 17

SPC Ballroom Dancing Class: 6 p.m., WUC 159
African New World Studies program presents a performance by Toni Thompson: 6 p.m., WUC, Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre
Catholic Student Association presents weekly Mass: 12:30 p.m., WUC 157

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 18

SOC general meeting: 4 p.m., WUC 159
School of Hospitality & Tourism Management presents: Friday Luncheons, 11:45 a.m., HM 129

SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 19

Iglesia Mision Carismatica Assembly/Service: 5 p.m., WUC Ballroom



GRAPHIC DESIGNERS WANTED

Experience with Adobe InDesign is preferable, but we will accept and train interested applicants who have thorough experience with Adobe Page Maker. Contact C. Joel Marino at Beaconrecruit@yahoo.com or stop by GC 210 or WUC 124 for an application.

OPINION

Alejandra Diaz Editor In Chief • John Lovell Managing Editor • Leoncio Alvarez Opinion Editor

SURVIVING A LOVELESS

By **DARA BRAMSON**
Staff Writer

Going into hibernation for the entire month of February is certainly enticing.

Some may ask, “Why do you desire to spend the month acting like some kind of furry animal?” There are only two words to say to these people: SHUT UP. You will never understand. To put it simply, if you have a valentine, I hate you.

Had I signed up for a dating service two weeks ago, I would never have written this indignant article.

With some effort, it probably would not be too grueling to score myself a valentine that resembles a blow-up doll, except with less personality. Alas, it seems that may be my only option at this point.

As I reminisce about those small Valentine’s Day cards on which people would scribble their names and shove in their friends’ faces, I wish I was back in middle school. Life was simple back then. Everyone was in their awkward stage: pimples, braces, baby fat, terrifying 90s attire; in other words: me – up until last Thursday.

The only girl that had a valentine was the “hot girl.” She had a miraculously perfect complexion and somehow

found clothes that flaunted her lean figure, rather than accentuating all the wrong places, like the clothes the rest of us wore. Certainly all the inferior girls had some jealousy toward her; yet it was more of an infatuation with her flawlessness.

As we got older, we visited the dermatologist more often and the orthodontist less. Evidently, this worked wonders for most girls. But it only wasted oodles of my parents’ money after we all realized that there was no hope for me. So now, there are numerous “hot girls.”

Luckily, I have grown out of my childish infatuation and graduated into something more mature ... namely, jealousy. Of course, my life would solely revolve around flaunting myself if I had their figure. Lose the tube-tops and mini-skirts – bring on the Brazilian bikinis!

Until the day I can bounce a penny off my abs, and my ass somehow gains a spherical curvature, I will complain endlessly. Some part of me has always hoped that one year the cute boys would get bored of the pretty girls and take a break, if only once, for the homely ones. It still has not happened.

This brings up an eternally perplexing question: would

you rather fool around with a homely person who knows what they are doing or a hot person who just lies there?

While you ponder that, I have a present for you. In honor of all of the other valentine-less college students, I’ve compiled a Valentine’s Day survival guide for all of us:

- Make sure you look hot. In case you run into an ex or your crush magically shows up on your doorstep, you do not want to look like a pre-rehab Robert Downey, Jr.

- Visit a Hallmark store and rope off the card area. Threaten to light yourself on fire if someone buys a card without giving you one too.

- Visit a homeless shelter. Make sure you are dressed to impress and bring pictures of your summer home in the Bahamas. Bring along some Cisco to get them in the mood.

- Compile a list of phone numbers of every crush who ever turned you down. Spend at least two hours prank calling them and making the “most annoying sound in the world” according to Lloyd (Jim Carrey) in the movie “Dumb and Dumber.”



LUIS NIN / THE BEACON

- Do not associate with anyone in your life who has as a significant other or hot hookup. If you must, be equipped with earplugs, something sharp and a place to hide the body.

With any luck, these guidelines will lead you in the direc-

tion of payback for not having a valentine. However, please do not ignore the fact that there are other crucial things to focus on during Valentine’s Day this year – like snagging the hottest homeless person and making him or her swear to be your valentine before I do.



by **Leoncio Alvarez**
and **Alicia Bustamante**

Write to us at [beaconopinion@yahoo.com!](mailto:beaconopinion@yahoo.com)
We kinda know what we’re doing.

Dear **Leoncio and Alicia,**

Lately, I’ve been having trouble macking it to the ladies. Can you please give me some pointers so that I can pick up some chicks?

What colognes should I wear? Should I start going to the gym? Do the ladies want a tough guy or a sensitive guy? Please help.

Sincerely,
Hunting in Hialeah

Leoncio says:

Macking it to the ladies seems to be a problem that most guys have lately. Girls are much pickier now-a-days, but it’s a problem that can be fixed.

It never hurt anyone to go to the gym. It’s something that you would benefit from both physically and mentally, and who knows, you just might snag your lady love. But remember, be yourself, and don’t change just to satisfy a woman’s taste.

Alicia says:

I’ll be frank with you sir; we ladies are a tricky bunch.

We want sensitivity and strength, playfulness and seriousness, and we want to be appreciated.

Mostly, though, we want honesty.

As for colognes, the only thing I ask is that you not bathe in it. No one wants to be hit in the face with a malodorous sledgehammer.

Past war efforts share similarities with recent war on Iraq problems

By **ANDRES NATALINO**
Contributing Writer

During last October's vice-presidential debate, moderator Gwen Ifill asked Vice President Dick Cheney what the Bush administration's specific plans were for dealing with the then-growing insurgency in Iraq.

The following is an edited transcript of Cheney's response: "Twenty years ago we had a similar situation in El Salvador.

We had a guerrilla insurgency that controlled roughly a third of the country, 75,000 people dead and we [still] held free elections. I was there as an observer on behalf of the Congress.

The human drive for freedom, the determination of these people to vote, was unbelievable ... Today El Salvador is a whale of a lot better because we held free elections ... the lessons we learned will apply in Afghanistan, and it will apply as well in Iraq."

I was a bit confused. I vaguely knew the sad history of El Salvador but needed to learn more about the subject, so I could understand what the lessons were that Dick Cheney gloated about in front of cameras during the vice presidential debate.

Over 70,000 civilians were slaughtered in El Salvador by CIA-trained Salvadorian government troops during the 1980s. Cheney's arrogant, prophetic words gave the developing world a rare glimpse into their own future of economic destruction and subjugation.

The major lesson that the U.S. government learned from dealing with Central America in the 1980s is that it would be able to defeat guerilla movements as long as it supported the local government power structure, regardless of the human right abuses it committed.

This is referred to internally as "the good neighbor policy," but I like to call it benevolent negligence.

“

Over 70,000 civilians were slaughtered in El Salvador by CIA-trained Salvadorian government troops during the 1980s.

The CIA should talk to the people who lived through these "successful" CIA policy lessons. In El Salvador alone, U.S.-funded paramilitary forces quelled leftist peasant rebellions, killing about 70,000 people. Journalists, students, leftist sympathizers and the occasional U.S. citizen were massacred by CIA trained death squads (sound familiar?).

On Dec. 2, 1980 four nuns were killed by US-sponsored troops.

The people of El Salvador, burdened by poverty, remain unwilling relics of the Cold War. How could Cheney consider the U.S. involvement in El Salvador a success?

Another key lesson that the United States learned from dealing with the counter-insurgency of Central America is the importance of shielding the American public from the ugly realities of U.S.-funded secret wars through its use of public relations techniques.

Within the Reagan administration, this was referred to as "perception management." A key component of this technique is to focus on a defined enemy (the USSR during the 1980s and currently Iraq), so that the American people will give carte blanche to the government's military spending.

Having a defined "bad guy" builds support for the government, while the people of the third world tremble in fear.

If the Bush administration tries to recycle the counterinsurgency policies that the Reagan administration used in Central America and apply them in Iraq, Iraq will explode into civil war.

The Central American regimes of the 1980s were similar to America in culture, language and religion; the people of Iraq are not.

Iraq also has a long, proud history of repelling foreign invading armies, the last army being the British one in the 1920s.

According to the January issue of *Newsweek*, the Bush administration is actively seeking to employ the "Salvador Option." According to the article, one Pentagon proposal would send Special Forces teams to advise, support and possibly train Iraqi squads, most likely hand-picked Kurdish Perhmerga fighters and Shiite militiamen, to target Sunni insurgents and their sympathizers, even across the border in Syria.

By employing the Salvador Option in Iraq, the U.S. military would increase the pressure on the Iraqi people to submit to democracy, especially in Sunni Muslim areas where resistance to the U.S. occupation has been the strongest.

In effect, the Bush administration would assign non-Sunni Muslims the job of leading the "death squad" campaign in Iraq against the Sunnis. So in the name of defending the U.S. against Iraq's terrorists, the CIA will train our own brand of Iraqi terrorists.

If the Bush administration is allowed to sponsor inter-Iraqi terrorism, a civil war will ultimately break out and the American people will end up with even more of its sons and daughters coming home in body bags.

One macabre lesson that the American people can learn from El Salvador is that the body dumps unearthed from El Mozote are not that much different from the mass graves blamed on Saddam Hussein in Iraq, except that they represent the tip of the spear of American foreign policy, and they received much less time in the mainstream media.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think about the closing of FIU's Speech and Language Pathology program?

- The closing should not happen. It is a significant program that FIU needs.
- It should not be closed entirely.
- I feel indifferent to the closing. If it doesn't affect me, I don't care.
- I feel the closing is appropriate. What good did the program serve?
- We had a Speech and Language Pathology program?

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER

Lassie the bridesmaid: Sonia Wilde, a soon-to-be wife living in Stockport, England, has chosen her collie, Lucy Brown, as her bridesmaid. The groom's pet parakeet has happily accepted the position of best man.

LOSER

Sleepless children: For \$7, parents can now call a storybook hotline that has different recordings of tales at the touch of a button. For only \$2 more, parents can now also sell their childrens' souls to Satan over the telephone.

QUOTEABLES

"The day my parents accepted I was an actor, was the day I told them, 'I get insurance.'"

– **Jennifer Garner**, actress, during her acceptance speech for a SAG award for her role in "Alias."

"'Whoa!' came from my favorite sport at the time, which was horseback riding. 'Whoa.'"

– **Henry Winkler**, actor, during a reunion special for the TV show "Happy Days," on how he came up with his trademark catchphrase.

"Well, ideally, Cary Grant reincarnated. He's the ultimate. Off the cuff, I can't think of anybody I'd be particularly thrilled with. The world of movie stars today is not what it was 50 years ago."

– **Donald Trump**, real-estate mogul, on whom he would ideally choose to play himself in an upcoming movie about his life.

"What is the name of the memory book you just got me? It's a book about memorizing. It's a memory book. And it's awesome."

– **Carmen Electra**, actress, to a male friend, when asked by the *New York Daily News* what book she was currently reading.

"To them I'm just a mom who drives them crazy. I've been in Playboy, sure, but I can still be lunch monitor at their school on Wednesdays. My kids couldn't care less."

– **Pamela Anderson**, actress, when asked on how she balances her social life with her family life.

I Love You! **[FIU]**
BY LUIS NIN

VALENTINE'S DAY
SPECIAL



SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off in GC 210 at the University Park campus, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beacon@fiu.edu. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. If brought in to an office, a legitimate ID may be accepted instead of a phone number. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 400 words.

valentine SCHMALENTINE

CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY YOUR LOVE? WAIT FOR THE SALES!

By **RAQUEL COOL**
Contributing Writer

Valentine's Day is a holiday that demands binging. You are either gobbling up its shrink-wrapped romance or projectile vomiting over all this sappy idiot-fest.

To both sides, I say: It does not have to be this way! This year I urge you to think outside of the heart-shaped box of chocolates and indulge in all things cheap.

I hereby designate Feb. 15 as Discount Valentine's Day – Schmalentine's Day, if you will. For those who aren't in the know about post-holiday discount frenzies, listen up. The day after major holidays, convenience stores, like Wal-Mart and Target, chop their prices by 50-75 percent. This means you can buy cheesy Hallmark paraphernalia at prices so low, they transcend logic. Such is the way of Shamlentine's day! (Speaking in rhymes is not required, but recommended.)

But say you aren't fully comfortable with straying from the

ordinary. Say you want to spend \$50 on roses. Why not try my romantic variation on this popular tradition? Skip the rose petal bath tub or bed sheets.

Surprise your beau with a soft path of rose petals that start at the front door and then trail up the stairs and down the hall to a candle-lit bathroom and a very naked you on the porcelain throne.

Oh yes, bathroom humor – probably the sweetest of Schmalentine's day treats. A variation of this is a similar rose petal path through your house that actually leads to your bedroom, granted *your whole family lives with you*. With a little Celine Dion in the mix, you will undoubtedly feel the love. And the sexual tension.

If that is not enough for you, perhaps hacking at a cake that bleeds will do the trick. That's right, a Bleeding Heart Cake. Chocolate that bleeds raspberry syrup! If you can say no to that, check your pulse, man.

Ask yourself: Does *my* heart pump raspberry goodness? Probably not. But if it does,

uh, *berry* good for you. And berry good for me for winning at puns.

The Bleeding Heart cake is basically two layers of heart-shaped chocolate cake with raspberry syrup trapped in the middle. Once the bottom layer of the cake has cooled, carve a dip on its surface deep enough to contain the desired amount of syrup. Before adding syrup, line the dip you carved with a cream cheese frosting, which will act as a sealant.

Chill the sealant for a few hours or until it has hardened. Pour the syrup into the dip and place the second cake on top. To finish it off, cover the entire cake with the cream cheese frosting.

On the big day, invite your friends over to exchange schmalentines. At this point, you all should have gone to Wal-Mart and picked up your very own children's style valentines, a-la second-grade.

Feast on discount lollipops and chocolates and your Bleeding Heart, but remember to thank me for such a totally awesome Schmalentine's Day.



GRAPHIC BY LUIS NIN/THE BEACON

VALENTINE RECIPE FOR THE CHEAPSKATE GOURMET

CHOCOLATE-MOCHA SWEETHEARTS

Total Time: 45 minutes
Makes 17 servings, about 2 hearts each

- 4 squares unsweetened baking chocolate
- 3/4 cup (1-1/2 sticks) butter or margarine
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup coffee, mocha flavor, or any other flavor
- 6 squares semi-sweet baking chocolate, melted



COURTESY PHOTO

PREHEAT oven to 350°F if using a 13x9-inch baking pan (or to 325°F if using a glass baking dish). Line pan with foil. Grease foil. Microwave unsweetened chocolate and butter in large microwaveable bowl on HIGH 2 min. or until butter is melted; stir until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in sugar. Add eggs and vanilla; mix well. Add flour and flavored instant coffee; stir until well blended. Spread into prepared pan.

BAKE 30 to 35 min. or until toothpick inserted in center comes out with fudgy crumbs. (Do not overbake.) Cool in pan.

CUT brownie into heart-shapes using a 1-1/2-inch cookie cutter. (Reserve scraps for snacking or another use.) Dip the top of each brownie heart into melted semi-sweet chocolate. Refrigerate until chocolate is set.

– www.kraft.com

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Revenge, the legal way

By **BETSY MARTINEZ**
Assistant Life! Editor

Author Alison James provides diva advise.

Push the Kleenex to the side, ladies. Pull out the luscious lip gloss the ex-boyfriend didn't let you wear and pick up her book, "I Used to Miss Him But My Aim Is Improving: Not Your Ordinary Breakup Survival Guide."

The uniquely titled guide offers a variety of tips to help you get even with your ex without risking arrest.

During my interview with James, she gave me a few tips on how to deal with an ex. These include: programming his number into a fax machine, tossing a few weed seeds on his front lawn or clipping the air conditioner wire that keeps his place icy-cool.

In chapters such as "Lose the Guy, Keep the Jewelry" and "Grieve-a-Like a Diva," James states that mistreated women can learn to channel their fury and self-pity into revenge and eventually, recovery. For example, the soon-to-be-married author recommends repaying any debts to your ex in "full shiny pennies."

When it comes to the dreaded here's-your-stuff-back exchange, James's advice is to forget about garage sales and hit the internet. With sites such as Ebay, you can ship an ex's favorite football jersey to a total stranger for a sweet profit.

In her chapter "Look Sexy, Feel Fabulous," James, who considers chocolate the perfect breakup food, provides a recipe for a low-calorie strawberry-banana smoothie.

While you're picking up the ingredients for the smoothie, drop by the store's deli section and bribe the person behind the counter to stash a long greasy hair in your ex's meatball sub.

James suggests having a fabulous "me" day to get the loser out of your head. Go the whole nine yards. Treat yourself to a new hairstyle, manicure, pedicure, full body massage and wax. When the ex catches a glimpse of the new you, he'll feel sorry he ever lost you.

After cutting up all of his pictures and getting rid of his belongings, it may take at least a month to put him completely behind you.

"Do everything you can to stay busy," said James during our interview. "Rearrange your room. Go out with people who don't know him. The busier you stay, the faster you'll forget him."

So what should a single diva do this Valentine's Day? "Have a little fun. Stick that ex's photo on a pink piñata at a party and give it a swing," wrote James in "I Used to Miss Him" "He'll never know."

As perverse as her advice may seem, it's just what a diva in distress needs. There aren't many books that reflect the feelings of this new genera-

tion of women.

James, who comes across as a witty, independent woman, not only offers self-help tips in her book. It has a subtle humor and empowers divas with its 'go-getter' attitude.

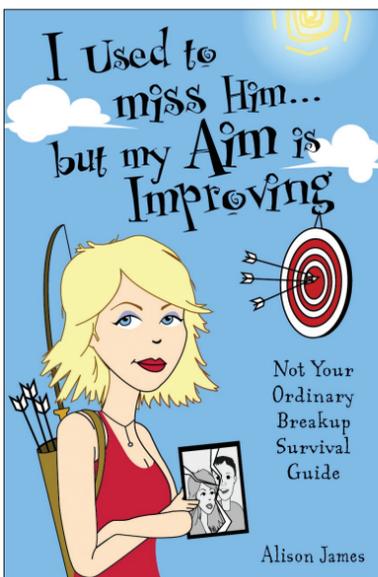
But James's most valuable advice to divas everywhere is: "Maintain your own life. No person you meet is going to provide you with everything you need in life. Do not let a guy become the center of your universe."

The thirty-year-old author is set to be married May 21 and is currently promoting her new book, "The 10 Women You'll Be Before You're 35," set for release in March.

Copies of "I Used to Miss Him But My Aim Is Improving: Not Your Ordinary Breakup Survival Guide" are available at the FIU bookstore.



JAMES



COURTESY PHOTO

New chance at V-day for Marine girlfriend

By **MAILYN MEDEROS**
Contributing Writer

Matthew Conway dreamed of becoming a U. S. Marine since childhood.

He enlisted in December 2003, three months after I became his girlfriend.

When Matt left to boot camp, I was depressed, not only because of his departure, but because my grandfather had recently died. My grandfather meant everything to me; when he died I felt lost and lonesome.

Matt helped me in the beginning but quickly had to leave. I was not going to see him for three months. Then, he would come back home on a 10-day leave and return to Marine combat training and to his military occupation school for four months.

I felt that Matt chose the worst time to join the Marine Corps, but I knew it was his dream. I supported him 100 percent, even though it depressed me. We'd been together for a year and a half, and we'd known each other for two years before we

There are times when I really want to see him and hear him, but can't, so I look through our pictures and feel better.

started dating. It is hard to have a boyfriend who comes and goes frequently, but in our hearts we are always together. There are times when I really want to see him and hear him, but can't, and so I look through our pictures and feel a bit better.

While Matt was away I found a boot camp schedule and a chat place for people whose loved ones are in the Marines. I checked the schedule daily to see what he was up to. I educated myself about the Marine Corps. I spent my time exercising, studying and working. I barely went out with my friends.

As soon as I got his mailing address I wrote him my first letter a week after he shipped off. I would write two or three times a week. In the letters, sometimes written on special stationary paper, I included poems, cards, pictures, Marine

Corps jokes and extra stamps and envelopes. I sprayed them with my perfume, thinking it would make him feel closer to me. He told me the smell of my perfume on the letters reminded him of hugging me and other moments we shared.

Matt said that he received letters at night on the day they arrived. He would get on his rack, go under his covers and carefully read the letters with a flashlight. He did not have any other time to read them and pretended to be sleeping. He was never caught. Usually, he wrote back to me after reading the letters, but sometimes could not, because he had to get some sleep. He said that receiving letters felt like "a piece of home."

I sent Matt a Valentine's Day card a few days before Valentine's Day, so it arrived on time. I included confetti

hearts and pictures of me sending him a kiss.

On Feb. 14, I was lonely and sad, but I knew that he was following his dream and that I would see him soon. I knew I had more years to celebrate Valentine's Day with him.

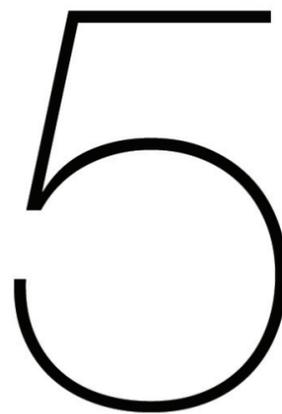
I stayed home that night and did homework. Matt did not know what day it was but knew Valentine's Day was coming up when he received my letter. He told me that he thought of the things he would have done if he were back home with me and how being alone on Valentine's Day made him miss me more.

My boyfriend has not told me his plans for this Valentine's Day, because he wants them to be a surprise, and I can't wait.

Later this month he will leave to jump school, and after he returns he will go to Iraq for seven months. He's happy to go, but laments leaving me again.

The Marine Girlfriend Hymn advises: "Tell him that you'll always love him and respect what he must do, when he's fighting for this nation to protect the red, white and blue..."

LIFE!



SOME FAVORITE THINGS
BY ALICIA BUSTAMANTE – OPINION
PAGE DESIGNER

1. RADIOHEAD

The haunting and complicated music of Thom Yorke and company has blown my mind for almost a decade. Yorke's fragile emotional state always brings a smile to my face. Favorite Album: *Kid A*

2. BREAKFAST FOOD

From bagels and coffee to pancakes and juice, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It is also the most awesome. Favorite restaurant: Roasters and Toasters.

3. TWISP AND CATSBY

This comic spin-off from the popular Penny Arcade website is the ultimate in absurdist humor. Favorite edition: "The Crocitillian."



TWISP AND CATSBY COURTESY PHOTO

4. YOUR MOM

Your mom – Yeah, I went there. What are you going to do about it? Favorite mom: Claire Huxtable.

5. EX-BOYFRIENDS

Whether you think fondly of them or hate their guts, they still mark an important part of one's life. I like to think of them as life mile-markers. Favorite ex: yet to be determined.

DID YOU KNOW?

The original copy of the Declaration of Independence is lost. The copy in Washington D.C. is what is referred to as a holograph. That is a term for a handmade copy of a document.

– www.kellys.com/know.html

Love hardships can take you by storm

By **GRETEL SARMIENTO**
Contributing Writer



Love can bring happiness and joy as it slowly transforms your life into a powerful storm that is both beautiful and disastrous.

Some people call it an illusion. Others see it as a curse. I think it is both. Love can bring happiness and joy as it slowly transforms your life into a powerful storm that is both beautiful and disastrous. Love has been the cause of many misfortunes throughout history, even war.

Why is it then, that we spend our lives trying to find a feeling that can bring us so much grief? As the music of The Beatles tells us, "All you need is love." Exactly. Not everything else that comes with it.

Love can be classified as a powerful storm or even a tornado ranging from F1, the feeblest condition, to F5, where life seems to be beyond your control and everything is just spinning in a vicious, uncontrollable cycle. Here is how it works.

F1

Weak constitution and no damage characterize the first stage of love. Curiosity and uncertainty reign, but there is nothing to fear as long as you remain calm and in control. You hope this time love is real and will not become an F5 storm like your last romantic episode.

You feel excited, but you must keep in mind the feeling might dissipate, and in the end, it might not be real. Major areas of your life are not yet affected; rather, you stay focused and seem to perform your daily activities with no difficulty. You tell yourself you will be cautious and not take big risks.

This stage of love can actually be very beneficial. It creates so much motivation and enthusiasm that you are able to make big positive changes in your life. In

addition to this, you might even become extremely sensitive to things like nature, music and family and see the world as a more beautiful place. If only it would stay like this forever.

F2

In the second phase of love, the feeling has grown and gained strength. It has become more stable and now promises a future. Your expectations increase and you begin to imagine a wedding, a beautiful home and kids.

Some light damage starts to occur, but you do not seem to notice. Love has started to invade different areas of your life and you start to adopt not only your partner's good qualities but his or her bad habits as well.

The unknown excites you, and now your goal is to find out more. Your principles and ideals begin to shake. By now you have decided to risk it all and accept everything because "Oh, it's nothing."

F3

The third phase reveals more than what you can handle. Love has conquered your body and mind. You seem unable to do your job or enjoy an afternoon, because all you think about is romance, and all you want to do is be with the person you love. You have forgotten to secure windows and doors, and when people criticize your behavior, you ignore them.

By now you have become a slave to passion and desire. Your goals and vision of the

future become obscure, and suddenly your judgment, which used to be definitive and precise, varies according to your partner's views.

Suddenly you cannot think or see for yourself. Instead, you see everything through the eyes of the other person. You begin to have moments of clarity in which you consider the possibility that love will indeed harm you if you do not have control. Your mind sends you messages: STOP! WARNING! CAUTION! But even when you see them you refuse to believe you are wrong.

F4

Once you reach stage four, you realize the chaos that is ruling your life. You finally become aware of the situation and understand that something needs to be done. Yet, you hope there might be a way to save the relationship.

At this point you have suffered severe damage. You cannot concentrate or perform any other activity if your partner is not involved. The roots of your foundation are being destroyed, and you feel lost in the middle of the storm. There may be frequent strong arguments, many stupid fights and some broken windows and glass.

You refuse to abandon the feeling that once made you feel so happy. Love indeed makes us blind.

F5

It is too late if you have reached the fifth phase. Now you are in the center of the storm, and there is

no escape. You have lost all sense of time, identity and space. You are completely dependent on your partner, and happiness only seems to be possible with him or her. It is time to face the consequences of your irresponsibility.

Love is now your worst nightmare. Your partner's every action or gesture irritates you. You have grown

selfish, irrational and paranoid. Heated arguments over an unanswered phone call or a lunch with friends are now daily events. The storm is now a fact, and all you can do is wait. Days pass. Weeks pass. Months pass.

Suddenly the storm is gone and has left behind ruins and a world of regret. Now you contemplate the devastating damage. You are left with nothing but a great sense of emptiness and isolation. You can see the mistakes you made so clearly now. There is a lot of anger. You realize how

stupid you were and cannot forgive yourself for trusting someone thinking this love was perfect. You tell yourself next time you will be more prepared and promise not to trust again.

What follows is a process of recuperation in which you will regain confidence in yourself and learn that the world is not always a dark place.

Life will start to show colors again, and just when you have forgotten the consequences of love and how badly it hurt you, you will find yourself in the face of another storm.



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Guys remember stats, not Valentine's Day

By **XAVIER VILLARMARZO**
Staff Writer

How does sports tie in with Valentine's Day? Well, it is no coincidence that Valentine's Day is right in the middle of February. With the NFL season two weeks past and MLB spring training about a month away, this is the slowest sports month of the year.

Now, I know what you're thinking: "That idiot forgot about the NBA and NHL!"

Of course I didn't, but who watches the NBA anyway? Honestly, can you name me two people you know who would drop whatever they're doing because the New York Knicks are playing the Houston Rockets?

And as for the NHL, even if they weren't in a lockout, can you name six teams for me? I didn't think so either.

When I asked my friend Miguel how sports and Valentine's Day are connected, it led to this exchange:

Miguel: *Why would you ask such a random question?*

Me: *Because Valentine's Day is in 5 days.*

Miguel: *Oh [fecal matter]!*

Now, if I were to ask Miguel how many passing yards Dan Marino had in his career, he'd answer 61,361 before I even finished the question. This is a dilemma that has bugged women for ages, or since the beginning of televised sporting events.

So when greeting card companies invented Valentine's Day, they chose Feb. 14 in with the

hope that men's minds would not be polluted by arbitrary sports statistics.

They lumped Valentine's Day together with birthdays and anniversaries as things guys are most likely to forget about their significant other.

But why is it that guys can remember that Barry Bonds's

MLB debut was on May 30, 1986, but can't remember their anniversary, even if it falls on the exact same day?

For one thing, neither Dan Marino nor Barry Bonds have ever made a man stand outside a Victoria's Secret holding shopping bags. They also have never asked a man if their new pants

make them look fat. Nor have they ever gotten upset, because you didn't notice their new hair style.

The funny thing is, women don't really care that men forget those dates, even though it doesn't seem like it. They know that the man must make up for it, which means that a plain gold

bracelet becomes a diamond tennis bracelet.

The gift-giving, however, should go both ways, and if by some highly unlikely chance you girls forget Valentine's Day, have no fear. We men are simple. Just cook for us in the nude. On second thought, screw the cooking.



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Intramural sports connect FIU students

By **C. JOEL MARINO**
Senior Staff Writer

Most afternoons, freshman Dimitri Daddoud puts on his cleats and runs through the muddy soccer fields with his teammates, practicing the sport even though the official soccer season ended last semester.

However, these students are not members of the FIU soccer team. They are the members of Junglis Massize, one of several student-run groups that compete in the annual intramural sporting events.

The intramural events, sponsored by Campus Recreation, include a variety of sports each semester. The department offers flag football and volleyball in the Fall term. Soccer, basketball, softball and the newly added dodgeball are played in

Spring. Teams are divided into male and female groups, the only exceptions are volleyball and softball.

"Soccer's the best sport. I play [in intramurals] because it's a good way to be part of the game I like and to keep up practice," Daddoud said.

As part of the open league, Daddoud's team competes every week against other teams made up of volunteer players from all years from all over the campus. Other leagues include the fraternity and sorority leagues and the newly established housing league.

"One of the biggest things in housing is that we want to continue offering services that would make students feel connected to the university, and we believe intramurals is one of the many programs we can offer to the residents, so they can feel that connection," said Murillo

Soranso, assistant Resident Life coordinator for the University Park Apartments and head of housing intramurals.

In the residential version of the games, inaugurated during the 2003 school year, sports teams from such UP residence halls as Everglades and the Towers compete against each other in order to reach the final tournament.

"Resident students find that playing an intramural game is fun and healthy," Soranso said. "If you're a little competitive, it's a great way to get involved and meet new people."

Though students from the Biscayne Bay Campus participate in the open leagues, the Bay Vista residence halls have not been incorporated into the housing league, though Soranso said their inclusion is being planned.

"I've been playing for a lot of semes-

ters, and I could keep on playing even more," said James Wang, a sophomore who plays soccer in the open league. "There are always injuries, but that's just part of the game."

Students must pay a \$30 entrance fee and attend tryouts and all practices in order to compete towards their respective league's championships. Despite all the effort, though, some students see intramurals more as entertainment than competition.

"There are people who can't run, and they go out there and play. There are also people who are good enough to be on the FIU soccer team," Daddoud said. "Everyone goes out there and everybody has fun."

For more information regarding intramural sports and tournament dates call (305) 348-1054.



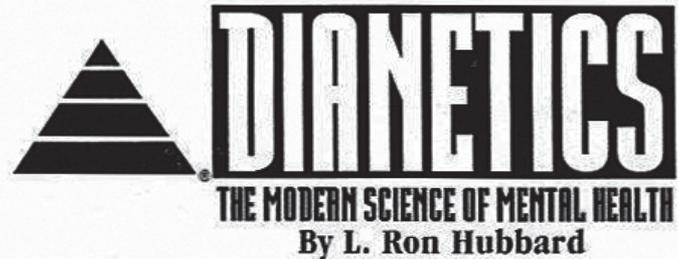
HAVING FUN: FIU students Jason Hoo-Fat (left) and Hardy Hougue practice for intramural soccer at the University Park Residential Quad. **JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON**

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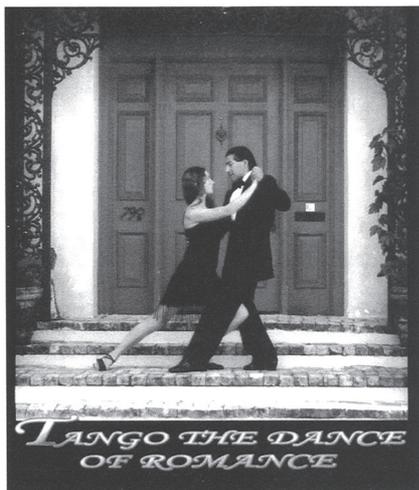
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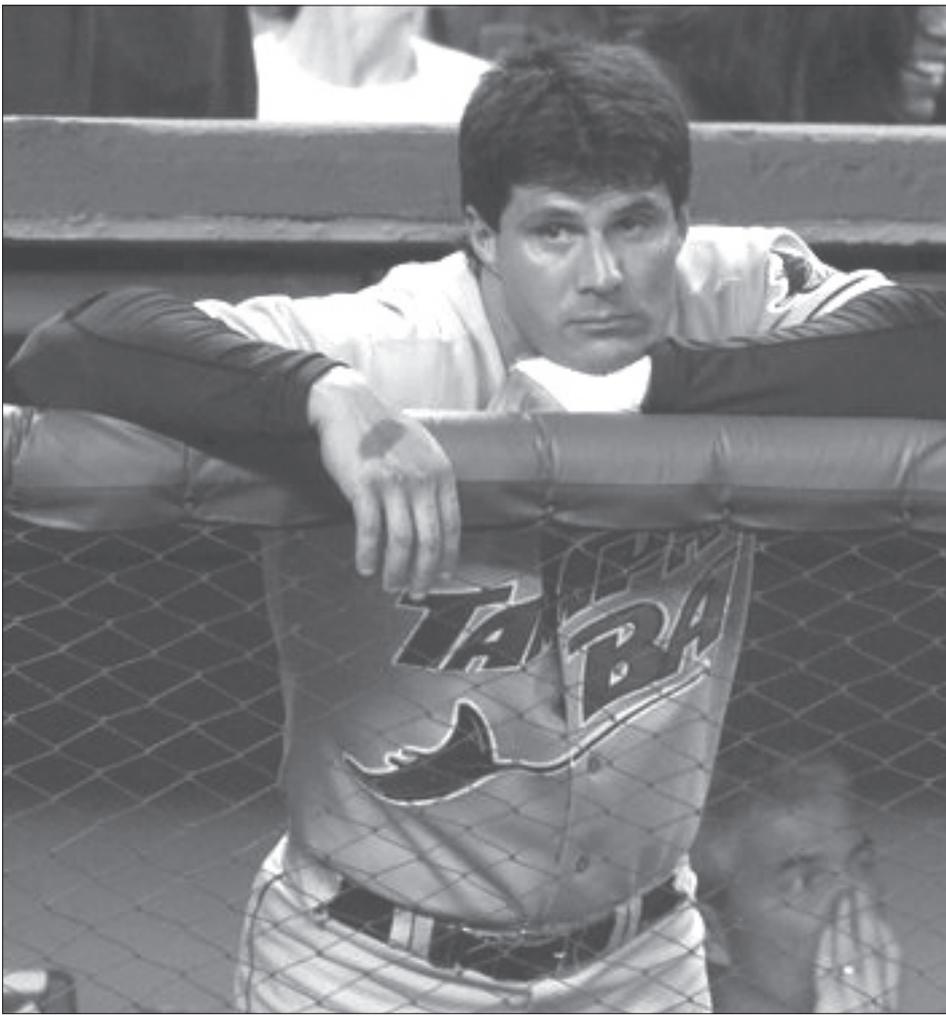
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Jose Canseco exposes steroids in book



TATTLETALE: Some feel Jose Canseco back-stabbed baseball in his new book by exposing steroid use within the sport and betraying his former teammates. COURTESY PHOTO

By **ALDEN GONZALEZ**
Staff Writer

The baseball world really does not have much to say these days. Two weeks before pitchers and catchers report to spring training, the hierarchy of Major League Baseball is doing a lot of listening.

Former six time all-star and 466 career homerun hitter Jose Canseco is finished with his tell-all book and is set to release it.

It's just an anthology of tattletales, snitching and backstabbing.

The book has an air of whining and jealousy that can only be generated by the biggest and most juiced-up baby the city of Miami has ever produced.

NOT A CREDIBLE SOURCE

Maybe we're being a little too quick to judge, but how can you not? This is the same person who used to charge his fans \$625 to hang out, because he was dead broke.

Lets face it, Canseco has never been well liked in the baseball world. Throughout his career he's been passed around in ball clubs like Madonna in the 80s (with whom he claims to have made out in his book).

He has been a problem on and off the field at every point in his career and has never showed decent character.

On his resume of homeruns, all-star appearances and balls hit off his head for homeruns, there are charges of felony, assault and battery and rape. There was also that incident where he was caught racing 120 miles per hour in his Jaguar with a loaded gun.

I have to tell you, watching Canseco after his prime with the Oakland A's has been gut wrenching as a Cuban living in South Florida.

The sole pride of our Cuban community was suddenly becoming the punch line of jokes and the disgrace of our culture.

THE BOOK

After all that Canseco is (or isn't), I still find it hard to believe that all of the book is a lie.

The former general manager of the Texas Rangers said on "Sportscentury," "One thing I have never been able to say about [Canseco] is that he's a liar."

It's hard to shy away from the truth. Here's a guy that admitted to taking steroids and has been around in the baseball world.

If anybody knew what was going on, it was him.

His allegations in the book include that he introduced steroids to Rafael Palmeiro, Ivan Rodriguez and Juan Gonzalez of the Texas Rangers organization.

After hearing about all the allegations, Rodriguez has lost twenty-two pounds. He says it's because it helps him to be more mobile behind the plate, but I think somebody is scared of failing a drug test or two.

Canseco also mentions that he actually shot up Mark McGwire with steroids in the bathroom stalls at Oakland.

I know McGwire is not the cleanest baseball player. After all, he did admit to using illegal substances, but I never imagined Canseco actually injecting him with steroids.

WHY THE BOOK?

What has MLB done to him? Why would somebody tarnish the relation-

ships they've made and get on so many people's hit lists just to get the truth out? It's very simple question with an even simpler answer.

When Jose Canseco limped out of the minor leagues and finally called it quits, he carried a rather large chip on his broad shoulders.

He was just 34 homeruns away from the exclusive 500-homerun club and probably short-ended from Cooperstown.

Right after his retirement, the bitter Canseco went on a sports talk show and mentioned that he was blackballed from baseball.

He felt as if commissioner Bud Selig wanted him out of the game and made it impossible for him to hit his five hundredth homerun because he didn't want him in the Hall of Fame. (Twenty-four of the 25 players who have hit over 500 homeruns are either still active or in the Hall of Fame.)

Never mind that Canseco finished his last four seasons barely hitting a .250 batting average and struck out nearly once every three at bats.

Never mind that his body was so old and juiced up with chemicals that he couldn't even put on deodorant in the morning.

Lets just look back at the last image we have of Canseco: a brutish, muscular guy with a Los Angeles Dodgers batting helmet in a public park trying to make the squad.

I think he black-balled himself out of the game.

NEGATIVE OPINIONS

As you might have guessed, the book was not well-received in the baseball community.

Every single player the book mentions denied Canseco's accusations.

Rodriguez went on record and stated: "I was his friend when he was in jail. I was the only one that visited him and brought him magazines. It hurts to hear him say those things."

Calling out Mark McGwire was probably not a good idea either. Nobody is more respected in the clubhouse than Big Mac is, and nobody is given more credit for resurrecting baseball than he is.

"I've never met anybody that has wanted to win more than [McGwire]," said Tony LaRussa, Mark McGwire's former manager in Oakland and with the St. Louis Cardinals.

Canseco is just hopeless in this situation. It's like Ron Artest publishing a book about violence in the NBA and saying Lebron James has a short temper.

There is just no way this black horse with a street named after him who doesn't even show up to the for the naming ceremony, can get credibility on a hot-button issue like this one.

As for Major League Baseball, there is not much they can do.

They will continue to implement their new steroid regulations and simply move on.

The city of Miami is finished with Jose Canseco.

Just when we thought he couldn't plunge himself deeper, he loses all self-respect and pride with this squealing book.

The tri-county area will focus on more beloved heroes that can display good character, like Alex Rodriguez or Dwyane Wade.

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SPORTS

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THE BEACON

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SMOKIN' HOT!



As a special treat for Valentine's Day, *The Beacon* decided to break down the hottest male and female athletes in the sports world. Here are the top five hunks and babes of today.

TOP MALES



By **JENIFFER GALASSO**
Staff Writer

1. SHAQUILLE O'NEAL

Between that shiny bald head and that unexpected sense of humor, this "gentle giant" won my heart quite a while ago. You can't miss him, and it's not just because of his skyscraper height of 7-1, but because he has been in movies and commercials, released albums, and oh yeah, he's a mighty powerful basketball player. His sarcastic comments and stupid jokes always leave me laughing.

His intelligence won me over the most. The former number one pick and NBA Finals MVP is currently finishing his Master's degree. Wow. Now that's a real man.

2. DAVID BECKHAM

Whether his hair is spiky, braided, parted to the side, short with a fade, or in a mohawk, the English soccer superstar looks great. Beckham is to the sports world what Brad Pitt is to Hollywood—the sexiest man in the business. Despite being a soccer mega star, Beckham takes care of his sons and his wife. With his adorable

accent and blond streaks of hair, Beckham is certainly something special.

3. TOM BRADY

Even though I rooted for the Eagles during the Super Bowl, inside I cheered for this good-looking Patriots quarterback. Despite his innocent look which make him oh-too-cute, he is one tough hunk who takes hit after hit on the football field. After reading that he was close to his family, my heart melted. With three Super Bowl rings on his fingers, I wouldn't mind wearing one for him.

4. JASON TAYLOR

He's six feet, six inches tall, has six-pack abs and rides a Harley Davidson. End of story. I am in love. Between the gorgeous eyes behind his helmet and his stature, there is something riveting about this Miami Dolphins Pro Bowl player. Even though he is not as big as the other defensive linemen in the NFL, his lightning speed has made him an elite player. When he speaks, all attention (or at least all of mine) hangs on his every word.

5. JOSH BECKETT

This 2003 World Series MVP captured my heart with his fierce look and demeanor as he single-handedly defeated the New York Yankees in Game Six of the World Series. This Texas farm boy is the reason the Marlins won the championship. His confidence and overpowering fastball makes him the ultimate man.

TOP FEMALES



By **HARRY COLEMAN**
Sports Editor

1. JENNIE FINCH

No athlete is as attractive as this Team USA softball player. Not only is she a four-time gold medalist, but she is the hottest female athlete to ever play a professional sport. With her long beach-blonde hair and beautiful, mysterious blue eyes, Finch not only stands out on the softball diamond (where she holds the NCAA record for consecutive wins with 60), but also on any red carpet among the most stunning movie stars.

2. SERENA WILLIAMS

With a physique like no other player, Williams can out-power any player on the tennis court, but she can also tame any man (well at least me) that she pleases.

Williams has captured the hearts of men everywhere by not only winning the four major grand slams in a row, but also by displaying her voluptuous curves in sexy tennis outfits.

She's so built that she could probably kick the crap out of me, but hey, I wouldn't mind that at all.

3. HEATHER MITTS

The professional soccer player has the perfect girl-next-door look. After reading that her favorite movie is "Meet the Parents" and that she loves watching sports on TV, I instantly fell in love with her. The former NCAA National Champion and Olympic gold medalist with gorgeous, straight, long blond hair is the perfect girl to marry. If I were rich and famous, or if she knew whom my journalism geek self was, I would pop the question without thinking about it twice.

4. ANNA KOURNIKOVA

Yes, I know she has never won a WTA tennis tournament, but no one can deny that she's popularized the women's tennis game. Her intense green eyes and blonde streaks have landed her on the cover of almost every magazine that's worth reading for the last eight years. This Russian bombshell is perfect from head to toe. Her favorite foods include sushi and steak, and she likes chocolate for dessert. What can I say? She's the perfect girl to take out to dinner and more.

5. MARIA SHARAPOVA

She is another blonde on my list, but what can I say? Blondes are hot. The 18-year-old Wimbledon champion has an innocent look that begs to show her wildness. Because she is constantly traveling, she is trying to finish high school through Internet classes. A girl that stays in school is a girl that stays in my heart.