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TIME FOR CHANGE

Castro won't seek re-election

CHARLIE GRAU
Editor in Chief

The University awoke to shock on Feb. 19 when Fidel Castro announced that he would not accept another term as Cuba's president.

In declining health, the 81-year-old who has ruled island for almost half a century said in a letter published in the online edition of the Communist Party daily Granma "it would be a betrayal to my conscience to accept a responsibility requiring more mobility and dedication than I am physically able to offer."

He also wrote that his "wishes have always been to discharge my duties to my last breath," in a letter published in Tuesday's editions of Cuban newspapers.

Castro has been in power since staging a coup and overthrowing former Cuba president Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

For many older generation Cubans, the announcement reminded them of darker times when Castro took control of the government.

"There was a time in Havana where you could go any place and you can hear him on the radio or television. You just couldn't turn his voice out. He has been telling Cubans what to do for many years," said associate director of the Cuban Research Institute, Uva de Aragon. "You have no idea how it used to be, you used to feel him breath on you. He was every where."

Araágon said that many, includ-

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FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

CASTRO OUT: People gather outside Cafe Versailles, a typical restaurant where Cuban-Americans typically assemble to discuss the happenings of their country. Supporters of a free Cuba joined together on Feb. 19 to celebrate the resignation of former dictator Fidel Castro.

WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL

Food Network chefs garnish South Beach

MARCELO GORENSTEIN
Staff Writer

The South Beach Wine and Food Festival is an epicurean extravaganza that visits South Beach annually in February.

The festival opens Feb. 21 with Paula Deen's Poker Party & Casino Night and Rachel Ray's Burger Bash at the Ritz-Carlton, both on South Beach. About 35,000 people are expected this weekend, according to Lee Dixon, associate dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Man-

agement.

This year's festival has a number of events planned that are guaranteed to satisfy even the most demanding palates.

"Our event helps the local economy by filling up hotel rooms in Miami, promoting tourism and raising funds for the University. Everyone is a winner," Dixon said.

The festival began in 1997 as a fund-raiser for HM known as the Florida Extravaganza, a one-day event that took place at Biscayne Bay Campus and showcased

both national and international wineries and local restaurants. An ethical dilemma brought by serving alcohol on campus shut down the event in 2000.

In 2001 Brian Lee Schrager, director of special events and media relations at Southern Wine & Spirits of America, and Joseph West, current HM dean, gave the event a makeover by relocating to Ocean Drive and renaming it the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

The Food Network partnered with the South Beach Food and

Wine Festival and became the event's title sponsor.

"It's a great place to meet people from the industry," said Carolina Cemborain, a graduate student of the HM program working on the event for her second year. "I have plenty of friends that attended the festival last year with me and got great business opportunities as a result."

The festival's popularity attracts culinary celebrities from all over the globe. Some of this

FEST, page 4

Children's Center cares for little golden panther cubs

CHARLIE GRAU
Editor in Chief

All over Libby Kirsch's wall are pictures. Each one of them tells a different story.

"He's a father now. He writes for the newspaper. She teaches elementary school," Kirch said as she pointed to each individual photo.

In one picture, Kirsch plays

with a parachute with children on the ground of where the Children's Creative Learning Center now resides.

"We have a really long history here. We have children here who are second generation preschoolers," she said.

Since 1975, the center at FIU has stood on the west side of University Park. The vibrant colored building first started out

as United Way Agency, based out of a trailer that still sits behind the current center today.

"It has always been really dark on this side of campus during the evening and people are drawn to our building. We were like a beacon at night," Kirsch said.

Since its infancy, the center has grown up into a popular educational preschool not only

for students and faculty on campus, but for alumni and others in the community.

The center has become so popular that many parents have their children on a waiting list to get them in.

"We have people who, once they're pregnant, they come and put their child's name on the waiting list to make sure they get in," said Silvia Valdes,

coordinator of administrative services for the center.

Children from the ages of two and-a-half to five can attend the center Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Many students try to take advantage of the help the center offers. Students can pay a

CUBS, page 3

Raul Martinez reaches out to young Democrats

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
Staff Writer

A candidate preaching Obama's change and packing Clinton's experience would be a gift for the Democratic Party. Democratic South Floridians can find that rare combination in the local congressional election. At least, Raul Martinez, former Hialeah mayor and current U.S. representative hopeful, believes so. Invited by the FIU College Democrats, Martinez spoke about his past experiences, present campaign and the change he will breathe into Washington if elected on

mayor to explain how he would help a country that is "going in the wrong direction."

As mayor, Martinez is largely credited for revitalizing Hialeah by creating 18,000 new jobs, providing hundreds of units of affordable housing and helping increase high school graduation by 125 percent.

He said that this separates him from his opponents.

"[My opponents] all talk about health insurance, community, all these things they are going to do but that's all rhetoric," he said. "I can

Martinez is an oddity in the traditionally Republican Cuban community. He believes that being "called a communist" has only made him a stronger politician, one that can "tough it out."

He might have to tough it out during this campaigning season.

The Miami Herald has called the congressional election a "Battle of the Titans" in a Jan. article, referring to Martinez and his main opponent Republican Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

Republican attacks came quickly after Martinez issued his intention to run.

They predicted a controversial race by taking into account Martinez's "history of corruption and indecency," according to the article, referring to his conviction of extortion in 1991 that was later appealed by Martinez, and subsequently resulted in hung juries.

The hour and half appearance ended with Martinez recruiting volunteers for his campaign:

"I think this was the most exciting meeting we've had. He's a bit of a legend in South Florida politics," Christian Martinez said.

Christian Martinez, VP College Democrats
I think this was the most exciting meeting we've had. He's a bit of a legend in South Florida politics.

Monday night.

"A lot of the things [he said] resonated to me as a voter ... he really touched me because he is willing to take on the issues I feel have been ignored for many years," said Moses H., a member of FIU College Democrats. Moses preferred not to give his last name.

In the business of "delivering services," as he proclaimed, Martinez leaned heavily on his two decades of experience as

replicate a lot of things like affordable housing. Can that be done? Yeah, we did it in Hialeah."

Martinez believes that one of his best assets is his budgeting experience. However, for Christian Martinez, Vice President of FIU College Democrats, it is his ability to unite that is most impressive.

"He has the rare ability to reach across the aisle and get things done," he said.

The Cuban-born

THE CORWIN EXPERIENCE



Victoria Lynch/The Beacon

GASPI: Sophomore Christina Nielsen is surprised when Animal Planet's Jeff Corwin places a marine toad in her hands. For more photos, audio and a Q&A visit www.fiusm.com.

Perez: Change in Cuba won't happen over night

CASTRO, page 1

ing herself, believe that Castro will continue to run the government behind the scenes. Others believe that even though he may be influencing the government in the shadows, Castro won't be able to fully control the government like he used to.

"People are realizing that Castro's veil of invincibility after [less than] 50 years has been lifted and is creating an opportunity for change because people can see they can be the protagonist of change," said FIU alumnus and Free Cuba Foundation coordinator John Suarez. "This magician is no longer there to weaving his spell or propaganda anymore."

Upon announcing he

would be undergoing surgery for intestinal cancer, Castro relinquished power to his younger brother Raul on July 31, 2006.

For less than a decade, Castro has held ultimate power in the government and set many hardline policies, but the transfer of power had many Cuba watchers believing that change may be coming soon.

"Not profound changes, but some changes that will allow people to have a little bit more measure of private enterprise or ownership and little bit more of capitalism so people can benefit from the fruits of their labor," said sociology professor Lisandro Perez, who founded FIU's Cuban Research Institute in 1991 and served as its direc-

tor until 2003.

While on his tour of Africa, President George Bush said that this transition period is an opportunity for Cuba to become a democratic society.

"What does this mean for the people in Cuba?" Bush asked at a news conference during his trip to Africa. "They're the ones who suffered under Fidel Castro. They're the ones who were put in prison because of their beliefs. They're the ones who have been denied their right to live in a free society. So I view this as a period of transition and it should be the beginning of the democratic transition in Cuba."

According to Perez, the Helms Burton Act which passed in 1996 will not allow any U.S. president to lift the embargo if they chose to.

"A lot of people think that change is going to happen from one day to the next but it's not going to happen that way," Perez said.

There are several possible candidates to succeed Castro: Raul, 61, who is served as Cuba's defense minister under Castro; Carlos Lage, 56, Cuba's vice president; Ricardo Alarcon, 70, one of Cuba's more prominent politicians; Foreign minister Felipe Perez Roque, 42; and Esteban Lazo, 64 a member of the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers and the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party. Despite the horrors of the past, many believe the Cuba's better days are ahead of it.

"Cuba was here before Fidel Castro. Cuba is still there and it will be there after Castro," Aragon said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Center takes 'hands-on' approach to teach kids social, emotional skills

CUBS, page 1

subsidized tuition rate of \$189 per month if they are eligible for a Pell grant and are enrolled in a minimum of nine credit hours per semester.

If both requirements are met, then they may be eligible for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Grant, which is awarded to the center by the Department of Education.

This allows students to pay \$189 a month to have their children enrolled in the center. The grant also covers the cost of the child's registration fee, supply fee, lunch and the center's family field trip.

Regular monthly tuition for students is \$378.

Zoraida Villanueva, a psychology graduate student, said the center helped her focus on getting her undergraduate degree in special education while her daughter Janellyzi was in preschool.

"I left her here because it was worth it. For what you're getting here, it's

a bang for you buck," Villanueva said. "It's really hard to find something out there. Most centers out there are just day cares. Here, it's a school and your children learn."

The center takes a more "hands on" approach to teaching children. Every week, teachers incorporate a different theme into their class to relate to what they are learning.

"A lot of their learning is done one on one through interaction. They're not sitting down and writing their ABCs and reading their ABCs, they're physically and actively learning their ABCs," said FIU alumna Daiana Diez.

Diez said the center prepared her daughter Katherine, 7, for public school.

"It gives children a lot of self confidence and lets them know who they are before they enter the larger schools," she said.

One of the main reasons many parents say they bring their children to the center is the center's philosophy.

Kirsch said teachers try to focus on the children's social and emotional aspect of development.

"We try to get children to verbalize their feelings and to get them to talk and use language to get what they want," Kirsch said.

Parents can even come in and watch their children while they learn and play in an observation room behind a two way mirror.

Students can also enroll their children in the Center's Express Edu-Care/ Flex-Time Program which allows their children to interact for a couple of hours while they are in class.

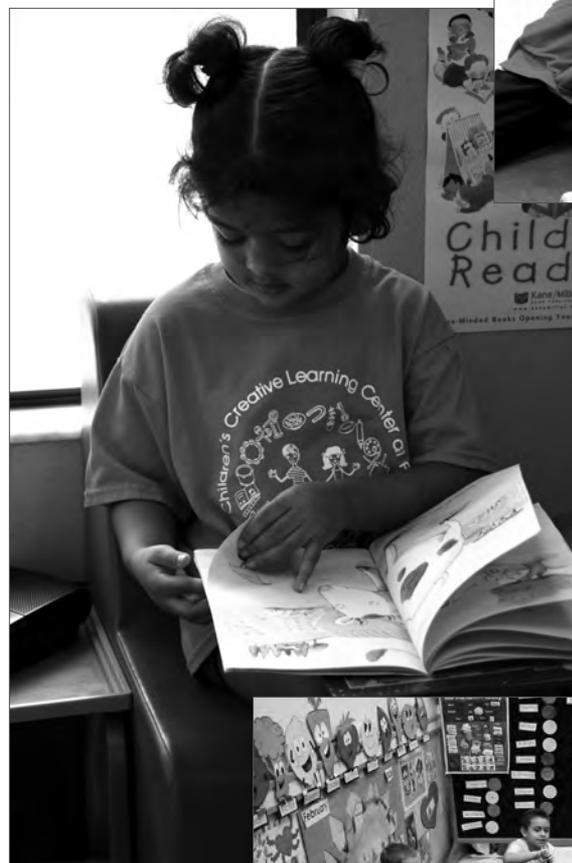
The program is located adjacent to the Graham Center Gallery and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The hourly rate for the program is \$6 for students and \$3 for students who qualify for the subsidized rate.

For more information about the Children Creative Learning Center, visit its Web site at www.fiu.edu/~children or call (305) 348-2143.



PLAY TIME: Students play and learn at FIU's Children's Creative Learning Center. Located on the west side of University Park, the center offers flexible schedules and financial help for FIU students, faculty, and alumni who enroll their children there.

For more pictures, visit www.fiusm.com



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MD CLINICAL



NEWS to reflect on historical struggle

RONICHA AZARD
Contributing Writer

In honor of Black History Month, the African-New World Studies Program is inviting Jeremy Levitt, professor of law and director of the Human Rights and Global Justice program, to lecture on the need for education on all facets of the African struggle.

Levitt will speak at the fourth annual Malcolm X and Ella Baker lecture held at the Wolfe University Center Ballroom at Biscayne Bay Campus on Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.

This year's topic is "The African Diaspora, the State and Globalization: The Next Frontier of Pan-African Unity."

"It will introduce students to the history and the culture and political struggle of the people of African descent," Levitt said in a phone interview.



LEVITT

"It's Black History [Month] and that history is commonly not known [to many], particularly in the context of Pan-Africanism."

Levitt is a professor at the FIU School of Law, political scientist and an international lawyer.

He specializes in human rights law and has written the books "Illegal Peace?: Examining the Legality of Power-sharing with African Warlords and Rebels" and "The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: From 'Paternalitarianism' to State Collapse."

Levitt has also edited 2008's "Africa: Mapping New Boundaries in International Law."

"It is intended for the students to learn about a people and a political struggle, and where we should be going from here as an African Diaspora," Levitt said.

"[This] includes all people of African descent, wherever they might live, and others who support that ideology and struggle," Levitt said.

The African Diaspora is the story of Africans' isolation and dispersal around the world due to slavery, their ability to maintain their traditions and their identity modification in a new world.

This lecture will also educate the FIU student population on the visions of Ella Baker and Malcolm X - visions of bringing peace and



Jeremy Levitt, Professor of Law

It is intended for the students to learn about a people and a political struggle, and where we should be going from here as an African Diaspora.

unity to humanity and reducing discrimination against the African American nation, according to Levitt.

Akin Ogundiran, associate professor of history and director of African-New World Studies, said the lecture would allow students to "explore new answers to old questions."

"The vision of both Ella Baker and Malcolm X was indeed not limited solely to the African American society but instead focused on a more robust factor which was making the

human race better through the pursuit of justice," Ogundiran said.

The lecture is open to all students.

Levitt said that there is "no racial component;" everyone is welcome.

Ogundiran agreed, stating that "This lecture is not just about Black people, it's about all people - we are all members of a human community."

For more information on this and other African New World Studies lecture series, visit www.africana.fiu.edu or call 305-919-5521.

NEWSFLASH

FIU Chabad hosts weekly pizza, parsha

FIU Chabad hosts pizza and parsha every Thursday on WUC's second floor, above the information desk. Students are invited to join in reading portions of the Torah over pizza. The next meeting is Feb. 21 and open to all students.

SGA Scholarships deadline approaches

SGA scholarship applications are being accepted through March 14, 5 p.m. Applicants must have a minimum cumulative 2.5 GPA. Applications are available at the Campus Life office, WUC 141. Call (305) 919-5800, for details on available scholarships.

Kayaking club to host Kayak Day on the bay

The Kayaking Club will host its second Kayak Day on Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. at the Biscayne Bay Boat Ramp, behind the Aquatic Center. No experience is necessary and application forms are available in the Recreation Center. Call (305) 919-5678 for more information.

International Student Tax Workshop to take place

BBC's International Student & Scholar Services will host a tax workshop designed for international students on Feb. 27 from 3 to 4 p.m. in WUC 363. For reservations, call (305) 919-5813.

Humanities Club to screen "Becket"

The Humanities Club will host a screening of the 1964 film "Becket," starring Pete O'Toole and Richard Burton, on Feb. 28 at 6 p.m. in WUC 100. Food and beverages will be provided. Call (305) 919-5948 for more information.

Judaic Studies program to host "The Holocaust by Bullets"

FIU's Judaic Studies program and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies will host "The Holocaust by Bullets: An Interview with Father Patrick Debois" on Feb. 28, 7:30-9 p.m., at the Koven's Conference Center. Debois is president of the Yahad-in-Unum, an organization that promotes Judeo-Christian dialogue, and an advisor for the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations. Call (305) 348-6561 for more information.

Monks to visit, complete Mandala sand painting

Tibetan monks will visit BBC March 3-6. The monks will work on a mandala sand painting each of these days in Panther Square from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. A closing ceremony will be held March 6 at 6 p.m. in Panther Square. For details, call (305) 919-5800.

- Compiled by Ana Perez and Susana Rodriguez, Beacon Staff

TELEVISED ENTREES



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

CUPID'S COOKS: CBS 4 studio anchor Jorge Estevez featured FIU Hospitality Management students Jovens Jean, Jesse Shlactman and Bianca Rojas on a Valentine's Day segment, Feb. 13.

Festival to draw tourist funds

FEST, page 1

year's expected guests include Michelle Bernstein, Guy Fieri, Mario Batali, Al Roker, Emeril Lagasse and Bobby Flay among many others.

Festival highlights include The Giada de Laurentiis and Friends Moët & Chandon BubbleQ at the Delano on Friday - an event planned and executed by HM students at FIU - and the "Taste Wine Like a Master Sommelier" at the Miami Beach Convention Center on Friday, in which students of Professor Barry Gump will pour some of the wines they developed in a class project.

"The grand tasting event is the best known part of the event. That's where the Food Network chefs come and host the food seminars, which my team of students will be working on," said Michael Moran, FIU chef and festival organizer.

The Publix Grand Tasting Vil-

lage and the American Express Grand Tasting will be held throughout Saturday and Sunday on 13 and Ocean, Miami Beach, and will cost a hefty \$187.50

As in previous years, kids will

That's only a sampling of the 54 events running throughout the weekend, most of which are HM student and alumni assisted.

However, the event is not geared toward students but con-



John Doe, Title

Our students don't like any of the connotations that come with getting old and that's why you really won't find any courses in here that deal with aging.

also be involved in the festivities. The Kellogg's Kidz Kitchen, hosted by celebrity Food Network chefs Emeril Lagasse, Tyler Florence and Giada de Laurentiis, invites children to try cooking for others.

Kellogg's Kidz Kitchen will also include juice tasting and be held in Lummus Park Feb. 23 throughout the day for \$35 (plus tax and service fee) per child.

sumers, according to Dixon. Events range in price from \$35 for Kidz Kitchen to \$2,000 for a foursome at the celebrity golf tournament.

If you plan to attend this year's festival, make your plans soon. Tickets for the more popular events traditionally sell out weeks in advance. You can purchase tickets online at www.sobewineandfoodfestival.com.

LOVE DAY LYRICISM



SARIT WORK/THE BEACON

CLASSIC COVERS: The Distorted Poets - freshmans Bryan Embon, Jason Shaefer, Andry Chruszcz and sophomore Joshua Posada - cover classic songs in concert on Valentine's Day in Panther Square.

CONCERNS EXPRESSED

Survey puts campus libraries to the test

**PAMELA DUQUE
LUIS VALDEZ**
Beacon Staff

Bookworms have a chance to make changes at FIU's libraries with the third Library Quality Survey.

The purpose of the survey is to measure user satisfaction with library resources and services, the quality of interactions with library staff and users and satisfaction with the libraries collection and space, according to Dean of Libraries Laura Probst.

"If you had an extremely positive experience at the library, you can comment on that, and if you had a negative experience, we are just as interested in that — if not more so — so we can focus on the problem and strategically plan to eliminate [it]," said Steve Switzer, co-chair of the 2008 survey committee and an access services librarian at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

The survey is a national survey model used throughout the country.

The FIU libraries already conducted the survey in 2003 and 2005 in accordance with accredi-

tation requirements.

This year's survey will compare and analyze trends in service and satisfaction with the FIU libraries.

Even though the process costs \$3,000 to conduct, it is a worth-while investment, according to University Librarian Douglas Hasty.

"This is the most important survey any academic library can do, in my

als and intercampus loans: books that come from the Green Library to the BBC library, and vice-versa. Other survey questions will include interlibrary loans, the service that brings books from another institutional library to FIU libraries and the overall ability of the libraries to support faculty's research and student needs.

The survey will run from

most important part of the survey. Criticism is also essential and it is even viewed as good news," Hasty said. "This feedback really shows that you care about our library."

The preliminary results will be back in two to three weeks and the full packaged report in about two to three months.

The several-hundred page report will not be available to nonlibrary staff, however, a simplified version will be made available online.

According to Probst, after the results come in, the libraries will conduct follow-up interviews with student and faculty members to gain additional information to help in accessing the details of the results.

"This is the best way to help our library. Since we only conduct this survey every three to four years, most students will only have one chance to fill it out," Hasty said. "I really encourage you to fill out the survey so that the library can improve."

The link to the survey will be made available on Feb. 22 and can be found at www.library.fiu.edu.

“ Douglas Hasty, University Librarian

Comments are the most important part of the survey. Criticism is also essential... This feedback really shows that you care about our library.

opinion," Hasty said. "The results are a strong factor in our three-year development."

Both the Green Library at University Park and the library at BBC participate in the survey.

"It is very comprehensive," said Lauren Christos, member of the 2008 survey committee and reference librarian at BBC.

According to Christos, the survey will ask students to rate FIU libraries based on available materi-

Feb. 22 through March 24 and it will be done completely online.

Participants will remain anonymous so they feel comfortable and secure about expressing their feelings about the libraries at FIU.

All students and faculty are invited to participate in the study which will only take about 10 minutes.

Hasty stresses the importance of user feedback.

"Comments are the

CAREER SERVICES MEGA WEEK

MONDAY • FEBRUARY 25

Resume Writing Skills Workshop: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., WUC 255

Interview Skills Workshop: 11:00 - 12:00 p.m., WUC 255

How to Prepare for Career Fair Workshop: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., WUC 255

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 26

The Chill Skill; How to Relax and Search for a Job Workshop: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., WUC 255

How to Prepare for Career Fair Workshop: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., WUC 255

WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 27

Bring Your Resume to School Day: 10:00 - 2:00 p.m., Panther Square

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 28

Walk-in Hours for Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 29

Walk-in Hours for Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

MONDAY • MARCH 3

Practice Interviews in Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

TUESDAY • MARCH 4

Practice Interviews in Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

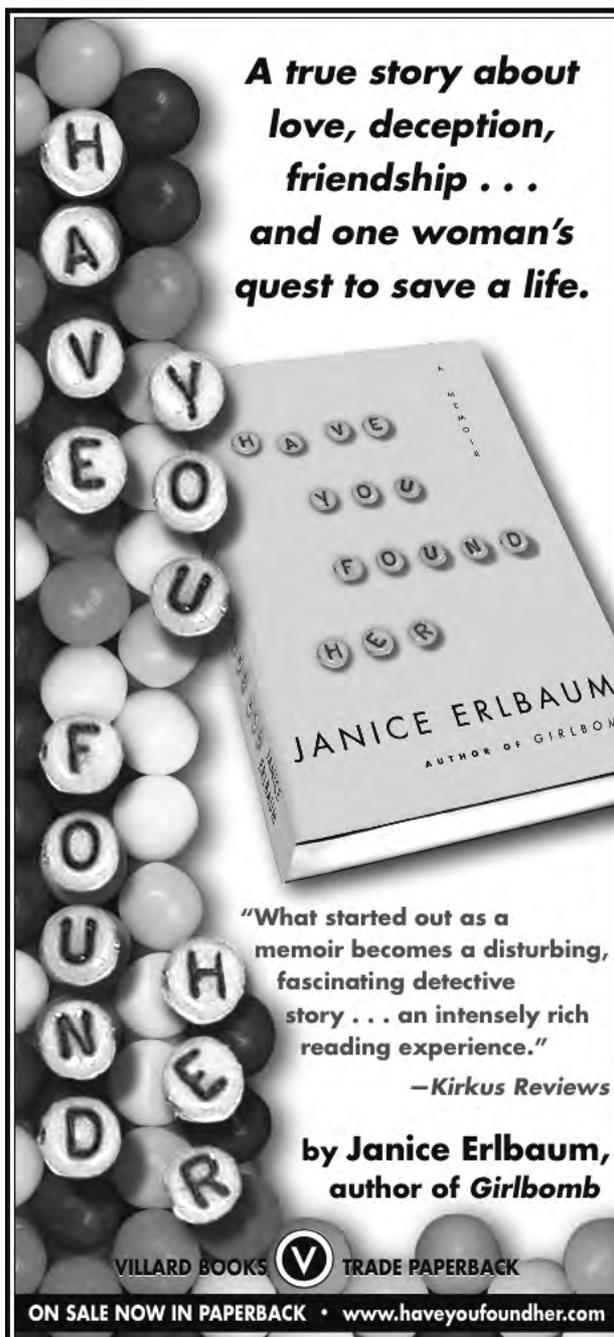
WEDNESDAY • MARCH

Career Fair 2008, semi-formal to formal attire required: 10:00 - 3:00 p.m., WUC 255

For more information, visit www.fiu.edu/~career or call 305-919-5770.

- Compiled by Ana Perez

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**by Janice Erlbaum,
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Castro-less Cuba's future not set in stone

JOSEPH MARHEE
Opinion Editor

With Fidel's brother, Raul, as acting president, should anyone be so sure that he can't be an effective leader? Is everyone jumping to conclusions about Raul and the future of Cuba? It certainly looks that way.

"He is simply a continuation of the Castro regime," State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey told AP.

The US should not even be involved in this situation. We're already out trillions of dollars from our fight for democracy in Iraq and we're expected to be suspicious of Iran, why should the US have any say what happens in a country where they have successfully lived under a socialist regime? Most assuredly, this will become a government and corporate field day.

As far as Bush is concerned, this is a final push to be remembered as the bringer of democracy, rather than a warmongering idiot. He will most likely heroically swoop in and turn things around before the whole country implodes, or so Bush would like you to believe.

Bush has led us to believe that socialism is evil and to ignore the positives of a socialized nation: For example, Castro was responsible for the outstanding Universal Health Care system in Cuba.

Accordingly, this is the perfect opportunity for Bush to surmise publically that socialism

has finally failed, but has it really? If any prominent American leader were to resign or die, would that mean democracy has failed? If so, America died along with Lincoln, which isn't too far from the truth.

You can expect a lot of multi-national corporations to open their "Post-Castro Cuba" plans while many Cuban exiles may be planning on going home, provided Bush intervenes, "saves the day" and opens trade, which is probably among the first things that should (but probably won't) happen.

It's pure logic (or maybe clairvoyance) to assume that Bush will use the trade embargo as a bargaining chip to get U.S. interests heard when appointing a new leader rather than Raul Castro and his ilk. "There are some very clear indications out there that what this ... is a transfer of authority and power from...Fidel to Raúl," Casey explained to AP.

In order to restore the lost dignity of Iraq, Bush's eventual intervention in "liberating" Cuba from socialism may be the savior of

“**Oscar Espinosa-Chepe, Economist**

“I don't think it will be more of the same. It's not what we, in Cuba, want... but this could be the time for some economic and...political changes.”

the administration's reputation, at least with the Cuban population. Bush has always had, however inexplicably, the support of the Cuban community in Miami. Deputy Secretary of



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

RAUL IS NOT WELCOME: A Cuban man expressing his distaste for Raul Castro on Feb 19.

State John Negroponte told AP he could not envision the U.S. lifting the embargo "any time soon." It's safe to say the embargo will play a big role in future Cuban leadership.

Raul Castro might not be the roadblock everyone is making him out to be now that he won't have to adhere to Fidel's format; a view shared by some.

"I don't think it will be more of the same," dissident economist Oscar Espinosa Chepe expressed to *The Miami Herald*. "It's not what we, in Cuba, want. We want democracy and freedom, but this could be the time for some

economic and ... political changes."

There's always the possibility that Raul will just be a puppet, which is a concern echoed by many Miami residents: "That's nothing. That's a farce," said Miami resident Jorge Alonso, 79, in *The Miami Herald* report. "With Raúl, there is no solution." Radio Mambi's News Director, Armando Pérez-Roura, as reported on Radio Mambi, believes Castro's move was a "pantomime" typical of the regime. As a result, many Cubans are torn between moving forward or risking "more of the same" with Raul Castro.

Florida's political escapades, missteps stranger than fiction

ERIC M. FELDMAN
Asst. Opinion Editor

Sure, Florida may be the punch line of many Saturday Night Live jokes every time an election rolls around, due to our alleged incompetence in the 2000 general election, but the Sunshine State still remains the most interesting - albeit hilarious - place in the Union to observe case studies of absurdity in politics. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Take the provision of our state constitution, for example, which collected just over 600,000 signatures, allowing any citizen group to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

A case in point: the infamous pig amendment of 2002. This pork project (pun intended) by an animal rights interest group compelled voters to mandate via the Constitution that pigs shall not be kept in cages so small that they are not able to turn around.

It's no wonder high school civics instructors don't include things like this along with "freedom of speech" and "right to a speedy trial" in constitutional curriculum.

It's not that I want pigs in cages; it's just not appropriate for the document that defines the basis for all other laws in the state.

Neither is a mandatory bullet train.

In the 2000 election, voters

approved another amendment that forced the state to build a bullet train to connect all of Florida's major cities. This train would be so expensive that the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* once claimed that the name of the train was apt because it would be a "bullet to the head of the taxpayers."

Unwilling to pay for the project, the state government with former Gov. Jeb Bush at the helm, held

“With all this political drama at home, who needs to follow the circus that is the race for the White House?”

off on starting the train so that they could push for another amendment to negate the first one. It too, passed, and the bullet train that all five citizens who live in Jacksonville and work in Miami would have used was put to rest.

The State has no problem lobbying for an amendment they like, though. Most recent example: Amendment 1, which was just passed on Jan. 29 primary elections. The campaign was lead by Gov. Charlie Crist, as a tax break for Floridians, and the ability of long-time residents, known as Homesteaders, to take their property tax breaks with them when they move to a new

home. This concept was known as portability. Despite advance warning of the downfalls of the tax amendment, it was approved by a large margin of voters who read the very next week in local newspapers that "Some Broward Cities May Raise Property Taxes" (*Sun-Sentinel*, Feb. 12) and that a "Lawsuit Challenges Portability Proposal" (*Miami Herald*, Feb. 13).

What all of that means is citizens will probably end up paying higher taxes,

anyway (just to the cities, rather than the state), and that portability stands to be ruled unconstitutional.

With all this political drama at home, who needs to follow the circus that is the race for the White House? Though, of course Florida is already drawn into that fray as well, with Sen. Hillary Clinton fighting to have our state's delegate's votes count for the Democratic National Convention. The delegates she supported not seating in the state she pledged not to campaign in ... until she won.

Maybe we will get to pick the next president for the second time after all.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

\$50,000 question answered

It is outrageous to read about a man who makes \$500,000+ a year and still needs a \$50,000 bonus for his outstanding work. With all of the budget cuts in the state, you would think that his salary would decrease throughout the years. And by the way, I would like to put it out there that the College of Education has been cut so much for the summer that there will not be enough classes for even a quarter of the education major students. Why isn't this "bonus" money being dispersed into areas that need it?

Jasmin Augustin
Elementary Education Major
Junior

FIU fails to honor past presidents

President's Day has come and gone. Imagine my shock when I noted that while FIU was closed for Martin Luther King Day, it will remain open on Presidents Day. As a matter of fact, the holiday is not even listed on the daily listings of the Student Handbook (there is a small mention on the monthly page). How can FIU not honor a Founder of our country and the president that ended slavery? Years ago, they each had their own legal holiday. Now FIU has reduced their meaning to nothing.

Hubert Harriman
Senior

STEP ONTO THE SOAPBOX

Officer of a student organization? Student government member? University official? Have something to say? Contact us at joseph.marhee@fiusm.com and we'll give you 500 words to share your opinion with the FIU community.

Dance company brings Samba, Brazilian culture to South Florida

JONATHAN DAVILA
Contributing Writer

When FIU Associate Professor Augusto Soledade finished his graduate studies at SUNY Brockport in Rochester, N.Y. in 1998, he was searching for a way to put his artistic interests to use.

"I really felt that I needed to have a way to direct my artistic ideas and I felt that a dance company was the best way to do that," Soledade said.

With that notion in mind, Soledade founded the Brazz Dance Theater, a non-profit dance organization that aims to educate as well as entertain its audience with their dance performances.

On March 7 and 8, Soledade and his company will be performing one of their shows, "A Foot for Samba," in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

The show concludes with the FIU faculty concert, "Dancing Our History," a concert produced by FIU faculty members representing different ethnic backgrounds.

With "A Foot for Samba," Soledade portrays the dance history of his home country, Brazil.

"I'm trying to bring my Brazilian culture into the [melting] pot," Soledade said.

Anne Morris, director of development for the Brazz Dance Theater, as well as a dancer performing in 'Samba,' said that there is more to the show than the history of Brazilian dance.

"The show looks at the historical basis of Samba and the social conflicts in Brazil," she said. "There's a view of life in the [Brazilian] cities with all their struggles and hardships. [We're making] a social comment on contemporary Brazilian culture."

The production is a collaborative

work between Soledade and fellow Brazilian dance artist Valeria Pinheiro, blending Afro-Brazilian dance with contemporary dance.

Although Pinheiro is not involved in this particular production, her name is still attached to the project because of the work and dedication she put into the show along with Soledade.

'Samba' debuted in 2007 at the Byron Carlyle Theatre in Miami Beach. Since then, the show has been performed at several schools, theaters and festivals in the South Florida area, as well as in New York, Massachusetts and Brazil.

The show is supported by the Theatre department and the College of Architecture and the Arts.

The success of Brazz Dance and its shows has also brought support from various outlets such as the Ford Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs office.

"To put a show like this together you need support from many people," Soledade said.

Aside from the two FIU shows, "A Foot for Samba" is currently scheduled for two more productions this year.

It will return to the Byron Carlyle on April 9 and will also be performed at ArtSouth in Homestead on May 10.

Morris confided that Brazz Dance is now working on new projects set to debut next year, but "A Foot for Samba" will definitely remain a part of the company's repertoire.

Tickets for "A Foot for Samba," are priced at \$8 for students. For more information, call the FIU Theatre's box office at (305) 348-3789.



How to Samba!

Forward Basic Movement :

Left, Place. Step slightly forward, on the first beat of the music. Toe first, slide your left foot forward and change weight onto the left leg. Don't move your right foot!

Right, tap, up-down. Moving your right foot slightly forward, tap on the inside ball of the foot. The up motion results from partially changing weight onto the right leg, by rolling onto the outside ball of the right foot (don't put your heel completely to the floor). The left leg will rise from the floor a little. The down motion occurs from changing weight back onto the left leg.

Back Basic Movement :

Right, Place. Step slightly back, on the first beat of the music. Toe first, slide your right foot back and change weight onto the right leg. Don't move your left foot!

Left, Tap, Up-Down. Moving your left foot slightly back, tap on the inside ball of the foot. The up motion results from partially changing weight onto the left leg, by rolling onto the outside ball of the left foot (don't put your heel completely to the floor). The right leg will rise from the floor a little. The down motion occurs from changing weight back onto the right leg.

www.geocities.com

Relay for Life raises thousands to fund cancer research

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Ass. News Director

On the dimly lit streets in front of the Ryder Business building, thousands of students, faculty and community members gathered on Feb 15.

The purpose of the gathering was a simple one: to raise funds for cancer research during FIU's annual Relay for Life while having a night to remember.

"I think tonight [has been] a huge success," said Beverly Dalrymple, director of the Center for Leadership and RFL advisor during the event on Feb 15. "We came into already raising \$43,000, which is more than halfway to our goal."

At the high point of RFL, about 3,500 people were in attendance.

For Carmen Murphy, RFL chair, the number of people participating in the Luminaria lap dedicated to those who have died or been affected by cancer was impressive.

"The most touching moment for me

was during the Luminaria lap, when I was already half way around and you looked on the other side there were still people," Murphy said. "That's how big we were this year."

There were three main goals for this year's relay. The first was to have 70 teams participate in RFL and there were 74.

"Things have been really awesome," said freshman Justin Otis of Team Hope. "Everyone is working hard for a good cause and you can't ask for more. We have made sure everybody has gotten food and we have had a lot of donations."

Another goal was to have 70 cancer survivors attend the event and there were 84.

"When RFL came to FIU it was a year or two after I had been diagnosed with cancer and I felt it was important I get involved," Dalrymple said.

The final goal was to raise \$70,000. While it was not met by the end of RFL, a grand total of \$65,700 has been raised with more donations on the way.

Justin Otis, Freshman, Team Hope

Everyone is working hard for a good cause and you can't ask for more. We have made sure everybody has gotten food and we have had a lot of donations.

"We have a few donations that have been brought to my attention that just haven't been calculated," Murphy said.

RFL organizers have until June to raise the final \$5,000 at the University level, but until August for the American Cancer Society.

Murphy is extremely optimistic that her team will not only reach the \$70,000 goal but also surpass it.

The online donation system will remain for the rest of the month according to Dalrymple. Relay organizers will also host other small events to raise additional funds, such as raffling off a car donated by the Gus Ford Machado car dealership in Hialeah.

The funds raised from the raffle will benefit all of the RFL's in Miami-Dade County, according to Dalrymple.

In the meantime RFL teams celebrated their hard work on Feb. 20 during a closing ceremony in the Graham Center. Among the awards given out were the Spirit Award and the Most Funds Raised Award.

The first was given to the American Student Pre-Dental Association.

"They have been working like crazy since kickoff," Dalrymple said.

The Pre-Dental club formed five sub teams which allowed them to participate

WEEKEND RUNDOWN

• THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 21

What: Hellogoodbye
Where: University Center Arena at NSU
3301 College Ave,
Davie, FL 33314
When: 7:30 p.m.
How Much: \$15 - \$17.50

What: J J Grey Mofro
Where: Culture Room
3045 N Federal Hwy,
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33306
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$19.99

What: Premio Lo Nuestro
Where: American Airlines Arena
601 Biscayne Blvd,
Miami, FL 33132
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$30 - \$80

What: Mad Forest and The Ameirca Play
Where: The Ring Theatre
1312 Miller Drive
(University of Miami)
Coral Gables, FL 33146
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$16 - \$18

• FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 22

What: Poison the Well
Where: Culture Room
3045 N. Federal Hwy,
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33306
When: 7:30 p.m.
How Much: \$12

What: Requiem Fridays
Where: Club X-It
219 N. 21st Ave
Hollywood, FL 33020
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$10 for women, \$15 for men, and \$20 for couples

What: 30th annual Everglades Bluegrass Festiva
Where: Ives Estates Optimist Club
1511 NE 207th St
Aventura, FL 33179
When: 5 p.m.
How Much: \$20 - \$25

What: 3 for All Fridays
Where: Grove Isle Hotel
4 Grove Isle Dr
Coconut Grove, FL 33133
When: Varies
How Much: Varies

• SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 23

What: Cuban Classical Ballet of Miami's Swan Lake
Where: Fillmore
1700 Washington Ave
Miami Beach, FL 33139
When: 3:00 p.m.
How Much: \$23 - \$65

What: Women Only! In Their Studios
Where: Lowe Art Museum
1301 Stanford Dr
South Miami, FL 33146
When: Daily
How Much: Free

What: Leon Russell
Where: Culture Room
3045 N. Federal Hwy,
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33306
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$19.99

What: Oscar D'leon and Issac Delgado
Where: James L Knight Center
400 SE 2nd Ave,
Miami, FL 33131
When: 8 p.m.
How Much: \$24 - \$100

• SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 24

What: MakeUp Show
Where: Miami Beach Convention Center
1901 Convention Center Dr
Miami Beach, FL 33139
When: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
How Much: \$30 - \$45

What: Ambiance at Uva
Where: Uva
2626 Ponce de Leon Blvd
Coral Gables, FL 33134
When: Evenings
How Much: \$20

What: Amazing Sunday's
Where: Nikki Beach
1 Ocean Dr
Miami Beach, F
When: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
How Much: Varies

What: Happy Hour at Ivy
Where: Ivy Aventura Restaurant and Lounge
19004 NE 29th Ave
Aventura, FL 33180
When: 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
How Much: Varies

- Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*

Hatchbacks a cheap, fuel efficient mode of transportation



Technolust

Tech, Specs and Everything else

Susana Rodriguez

Tired of paying \$40 to \$50 a week because your SUV's a gasaholic? Want to do your part to slow down our planet's mad downward spiral into the next Ice Age - or at least pretend to? Then you should start looking for a four-cylinder hatchback for your next car.

Smaller and lighter than sedans, you'll zip through traffic and squeeze into the tightest of parking spots like a glove.

In Miami-Dade, where the road is shared with more than 2.4 million people, every inch you can save in size is not just an environmental bonus but one for your social life as well.

All the commute time and gas money you'll be pocketing can be used for other

things like a night out on the beach or a weekend in Orlando.

Now that the compact car revival is in full swing, it's important to know the best one. Here are the most popular rides under \$20,000; decide which one is right for you.

HYUNDAI ACCENT - \$10,775

If you're expecting bells and whistles, consider the spartan Accent as your beginner's guide to masochism. You won't find power locks, windows or air conditioning here, and with a 110-horsepower engine, cutting into oncoming traffic may become an everyday faith test. Thankfully, airbags come standard and plenty. The Accent sports one up front for the driver and passenger as well as seat mounted and roof curtained sets in case of side impacts. For \$1850 more you can get all the automatic options, a/c, heated mirrors and radio for a reasonable comfort.

For another \$1000, even stick shift phobia can be conquered.

If the Accent sounds right for you, you might also like the Chevy Aveo5.

Starting at \$10,895, you'll fall in love with just three words: standard tinted windows.

TOYOTA YARIS - \$11,350

For only \$575 more, the Yaris comes with all the luxury goodies the Accent's base model spurns.

While you may be getting more bang for your buck, you're sacrificing precious interior space for a sleeker body design.

The Yaris cuts an inch from both head and hip room as well as two from the shoulder. If you're tall or - perish the thought - have a pelvic bone, these trimmings will add more physical stress to your morning commute than your fellow Miami drivers offer for free.

Despite looking like an egg, the Yaris loves keeping money in your pocket where it belongs.

At 29 miles per gallon in the city, and 35 on the highway, it will stretch its \$30 fill-up for 310 miles according to www.fueleconomy.gov.

If you want to save at the pump and have room to stretch out, the Honda Fit is your ride.

You and your 150-pound Great Dane can sit soundly for \$13,950.

SCION XD, \$15,170

If you look for more in a car than space and gas mileage, Scion's xD wants you to have it. That "it" is the ability to customize the car to your heart's content.

Spoilers, exhausts, light kits, navigation systems - the xD offers a plethora of design options that allow you to create a unique car to complement your own personality. Don't get too excited just yet, though.

Dealer accessories are priced to impoverish you so you'll be looking for an after market vendor before you even pick the color of your car.

If you want actual carbon fiber flourishes, however, go with a Mini Cooper. Although it's priced at a steep, student deterring \$18,700, the Cooper has enough accessories and options available to satisfy the fussiest of car customizers.

The Mini is mini, so kiss carpooling and grocery shopping goodbye.

Whichever hatchback you choose, you'll not only be buying or leasing a car but saving yourself time, money and helping the environment.

So the next time you find yourself in a car dealer, skip past those super-sized wheels and go small, lean and green.

The Green Machines



Hyundai Accent
27 city
32 hwy



Scion xD
27 city
33 hwy



Toyota Yaris
29 city
34 hwy

fuel economy.gov

Gas Mileage Tips

- Drive more efficiently
- Keep your car in shape
- Plan and combine trips
- Choose a more efficient vehicle

www.fueleconomy.com

Relay for Life organizers seek bigger yearly budget

Relay, page 7

in virtually every RFL event, which is what lead to them winning the Spirit Award.

It is reserved for the team that participates the most throughout RFL and all events leading up to it.

The Golden Key Honor Society raised \$6815, an amazing amount according to Dalrymple, earning them the Most Funds Raised award.

Jeffrey Knapp, director of the Center for the Art of Teaching, was the top individual fund-raiser. He managed to raise \$5047.

With most of the fund raising over and awards handed out, the only thing left for RFL organizers to do is secure a permanent budget from the Student Government Association.

“We have had a lot of support from SGA this year,” Murphy said.

RFL staff will be meeting with SGA on Feb. 28 to present a proposal for a permanent budget of at least \$5,000.

Murphy commented that she could only imagine what RFL could do with \$5,000 in operating expenses compared to what they were able to with the \$3,000 stipend from SGA this year.

“We would have gone over the \$70,000 if we had the budget we needed this year,” Murphy said.

If you would like to make a donation to FIU’s Relay for Life you can visit its Web site at www.fiu.edu/~rfl.

And the award goes to:

Best Overall Greek Team:

Beta Theta Pi and Alpha XiDelta

Best Family Team:

SSWA/Phi Alpha

Best Friends Team:

Team Hope

Best Decorated Site:

Golden Key

Best Banner:

Honors Council

Best Cancer Fact:

Alpha Omicron Pi

Best Team Captain:

Pre Dental

Best Housing Team:

Lakeview South

Best Honor Society Team:

Psi Chi



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

OBSERVING THE LIGHT: Students participate in the Luminaria ceremony which honors those who have died or been affected by cancer at the Relay for Life Feb. 15.



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

LUMINARIA LIGHTER: A Relay for Life organizer lights candles in preparation for the Luminaria ceremony.

JOIN OUR STAFF!

The **BEACON** is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don't be shy.

Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.

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Sports Replay

SOFTBALL

GEORGIA 6, FIU 0

The Golden Panthers (1-5) were unable to obtain their second win of the season as they fell 6-0 to No. 18 Georgia on Feb. 15 at the Schutt Sports Invitational. It was a closely contested game through the first five innings, as the Golden Panthers headed into the sixth down just 1-0. However, the Georgia offense woke up against starter Desiree Fink to open up the game 6-0.

FIU 11, ILLINOIS STATE 1

The second win of the season for the Golden Panthers (2-5) was nothing short of an exclamation mark, as they defeated Illinois State 11-1 in six innings. Amanda Cox and Lisa Brooks hit home runs and Kim Rodriguez recorded three hits and two RBI. The Golden Panthers combined their bats and miscues by the Illinois State defense to score 11 runs.

FIU 7, PROVIDENCE 3

Their offensive momentum lifted the Golden Panthers (3-5) to their second consecutive win against Providence on Feb 16. Kim Rodriguez added another two RBI and Lauren Spiers drove in two RBI herself. The Golden Panthers struck first in the second inning and scored four runs in the fifth to break away. Two FIU errors allowed Providence to score, but they would still come up short falling 7-3.

OHIO STATE 16, FIU 4

After soundly defeating their last two opponents, the Golden Panthers (3-6) were

routed by No. 21 Ohio State 16-4 on Feb. 16. The Golden Panthers doomed themselves in the first innings, as they allowed a total of six runs, including five unearned. The Golden Panthers would not be able to dig themselves from this hole. A short rain delay in the seventh preceded the end of the game and the one-sided match.

ILLINOIS STATE 8, FIU 1

Hung-over from the Ohio State game, the Golden Panthers (3-7) scored just one run against Illinois State on Feb. 17. The Golden Panthers defeated Illinois State 11-1 in the previous meeting, but the same offense did not show up in the second game.

FIU 7, OHIO STATE 1

The Golden Panthers (4-7) redeemed their worst loss of the weekend by defeating No. 21 Ohio State 7-1 on Feb. 17. Starting pitcher, Kasey Barret, froze the Ohio state bats and held Buckeyes to just one run. Barret finished the tournament with a 3-0 record and an 0.66 ERA in 21.1 innings of work.

TENNIS

The women's tennis team reached the .500 mark by defeating UCF 6-1 on Feb. 17 at University Park. After the win, the Golden Panthers are ranked No. 33 in the country. Of the six singles matches, FIU won five. The Golden Panthers won two of three matches in the doubles competition.

Compiled by Sergio Bonilla

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NOTEBOOK

Golden Panthers near record winning streak

DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

The FIU Women's basketball team (12-13, 8-6 Sun Belt) will look to extend their 5 game winning streak as they travel to FAU (5-18, 1-13) and Troy (10-16, 3-12).

The numbers favor FIU in both games. The Golden Panthers have beaten both FAU and Troy this season, and the Panthers have a 21-1 all-time record against FAU and a 5-2 all-time record against Troy.

The streak started on a two game road trip with wins in Denver and North Texas.

FIU kept their momentum going during a three game home stand with impressive wins over ULL, MTSU and UALR.

Now, FIU will finish off their road schedule against FAU and Troy, for their first conference wins of the season.

A lot is at stake for FIU during this road trip.

If the Panthers win both games, they will clinch a winning conference record. A pair of wins would pretty much assure that the Golden Panthers host their first round Sun-Belt conference game.

Also, with two wins, FIU would have a seven game winning streak, which would be the teams biggest since an 8 game burst in 2004.

Against FAU, FIU will need to contain

the Owl's Carla Stubbs, who leads the team in scoring with 12 points a game and had a team high with 11 points when the teams met earlier this season.

FIU last played FAU on Jan. 5 at the Pharmed arena, when the Golden Panthers earned their first conference win of the season, 53-44.

Senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson led all scorers with 16 point and also pulled down 10 rebounds.

That game marked one of FIU's best defensive performances of the season, as FAU was held to 44 points- the fewest points the Panthers have allowed this season.

Only four days after FIU's home win against FAU, Troy came into town led by one of the conferences best players, senior guard Amy Lewis.

The game was close, but FIU prevailed 55-49, thanks to a season high 18 points from junior guard Iva Ciglar.

This time, Troy comes into the game having lost 9 out of their last 10 games.

Beating a team twice is never an easy task. Despite the 4-25 combined records FAU and Troy bring to the court the Golden Panthers will need avoid coming into those games overconfident.

FIU will need to continue their solid fundamental play and effort that has brought the team its five consecutive wins.

F L O R I D A I N T E R N A T I O N A L U N I V E R S I T Y

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Please come and see why.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition

The A-Bomb Survivor (Hibakusha)'s Seminar

February 25 (Monday) 2008 and February, 26 (Tuesday) 2008

Venue: GC Ballroom East (Graham Center)

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 pm

The Scholarly Presentations

February 29 (Friday) 2008

Venue: GC 243 (Graham Center)

Time: 11:00 - 1:00 pm

Panel Displays

February 25 (Monday) to March 8 (Saturday) (except Sunday March 2)

Venue: GC Panther Suite (Graham Center)

Time: 9:00 - 5:00 pm

Contributors to this project

- 北原市長 上野 文雄
- 田川 純子
- 片村 輝子
- 上田 剛
- 新田 雅子
- 大木 裕子
- 藤原 美子
- 藤岡 真雄
- 宮崎 潤美
- 鈴木 敏子
- 中国国際関係学会
- 広島ソード学会
- 広島友の会
- 加古川市立中野中学校
- 加古川市立東通小学校

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Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum



Institute for Asian Studies

SUN BELT BASEBALL STANDING

TEAM	OVERALL	CONF	PCT
Louisiana-Lafayette	45-17	23-7	.767
New Orleans	38-26	16-14	.533
Troy	34-27	16-14	.533
Middle Tennessee	32-28	16-14	.533
Louisiana-Monroe	29-28	15-14	.517
Florida Atlantic	36-22	15-15	.500
Western Kentucky	25-30	15-15	.500
South Alabama	31-26	13-16	.448
Arkansas State	23-32	13-17	.433
Florida International	26-29	12-17	.414
UALR	21-31	9-20	.310

*All records up to date as of Jun. 5th 2007

SUN BELT LEADERS

BATTING

Min 2.0 AB	G	Avg	AB	R	H	RBI	2B	3B	HR	BB
Windlansky FAU	58	.433	240	61	104	69	24	1	15	24
McOwen FIU	54	.414	220	54	91	44	22	3	2	23
MCKenna FAU	56	.413	218	46	90	60	14	2	16	37
Kendrick MT	60	.405	247	62	100	45	22	3	5	29
Dunn FIU	46	.394	155	55	61	32	13	2	6	15
Giavotella UNO	64	.385	247	65	95	65	19	4	15	54
Bomback FAU	58	.376	255	67	96	60	14	1	16	20
Baxter UNO	63	.374	235	68	88	60	12	6	11	44
Doss USA	57	.365	233	52	85	52	18	5	8	29
Robinson TROY	59	.364	239	62	87	71	18	1	17	31

PITCHING

Min 10 IP	App	ERA	W-L	Sv	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Dew TROY	27	2.48	7-2	10	65.1	49	19	18	27	97
Brewer ASU	15	2.49	5-4	0	90.1	78	37	25	38	98
Salberg FAU	25	3.05	7-3	2	100.1	85	41	34	47	124
Farquhar ULL	30	3.08	6-3	6	87.2	79	33	30	22	115
Solich ULL	17	3.21	5-2	0	73.0	78	38	26	17	63
Mixon ULM	23	3.28	5-1	8	74.0	58	32	27	29	63
Glass ULL	16	3.42	7-5	0	81.2	95	45	31	21	65
Whalen UNO	30	3.61	9-5	4	67.1	67	33	27	35	56
Robinson MT	16	4.0	8-2	0	83.1	82	44	37	33	74
Carter WKU	19	4.13	6-5	0	85.0	82	51	39	37	64

HITS

Min 2.0 AB	HITS
Widlansky FAU	104
Kendrick MT	100
Bomback FAU	96
Lucroy ULL	95
Giavotella UNO	95

RBI

Min 2.0 AB	RBI
Robinson TROY	71
Widlansky FAU	69
Lucroy ULL	68
Giavotella UNO	65
Bishop MT	65

RUNS SCORED

Min 2.0 AB	RUNS SCORED
Baxter UNO	68
Bomback FAU	67
Giavotella UNO	65

HOME RUNS

Min 2.0 AB	HOME RUNS
Cunningham USA	22
Block FAU	18
Lucroy ULL	18
Robinson TROY	17
Bishop MY	17

STRIKE OUTS

Min 2.0 AB	IP	SO
Salberg FAU	100.1	124
Farquhar ULL	87.2	115
Brewer ASU	90.1	98
Dew TROY	65.1	97
Klump UALL	100.2	92

STOLEN BASES

Min 2.0 AB	SB-ATT
Craze TROY	25-29
Bowser UNO	25-30
Ray MT	24-29
Logan ULL	19-23
Kruml USA	18-23

TOTAL BASES

Min 2.0 AB	TOTAL BASES
Widlansky FAU	175
Lucroy ULL	174
Giavotella UNO	167
Bomback FAU	160
Block FAU	159

DOUBLES

Min 2.0 AB	DOUBLES
Widlansky FAU	24
Kendrick MT	22
McOwen FIU	22
LuCroy ULL	19
Giavotella UNO	19

Allen and Polizano to anchor rotation; bench deep with talent

BASEBALL, page 12

"Ryan has tremendously improved over the last year under assistant coach and infield instructor Sean Allen," Thomas said.

Solid defender Junior Arrojo will start at shortstop as the sophomore has also played at second base. He batted .211 with six doubles and a triple in 53 games last season.

Sophomore Kevin Mirabal is likely to get the nod behind the plate after winning a toughly fought four-man contest. He batted .326 with two home runs and 16 RBI. Junior transfer Steven Stropp and freshman Ruy Rodriguez could also see extensive time there as well.

Designated Hitter- Heavy-hitting sophomore Tyler Townsend has won this spot and will look to improve upon his surprising freshman campaign in which he batted .338, while hitting five home runs and driving in 32 RBI. He had offseason surgery after dealing with a nagging shoulder

that bothered him all last season.

Bench- A satisfying bench can be expected this year as the depth is decent. The team has about 14 players that Thomas will count upon to "swing the bat" as he described and provide defensive replacements.

"There is a not a bench in sports that is not important," he said.

Starting Pitching- First-year pitching coach Felipe Suarez mentioned that the strengths of the rotation are the returning No. 1 and 2 guys, senior Chad Allen and sophomore Corey Polizano, respectively. He also explained how No. 3 starter senior Steven Stewart has the ability to be an ace as well. Allen is expected to take the mound on opening night.

The only cloudy area is mid-week starters. Four hopefuls will eventually fill the area: seniors Eric Horstmann, James Lajiness, Kyle Preshong and junior Jorge Ramos.

Bullpen- "The back-end of the bullpen controls

the running game well by keeping the ball down in the zone," Suarez said. Either right-handed sophomore Brian Santana or left-handed sophomore Evan Ellison will

assume the closer's duties. Keep an eye out for a potential underdog story in senior walk-on brothers Carlos and Dan Martinez.



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

EYE ON THE BALL: With new head coach Turtle Thomas at the helm, the Golden Panthers may soon find themselves back in the College World Series.



Do you like sports?

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to cover a sporting event?

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THIS WEEKEND IN FIU SPORTS

FEBRUARY 22

Softball vs. Connecticut & Illinois (5 and 7 p.m.) at Miami

Baseball vs. Southern Cal (7 p.m.) University Park

Home games in bold

FEBRUARY 23

Softball vs. Alabama & Connecticut (4 and 6:30 p.m.) at Miami

Baseball vs. Southern Cal (7 p.m.) University Park

FEBRUARY 24

Softball vs. Illinois (1 p.m.) at Miami

Baseball vs. Southern Cal (1 p.m.) University Park

* Conference game

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The BEACON is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don't be shy. Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.

Thomas will prove us wrong



Commentary

Xavier Villarmarzo
Copy Editor

Oh, Zach Thomas, how I will miss thee greatly. For over a decade you roamed the middle of the Miami Dolphins' once tenacious defense and never let up even when the defense was not so tenacious.

You, along with Jason Taylor, were the unquestioned leaders of the defense, setting the example for everyone else by not stopping until the whistle blew.

Dolphin fans loved you to the point where it was like a long-term relationship, because every emotion was felt equally. When the fans got excited with the team, you got excited. When the fans got frustrated with the team's play, so did you. And when the fans were frustrated to the point of leaving, you gave them a reason to stay.

However, like most relationships, they sometimes come to an end.

The new Dolphins' front office regime doesn't see you as a long-term option. Bill Parcells and his cronies say you are no longer good for the team. Too old and too injured.

But Dolphin fans know the truth. You may have had constant migraines stemming from a concussion you suffered, but like you have done most of your career, you'd fight back from it and be the same old Zach.

Sadly, they will not see you be the same old Zach in a Dolphin's uniform..

Maybe it's for the best, though. You've suffered through enough hardships with this franchise and stuck by it even when you didn't have to. That loyalty should be rewarded with a ring - a Super Bowl one.

The Dolphins are far from a Super Bowl team and you deserve better, especially if it means winning the big one. Knowing our luck, you will be snatched up by the New England Patriots, your once bitter archrival, who have a penchant for signing aging linebackers from Dolphins who are thought to be washed up.

Regardless of which team you end up with know that we will be rooting for you to do great, even if it's with the Patriots. Except for those two Sundays a year when the Dolphins play them. But you understand, right?

And even though you may feel hurt that the thing you have literally sacrificed your body for 12 seasons decides you're no longer good enough, but you deserve better than this franchise in shambles. You deserve a luxurious mansion and the Dolphins are tornado-ravished mobile home in the process of being rebuilt and it won't be finished until it's too late for you.

They once said you were undersized. After all, 5-11 linebackers aren't supposed to be good, right?

They also said you were too slow. Slow middle linebackers will never survive in the NFL, right?

Twelve seasons and seven Pro Bowls later, you proved them all wrong.

Now, they say you're too old. Old linebackers aren't supposed to be good, right?

Like you've done throughout your career, you'll prove them wrong once again.

A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

Panthers look to slug their way to top

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

After several months of hype and anticipation, the Turtle Thomas Era will finally begin on Feb. 22 as the FIU baseball team opens up its season with a non-conference, three-game set against perennial powerhouse Southern California at University Park Stadium.

Widely known for his recruiting and scouting prowess, Thomas brings a fresh new mentality to FIU baseball after taking over for former coach Danny Price, who was fired after 27 seasons with FIU. His extensive background in the aforementioned areas give him a very high probability of carrying his past successes over to FIU.

While this is Thomas's first head coaching job, he has worked as an assistant head coach with several successful programs, such as Clemson, Georgia Tech, the University of Miami, and most recently Arizona State University.

A disappointing 26-29 finish last year will certainly be on the minds of the returning players as Thomas will strive to improve upon that below average mark. Playing in the Sun Belt Conference, the No. 6 ranked conference in the nation, will include challenging opponents for the Golden Panthers in what figures to be an intriguing schedule.

Outfielders- The three positions are pretty much determined. Junior Jordan Karcher starts in left field, senior Raimy Fuentes will be

in center field and right field will be occupied by senior John Petika Fuentes and Petika are returning while newcomer Karcher comes as a transfer from Gulf Coast Community College. Petika is the Golden Panthers' top returning hitter as he batted .342 and led the team in home runs and RBI. He switches to the outfield after playing first base last year. Fuentes returns after starting 40 out of the 52 games last year. He hit .307 with three home runs and 24 RBI. His ability to avoid strikeouts is promising as he struck out only 16 times in 163 at bats.

Infielders- Every position is solidified except for third base as Thomas describes the opening as "up for grabs." The incumbents that are still vying for the spot

are: senior and the only four-year team member Corey Lozano, freshman Javier Sujo, freshman Anthony Boza and freshman Jared Schlehuber.

First base will be occupied by Louisville transfer Jorge Castillo. He played at Louisville for three seasons and compiled a .301 average with 13 home runs and 130 RBI before deciding to finish out his career in his hometown. He was a clutch performer for the Cardinals in their 2007 run to the College World Series. He could also see time at third base.

Junior Ryan Mollica will start at second base after redshirting unexpectedly seven games into last season due to an elbow injury.