

BOOK REVIEWS

Institute kicks off lecture series

AT THE BAY

PAGE 4

BROKEN COVERAGE

Media, candidates ignore Iraq

OPINION

PAGE 5

DANCE 'TIL YOU DROP

Dance competition returns

LIFE!

PAGE 6

HOMETOWN LEGEND

Carlos Arroyo's number retired

SPORTS

PAGE 12



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

PUNCH IT: Sophomore Daniela Diaz workouts at the Recreation Center by punching a speed bag.

Recreation Services offers ways to keep New Year's resolutions

CHRISTINA VEIGA
News Director

Besides debt reduction, quitting smoking and stress elimination, losing weight and getting fit are among the most popular New Year's Resolutions, according to USA.gov. Recreation Services at University Park is ready to help students stick to their healthy promises during the New Year.

"It's busy at the beginning of every semester—especially after the New Year. We're overwhelmed with people," Carlos Zayas, building supervisor for Recreation Services said.

Graduate student Meaghan Bradshaw thinks she knows why this gym is so packed this time of year.

"I think going home for the holidays and eating mom's food, and then coming home to beach weather motivates students to come at the beginning of the year," Bradshaw said.

To help students work off mom's home-cooking, group fitness classes, personal training and intramural sports are being offered again by the Recreation Center at UP, after being closed over the winter break. The classes are offered at a variety of times, intensities and costs so that students can choose a work out time that fits their schedules and individual needs.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, this is an important aspect of maintaining a

New Year's resolution.

Resolutions that are realistic and have reasonable time frames are more likely to be kept.

"Taking our group fitness classes is not only healthy, but it's a fun and interactive way to get in shape. It's not like being a zombie and just going to the gym," Zayas said.

For early risers, the "20/20/20" class is offered as early as 7 a.m., which is geared towards increasing metabolism through 20 minutes each of jumping rope, strength conditioning and abdominal work.

There are many other workout classes available but "Zumba," which allows participants to "dance away their worries," according to the Rec Center Web site, is gaining popularity.

"Zumba is one of our most favorable classes, especially for women, here at FIU. We even have males who joined the class," Zayas said. "You're dancing, but you're also doing a workout at the same time.

Most classes are free, though some charge up to \$3 per class. Others, such as Boot Camp or Women on Weights, last several weeks and cost up to \$30. For a complete pricing list see the Rec Center's Web site.

While the fitness classes are a big help in keeping a New Year's resolution, they are only half the answer. Personal trainers play a crucial role, according to Rec Center staff.

REC CENTER, page 3



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

CRUNCH TIME: Albert Santana, freshman, gets fit in the Rec center.

CAPACITY OVERRIDES

Students find solutions for closed courses

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

When the end of a semester nears, students sit anxiously at their computers, waiting for their registration appointment so they can pick classes needed to graduate.

For some students, though, registration appointments come too late, and popular or required classes fill up before a chance to register is obtained.

For that reason, it's important to know that students may still be able to get into classes that are already full by filling out a Capacity Override Form, or a little luck.

"We've been getting a lot of calls to get [overrides] done," Martha Cabrera, who answers phones at the Enrollment Services Call Center said.

When it comes to registration

With this form in hand, students should show up to class early, and sit as close to the professor as possible because just like PantherSoft registration, overrides are first come, first served.

Matas said that she has had to get overrides many times and they are not always successful.

"One time the professor put names into a hat because there were so many people who wanted an override," Matas said.

Students may have more luck getting into closed classes if the room where the class was being held is capable of seating more students than thought, in which case the professor has the authority to allow more students into the class.

Seniors should know that for some classes, such as SPC 4445 Corporate Communication & Leadership, professors will

“ Jenny Matas, senior

One time the professor put names into a hat because there were so many students who wanted an override.

appointments, freshmen get the first appointments, seniors get the second and juniors and sophomores are last to register, according to the Academic Advising Center's Freshman 411 Web site. Honors College Students and students registered with the Disability Center have priority over the general student population.

For senior Jenny Matas, even having an early enrollment appointment does not always help.

"It's survival of the fittest," Matas said. "Sometimes [FIU] only offer a class once every two years."

The first step in trying to get into a closed course is writing down the day and time of the first class of the semester and then going to the department that's offering the class and picking up the Capacity Override Form.

sign the form if the student is only missing one class for graduation.

There are a few things to take into consideration when attempting to get into closed classes – professors don't have to give you an override, and if they are giving them out, it's usually a limited number.

"It's always at the discretion of the professor to let another student in. It's never guaranteed," Cabrera said.

If a professor agrees to let another student into a full class, he or she must sign the Capacity Override Form. The student is then responsible for getting the form stamped by the department that is offering the class and for returning it within two days to the Office of the Registrar. Once a student has done this, he or she can register for the class.

OVERRIDES, page 3

NEWSFLASH

Social welfare program ranks fourth in nation for faculty productivity

The faculty of the Ph.D. social welfare program at FIU was ranked number four in the nation according to the Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index, produced by Academic Analytics.

Faculty productivity is measured by books published, journal publications, citations of journal articles, federal grant dollars awarded and honors and awards. The importance of each category is decided by its relevance in a given area of study. UC Berkeley, the University of Michigan and the University of Washington placed ahead of FIU.

According to Paul Stuart, professor and director of the School of Social Work, the social welfare program at FIU focuses on addictions, child welfare, mental health, adolescence, evidence-based practice and works with Hispanic populations.

To view a list of recognized professors, visit: http://news.fiu.edu/releases/2007/12-21_excellence.htm.

Guest artist performs one-woman show, conducts workshops at UP

The Wertheim Performing Arts Center will host *Miracle Tomato*, a one-woman show by actress and playwright Jessica Cerullo on Jan. 18-19 at 8 p.m.

The show begins with *Angelina*, an Italian-American waitress, who holds a tomato in her hand. Throughout the show, the tomato's history and how it relates to the world is unraveled, as well as Angelina's own history.

Miracle Tomato runs for 70 minutes and tickets are \$10.00 for general admission and \$9.00 for FIU students, alumni and senior citizens. Cerullo will also conduct student workshops on campus on Jan. 19-20.

For more information, call 305-348-3789 or 305-348-3365.

BFA Fall 2007 Exhibition displays students' work

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum at University Park will display the work of FIU students who are seeking a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of Art and Art History now through Jan. 19 as part of the BFA Fall 2007 Exhibition.

Students whose work will be displayed include: Cristina Aballi, Karen E. Baquedano, Nanette Charles, Andrés G. Erazo, Ana Garcia, Kristy González, EJ Greaves, Ivania Guerrero, Cinthya Guillén, Chad Harris, Jillian Mayer, Javier Proenza, Diani Safdeye and Jaime Alberto Segui.

For more information, call 305-348-2890 or visit www.frostartmuseum.org.

Florida Board of Governors challenges travel ban

Professors in Florida may have more freedom to travel to Cuba and other "state sponsors of terrorism" following a Florida's Board of Governors filing in U.S. federal court last month.

The ACLU also filed a lawsuit against the ban in Oct 2006.

The Board of Governors has asked a federal judge to throw out part of a 2006 law that bans colleges from spending money on sending professors to places like Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea and Sudan.

Lawyers for the Board of Governors maintain that Florida's Constitution gives the Board of Governors autonomy over University research and educational activities, which is the same argument that the board is using in a separate lawsuit to challenge the Legislature's authority to control University tuition rates.

~ Compiled by Christina Veiga, Beacon Staff

BACK IN SESSION



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

BUSY BODIES: As the semester begins, crowds of students take over the Graham Center once again. As always, the Graham Center's various food options and student services provides a hub for students to relax between their busy class schedules.

LATINO HEALTH ISSUES

Grant awarded for HIV research

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
Staff Writer

FIU received a \$6.5 million grant from the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities to continue the University's research programs on HIV/AIDS and drug abuse among Latinos in South Florida.

"This prestigious grant allows us to continue making a difference in the community," said FIU Executive Vice President and Provost Ronald Berkman in a press release.

The grant is good news for Miami, as the city continues to top National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports as the metropolitan area with the second highest incidents of HIV/AIDS for Latinos.

The grant, awarded in Nov. 2007 from the National Institutes of Health will mainly be used to continue research by FIU's Center for Research on U.S. Latinos HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse, also known as CRUSADA.

CRUSADA conducts training for up-and-coming researchers and develops prevention programs for Latinos.

"Most studies that investigate the effectiveness of drug treatment or alcohol treatment have been conducted, with few exceptions, in samples of White, non-Latino populations," Mario De la Rosa, FIU professor and CRUSADA director said in an e-mail. "We want to know what is going on in the Latino community."

To accomplish their

goals, CRUSADA will use the grant money to perform a number of studies related to substance abuse among Latinos.

The money will also be used for research training for doctorate students in the field of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.

"We hope that the research we conduct in CRUSADA will result in the provision of more effective treatment for Latinos, leading to a reduction of substance abuse problems in this population," De la Rosa said in an e-mail.

Also in the works is a community-based agency which will help pin-point the most effective substance abuse programs for Latinos.

They are also working on a women's study that

concentrates on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS among Latino women.

FIU also plans on expanding its HIV/AIDS outreach program "You Gotta Know, Hay Que Saber" with the grant money.

CRUSADA aims to equalize national research that ignores Latinos and their distinctiveness, De la Rosa said.

"Most studies for treatment focus on the white individual," De la Rosa said. "We do not know if there is cultural uniqueness from which the Latino could benefit."

According to De la Rosa in an e-mail, most of the current research has focused on white communities.

This has made it unclear whether or not incorporating unique cultural factors may lead to more effective treatments.

For example, since the Latino community stresses family unity, part of the research will look at whether or not involving the participant's family through substance abuse rehabilitation programs would be beneficial.

Research will also focus on whether or not substance abuse and HIV/AIDS is more prevalent among first generation immigrants or Latin-Americans.

De la Rosa also said that the substance abuse and HIV/AIDS problem will not be cured overnight but the grant will help the program combat ballooning HIV/AIDS and substance abuse problems among Latinos in South Florida.

"This is an ongoing effort, it will not disappear, but our hope is that it will be reduced," De la Rosa said.

THE BEACON

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Center gets students pumped for new year

REC CENTER, page 1

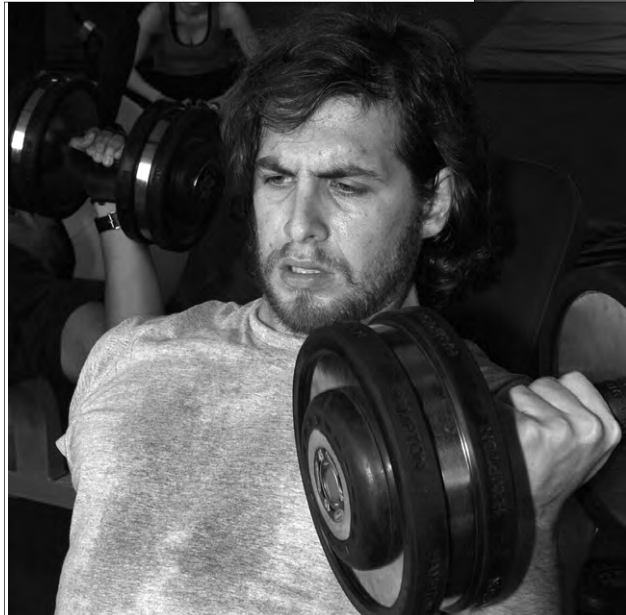
“The benefit [of working with a personal trainer] would be the one-on-one attention,” said Lance Kearns, graduate assistant for facilities at Recreation Services. “They are nationally certified, so their life is personal fitness.”

Trainers are available for a fee in the Rec Center, with initial consultations and pre/post assessments starting at \$20 each and individual rates for a one-hour training session starting at \$30 – the price, Kearns said, is worth it.

“It probably is for students in general, but in comparison to regular private trainers, it’s very reasonable,” Kearns said.

The Rec Center is able to offer reduced rates for personal trainers because a portion of their services is included in the Recreation Services budget. Essentially students only pay for their work with a trainer and not their trainer’s time and the facilities used.

According to Kearns, students who work with personal trainers are more likely to continue to work out



on a regular basis because the trainer works to accommodate the student’s needs. Personal trainers can also be an advantage for students who are inexperienced or uncomfortable in a workout setting, Kearns said. All this translates into a greater likelihood that New Year’s resolutions are kept.

Other options to stay fit and keep that weight-loss resolution can be found in the intramural sports offered by the Rec Center. There

are leagues in soccer, dodge ball, ultimate frisbee and basketball, among others, for the Spring 2008 semester.

Students must be enrolled for at least one credit hour and must be a recreation member to participate. Currently enrolled students who have paid the Activity and Services fee of \$10.52 per credit hour for continuing students are automatically Rec members. To form an intramural sports team, a team captain must be selected and register the team



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

RESOLUTION KEEPERS:

Leon Taylor, freshman, goes up for the shot in the basketball court. Tj Liguori, graduate student, lifts weights

by the appropriate deadline.

Students and Recreation Members can also bring as many as two guests per visit to the Rec Center by paying \$10 each or a \$5 per person, per visit fee for racquetball, in addition to a guest waiver being signed.

For more information on Group Fitness classes, personal trainers, or intramural sports at FIU UP, visit the Recreation Services Web site at <http://www.fiu.edu/~camprec>.

How to join the “in” crowd

OVERRIDES, page 1

There are times when a professor will not or cannot grant an override, but there is one more process that students can try, one that Marbely Hernandez, president of the Student Government Council at University Park, has tried first hand – attending class until a seat becomes available.

“It was a little frustrating,” Hernandez said. “I was not able to get an override so I attended the class and kept checking Panther Soft. It was even more frustrating when another lady was able to get a seat while I was in another class.”

Hernandez’s strategy was essentially a waiting game. Since her professor could not grant an override, Hernandez had to wait and constantly check PantherSoft to see if a student had dropped the class.

Students can drop classes during the first two weeks of the semester

without penalty, which is the time period that students are more likely to get one of those newly available seats before it becomes too late in the semester.

“The first time I had to get an override, I only knew how to do it by word of mouth,” Hernandez said. “I would not have known how to do it unless I had asked around. But I think the process is much more visible now.”

Students can avoid the hassles of trying to get into closed classes by being aware of what courses are needed and when their registration appointment is.

With the new three-day-a-week schedule, registering a semester in advance may also be a good idea.

“Planning ahead is the best bet. If you plan ahead, you have more choices available for you, and more times,” Cabrera said.

For more info on registration you can visit registrar.fiu.edu.

Additional reporting by Christina Veiga, Beacon staff

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Osher Institute presents book review lecture series

SUSANA RODRIGUEZ
Asst. News Director

Students can start curling up with a season of good books on Jan. 14 with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's book review lecture series.

Ronelle Delmont, FIU alumna and OLLI instructor, founded the lecture series three years ago.

"I consider my lectures on popular books as an intellectual form of entertainment," Delmont said in an e-mail interview. "I do not use notes and I do not read from a paper so each one is different from the others, even if it is the same book."

Delmont began lecturing while working toward her Bachelor's of Science in International Relations with plans to become an immigration lawyer.

After graduating in 1996, she decided to take a break from her studies and has been lecturing ever since.

"I was exhausted from having gone to school for four straight years and needed

a break," Delmont said. "I was, by that time, in great demand with the senior communities in all three counties and working full time."

The series will open with Al Gore's "The Assault on Reason" an argument about threats to democratic reason in our country presented by celebrity culture, the media and propaganda.

The series continues throughout this semester with Michael Chabon's "The Yiddish Policemen's Union", Jeanette Walls' "The Glass Castle" and Orhan Pamuk's "Snow."

Delmont selects books based on her audience and her expectations for them.

"I choose books that have something of interest for senior audiences and my hope is to inspire them to read better books more often," Delmont said.

Students don't need to worry about showing up to lectures having already read the material - this is one class where homework is optional, according to Lonnie Colan, an OLLI program assistant.

"It's really for adults wanting to learn with no homework, no exams and no credit. People come here to learn and make social contacts," Colan said. "[It's] just what she thinks is exciting material, fiction and non fiction. She's a very dramatic presenter. All ages are welcome."

Delmont's book review series is just one of the benefits OLLI provides.

"We have a tremendous interest in current topics and the lecture series is one of the ways we fulfill this commitment to our members," said Mercedes Martha Ponce, executive director of continuing and professional studies. "Our instructors are extremely passionate about their fields. Their subject matter varies from art history to computer training to current affairs."

The cost of registration for the entire series is \$70. Taken individually, each lecture is \$20. Call 305-919-5910 to register.

CANDLE ART FACTORY



SUSANA RODRIGUEZ/THE BEACON

COOLING THE MOLDS: Armante Labady and Michelle Garel, graduate students in the higher education administration program, enjoy candle making with Stephanie Roth and Sofia Orendain of La Luna Entertainment.

North Miami Beach officer found shot, dead in vehicle

LISA ORKIN EMMANUEL
AP Wire

A Miami police officer was found shot to death in an unmarked patrol car riddled with bullet holes early Tuesday, becoming South Florida's fourth law enforcement officer killed in recent months.

Detective James Walker, 30, was found in his car in an alley by North Miami Beach officers responding to reports of shots fired around 12:50 a.m., said Miami police spokesman Lt. Bill Schwartz.

He had been shot multiple times, apparently with a high-powered weapon, and it wasn't known if he returned fire, Schwartz said.

"His car had been filled with holes," he said. "The car was made into Swiss cheese."

Police were now searching for at least one gunman and a white Ford Taurus with bullet holes.

Schwartz said police had no suspects identified, but investigators were questioning drug dealers, gang members and others to see if they had information.

One man being questioned had been shot in the arm Tuesday morning, but police did not call him a suspect.

"He might just be an innocent

John Randle, Detective James Walker's brother-in-law

I don't know what he was doing in this alley. He was a good, humble guy. He was no trouble. I can't tell you no flaws.

bystander," Schwartz said.

"I know we have checked a lot of homes, run down a lot of leads. We don't have a suspect at this point," said Delrish Moss, a Miami Police spokesman. "We are not stopping."

Blood trails led from Walker's car, and officers in flak jackets, helmets and rifles walked around the scene as investigators searched the area for clues.

Police said a high powered assault weapon was found at the scene, but did not disclose whether it was the one used to kill Walker.

Walker went off-duty around 11 p.m. Monday. It's not clear what he was doing in North Miami Beach, Schwartz said.

Walker's body was removed from the car and taken to the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner's office for an autopsy.

Law enforcement members lined both sides of the street and saluted as the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue

vehicle drove past, escorted by five police officers on motorcycles.

One of the motorcycle officers was struck by a car on Interstate 95, but was conscious and talking as he was transported to a Miami hospital, Schwartz said.

"We think he's going to be fine," he added.

Walker had been a member of the Miami police since 2000, and had been working with the department's domestic violence unit.

His ex-wife lived in the area where he was found, said John Randle, the detective's brother-in-law.

"I don't know what he was doing in this alley," Randle told The Associated Press. "He was a good, humble guy. He was no trouble. I can't tell you no flaws."

A North Miami Beach police spokesman said the area is not considered a hot spot for drugs or gangs, but referred all calls for specifics to the Miami police department.

NEWSFLASH

Kayak on the Bay

Biscayne Bay Recreation invites students to Kayak on Oleta River Jan. 11 at noon. Students are asked to meet with BBR staff at the boat ramp behind the aquatic center the day of the event. Equipment is provided, no experience necessary. Call 305-919-4701 for details.

SJMC students honored by *New York Times*

The New York Times has chosen FIU students Yolanne Almanzar and Jose Pagliery for their Hispanic Student Journalism Institute program at the University of Arizona. Almanzar and Pagliery were chosen from a pool of 18 national competitors.

Six FIU students have participated to date, making FIU's School of Journalism and Mass Communication the only U.S. program with so many honorees. Almanzar and Pagliery begin with HSJI in Jan. 2008.

Cinema Thursdays returns

Cinema Thursdays starts off the Spring semester with "Dan in Real Life," Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. The reel keeps rolling with "American Gangster" screening Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. and "I Am Legend" March 13 at 5 p.m. The season closes with "The Great Debaters" April 10 at 7 p.m. All movies are shown in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre. Call 305-919-5280 for more information.

SGA offers scholarship applications

Student Government Association has eight \$500 scholarships available for the Fall and Spring semesters. Four one-time \$250 scholarships are also available. GPA requirements range between a 2.5 through 3.5 minimum depending on award stipulations. To apply, stop by the SGA-BBC's office in WUC 141 to pick up an application. Deadline is March 14 at 5p.m.

- Compiled by Susana Rodriguez

ELECTION '08 NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARY

Hillary wins N.H.; race will be a long one

CHRIS CABRAL
Asst. Life! Editor

Well, I guess no one is going to cruise to the nomination. Months before Barack Obama won Iowa, Chris Matthews and other pundits called the nomination for Hillary Clinton, some mocking the notion that Barack Obama could even come close to winning the nomination.

Then Barack Obama won Iowa, and all of a sudden he had a chance. Unfortunately, the media, apparently eager to anoint a new inevitable frontrunner, acted as if Barack Obama won on Monday, the day before the primary.

Meanwhile, the Clinton campaign sent out signals that they were worried about New Hampshire, that they were reeling from an unexpectedly strong Obama.

Then Hillary narrowly won

the New Hampshire primary. And the media was forced to deal with a more complicated narrative. The overdramatic nature of the media's treatment of Obama's rise just made Clinton's "comeback" more dramatic.

As a Democrat and Obama supporter, I had worried that those favoring Obama's candidacy seemed a bit overconfident, and perhaps some of his supporters were.

Now, with Nevada and South Carolina looming, it's anybody's game, with Hillary and Barack set for a dramatic battle. While we won't know who the Democratic nominee is for weeks now, one thing is certain. Nothing in politics is predictable, and no candidate on either side can be called "inevitable."

Chris Cabral currently serves as the president of the FIU College Democrats



McCain victory puts him back in the game

JOSE MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

Failing to duplicate the results of the Iowa primary election, surprise winner Mike Huckabee was defeated by Mitt Romney and John McCain; the latter of whom secured the victory in the tightly contested New Hampshire primary election.

McCain's victory in New Hampshire can only serve to contribute to the uncertainty as to who will claim

the Republican presidential nomination. Mitt Romney, who appeared to be the front-runner prior to the Iowa primary, has seen a considerable decline in his support, which is evident from his inability to garner victory in either primary.

One-time front-runner Rudy Giuliani saw his support in the polls begin to wane even before the Iowa caucus, in the wake of allegations which called attention to his infidelities.

The inability of both Romney and Giuliani to garner victory in the two caucuses brings the viability of both campaigns into question. McCain's win in New Hampshire will likely serve as a wake-up call to all the other Republican candidates, who will redouble their efforts in the specter of the upcoming South Carolina caucus.

The importance of a victory in South Carolina has become ever more clear to both Romney and Giuliani, who have yet to deliver on the promise of their earlier popularity. One thing remains clear, however, the nomination can go anywhere, as no clear-cut front-runner has yet to emerge.

Huckabee's appeal seems to be limited to areas where his Conservative Christian support base can mobilize, and it remains unclear if McCain can duplicate his success in New Hampshire elsewhere.



REMEMBER IRAQ?



KHALID MOHAMMED/AP PHOTO

CLOSER TO NORMAL: Toys are displayed in a store at market in the Shiite Karradah neighborhood in Baghdad. This area in central Baghdad, has come closer to normalcy than any other Baghdad neighborhood.

With a decline in violence comes a decline in coverage of the war

CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Production Manager

With the amount of media coverage being given to the race for the presidency and its primary process, important issues are being lost in the shuffle. Once the issue that dominated the headlines, the Iraq war has taken a backseat in the minds of most Americans to more domestic issues like healthcare, immigration and the economy.

The downturn in the amount of coverage comes at a time when the situation on the ground is improving. Speaking with reporters via video-conference last December, Major Joseph Fil, a commander of multinational troops in Baghdad, put the situation in perspective.

"The number of attacks against citizens in Baghdad has dropped by almost 80 percent since November 2006," he said. "The number of vehicle-borne [Improvised Explosive Device] incidents has also declined by about 70 percent."

Army Col. Paul E. Funk, commander of a Brigade Combat Team, or BCT, also recognizes clear signs of improvement.

"We have seen attacks drop from an average of 150 a week in [the] late January and February [2007] time frame, to less than 10 attacks a week," Funk said. "The result has been nothing short of phenomenal."

So why the drop in coverage? Shouldn't the media be praising the success of the President Bush backed "surge" of 30,000 additional troops into Iraq to quell the rampant sectarian violence? What's to be said about the flourishing of businesses and the overall return to normalcy in the Iraqi capital?

Though the media has not com-

pletely ignored recent military successes, it seems that because news outlets have run out of bad news to report, they have turned their attention away from the war and focused it on the presidential campaign.

Even coverage of the campaign itself is reminiscent of the coverage of celebrity scandals with pundits and analysts spending night after night poring over candidates' actions and words, siphoning each for meanings that may or may not be there.

Though the coverage of the

Democrats went in bringing attention to its failures.

You can't blame the Democrats for not wanting people to consider the war as their main issue. As things improve and it becomes evident that perhaps the President's plan wasn't such a bad idea after all. Bringing too much attention to Iraq might actually backfire on the Dems in favor of the GOP.

Also absent from the national discussion arena is criticism for those Democrats initially against the surge.

Col. Paul E. Funk, Brigade Combat Team commander

We have seen attacks drop from an average of 150 a week in [the] late January and February [2007] time frame, to less than 10 attacks a week... The result has been nothing short of phenomenal.

campaign is necessary, this country currently has troops in harms way, risking their lives on a daily basis. Their successes on the ground are just as or even more important than their failures.

The media isn't alone in its decreasing coverage of the war. Once a key issue for any Democrat in pursuit of the White House, you are far less likely to hear any Democrat mention the war in their stump speeches or campaign ads. In fact, according to TNS Media Intelligence, at the beginning of October last year, nearly 40 percent of all Democratic campaign ads contained the words "Iraq" or "Iraqi" with Senator Barack Obama mentioning it the most overall.

By the end of December, that number was down to 3 percent. By this time, Republicans started touting the successes of the surge a bit more, but never to the extent that

In early 2007, when the situation in Iraq was at its most dire, it was smart politics to disagree with anything and everything the president said.

Democrats, and even some Republicans, disregarded the troop surge idea as more of the same. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, in a letter to president Bush in early 2007, called the idea "a strategy that you have already tried and that has already failed."

Many Democrats and Republicans alike were both against a surge that by most accounts has been a success - except John McCain of course, the surge's strongest initial advocate.

Those Democrats and Republicans against the surge should be questioned about these convictions just as they are questioned about their initial convictions about whether or not to invade Iraq in the first place.

Panther Promotions makes its name by giving away freebies

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

Panther Promotions, a new club created last fall within the Student Organizations Council, wants to give you free stuff.

"The thing with Panther Promotions is that it's like [the] selfless little friend you have who never thinks about themselves and is always looking for ways to help you," said Rosalyn Delgado, a member of Panther Promotions.

With over 20 members, this unique club has a mission of providing various organizations on campus with promotional items such as movie passes and T-shirts, all to enhance the pre-existing events of those clubs.

"Any organization on campus can simply come up to us and say, 'Hey, I need giveaways for a fund-raising event' and we will provide them with giveaways," Delgado said. "It's like a 'go-to' club."

Ayxa Barbel, a junior majoring in public relations, is Panther Promotions' founder and president. Her inspiration in creating this club "has been a long time coming," she said.

In the past Barbel has been involved in both the Student Programming Council and WRGP Radiate FM.

Barbel was able to provide giveaways for both of these organizations for their respective events. Even though her primary focus was to get items for her own organizations, she still had many frequent requests from other organizations and departments such as Housing, Panther Rage and the Orientation office.

"I felt it was time to be 100 percent FIU, not 90 percent WRGP and 10 percent FIU, or 90 percent SPC and 10 percent FIU," Barbel said.

Networking has been Barbel's key in obtaining all of her promotional items.

While working for WRGP, she was able to build a strong foundation with many companies and venues in Florida, including Allied Advertising and Live Nation.

As she became involved with other organizations, the companies were confident to move with her and still provide her with many items for giveaways.

Last fall, PP worked with and provided promotional items for Be HIV Educated (B-HIVE), Panther Rage, Office of Admissions, the International Students Club and Music Saves Lives.

According to PP secretary Lyzette Blanco, promotional managers in the club act as liaisons between the organization that is requesting items to give away and Panther Promotions.

Also last fall, Panther Promotions helped collect toys for a toy drive promoting the family movie "Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium," starring Dustin Hoffman and Natalie Portman.

The drive was held in 10 cities across the United States and broke the world record for the most toys collected in a single week during a toy drive. The group received a certificate recognizing this accomplishment.

Although the club receives and provides promotional items, storage has become a problem, since they apparently have so much to give away that they have been nearly overwhelmed.

"It would be much easier for us to function and benefit the Graham Center along with the various organizations on campus if we had a specific place to work out of," Barbel said. "Having an office would give students, faculty and organizations a better way to reach us when they need our assistance."

Barbel's goal for Panther Promotions is to have the organization become an asset to the Florida International University community and she hopes to achieve this through persistent hard work and dedication to the club.

"What we want is to help organizations have the best events that they can have while we reward FIU students for coming out to them," Barbel said.

The group is hoping to have their logo and internet site up this semester to allow them to gain more exposure and visibility on campus. They will be participating in the Student Organizations Council (SOC) Club Fair where they hope to recruit more new members and establish their name and raise awareness about their existence on campus.

Meetings are every Thursday from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Their locations vary every week. For more information about Panther Promotions, students can contact the organization by e-mail at PantherP@fiu.edu.

DANCE OFF!

Competition doubles as charity for local hospital

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

The FIU Dance Marathon philanthropy is dedicated to raising funds and awareness for the Children's Miracle Network, whose hospitals treat nearly 17 million children each year for virtually all diseases.

On Feb. 6, DM will be hosting its second annual event to raise funds for the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation, the only CMN hospital in South Florida.

"It's a dance competition, sort of like the reality show on TV," said Mari Campuzano, FIU's DM advisor. "But it's for students here at FIU to showcase their dancing abilities and talent for a good cause."

DM hopes to raise \$1,500 with the event, according to Yasser Rodriguez, the special events co-chair for FIU's DM.

"Dance Marathon is the biggest event at FIU," Rodriguez said.

The first "So You Think You Can Dance" raised \$1,200, which was the largest amount raised by DM during a special event, said Leah Dunleavy, the executive director of FIU's DM.

This year's competition will have two tryouts on Jan. 16 and Jan. 25 from noon until 2 p.m. in the Graham Center Pit before the main event next month.



IRIS AMELIA/THE BEACON

well they dance and their overall performance.

Once the preliminary judging is completed, the top 10 participants will be invited to the main event.

The top 10 finalists will compete for a \$100 book scholarship. During the competition,

importantly are excited about the money they will raise.

"We are the only university in South Florida who does this for CMN, so they benefit directly," Campuzano said.

The overall DM goal this year is to break the \$100,000 mark, according to Rodriguez.



Leah Dunleavy, Executive Director of Dance Marathon

We are among the longest running Dance Marathons in the country. It's so rewarding and great to know your time is being well spent. I love giving my heart out to those in need.

During auditions contestants will have one minute to show their best dance moves.

In addition, all contestants must be registered FIU students, submit their own music in CD format, complete a registration form and pay a \$10 entry fee, which will also benefit the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation.

Registration can be completed up until auditions conclude on Jan. 25.

Applications can be picked up and dropped off in GC 2210 or during the auditions.

Those entering the competition can choose whatever form of dancing they desire.

"We're open to anything and everything," Campuzano said.

Contestants will be judged by a three-person panel on how

the finalists will each perform a minute performance.

The top five will then move onto the finals where they are required to perform a second dance routine.

It must be different than the first performance and have a different song. However, it can be from the same genre of dance.

"Last year went really well," Rodriguez said. "Students who didn't get a chance to dance in front of people before will get their chance now."

In addition to the contestants performances, the winner of last year's competition will be performing a special dance number.

The DM organizers are looking forward to "So You Think You Can Dance" but more

Last year, the group managed to raise \$86,000 which was completely donated to the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation.

Finals for "So You Think You Can Dance" will begin at 8 p.m. in the GC ballrooms. Entry to the event costs \$10 and is open to anyone.

"We are among the longest running Dance Marathons in the country," Dunleavy said. "It's so rewarding and great to know your time is being well spent. I love giving my heart out to those in need."

For more information on Dance Marathon and the second annual "So You Think You Can Dance" visit <http://www.fiu.edu/~dm/> and for information on Children's Miracle Network visit <http://www.childrensmira->

WEEKEND RUNDOWN

• THURSDAY • JANUARY 10

WHAT: Tea and Coffee World Cup
WHERE: Miami Beach Convention Center
1901 Convention Center Dr
Miami Beach, FL 33139
WHEN: Daily
HOW MUCH: Individual sessions cost \$50, a day pass costs \$90

WHAT: Bobby Collins
WHERE: The Theatre
854 Conniston Rd.,
West Palm Beach, FL
33405
WHEN: 7:30pm
HOW MUCH: \$28.50

WHAT: Galactic
WHERE: Revolution Live
200 West Broward Blvd.,
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312
WHEN: 8pm
HOW MUCH: \$22

• FRIDAY • JANUARY 11

WHAT: The Jewish Princesses Of Comedy
WHERE: Collins Park
21st Street and Collins Ave,
Miami Beach, FL 33139
WHEN: 6pm
HOW MUCH: \$30

WHAT: Luciana Souza
WHERE: The Studio at the Carnival Center for the Performing Arts
1300 Biscayne Blvd,
Miami, FL 33132
WHEN: 9pm
HOW MUCH: \$23

WHAT: Fashion Friday's
WHERE: Prive
South Beach, FL 33139
WHEN: 11 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$20

WHAT: Barefoot Oasis
WHERE: Mandrin Oriental
WHEN: 6 - 11 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free entrance 21 and over

WHAT: Cabaret Friday
WHERE: La Paloma
10999 Biscayne Blvd
North Miami, FL 33181
HOW MUCH: Free before 10 p.m.

• SATURDAY • JANUARY 12

WHAT: WrestleMania Fan Axxia Tour
WHERE: Dolphin Mall
11250 NW 25 St.
Doral, Florida 33172
WHEN: All Day
HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Soul Funktion Jan. 13
WHERE: Amendment XXI Lounge
190 NE 46th St.
Miami, FL 33137
WHEN: 11pm
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Lichtenstein at the Fairchild
WHERE: Fairchild Tropical Garden
10901 Old Cutler Road
Miami, FL 33156
WHEN: Daily
HOW MUCH: \$20

WHAT: Impromedy
WHERE: Roxy Performing Arts Center
1645 SW 107th Ave
Miami, FL 33165
WHEN: 9pm
HOW MUCH: \$10

• SUNDAY • JANUARY 13

WHAT: 2008 Miss Miami Scholarship Pageant
WHERE: Alper JCC Theater
11155 SW 112 Ave
Kendall, FL 33176
WHEN: 4pm
HOW MUCH: \$15

WHAT: Matt Haimovitz and Jean Marchano
WHERE: University of Miami Gusman Hall
1314 Miller Dr, Miami, FL 33124
WHEN: 4pm
HOW MUCH: \$40

WHAT: Absinthe, A production of SpiegelWorld
WHERE: Collins Park
2200 Collins Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33139
WHEN: 8pm
HOW MUCH: \$69-\$85

WHAT: "Sugar Daddy" Sundays
WHERE: Circa 28
2826 N Miami Avenue
Miami, FL 33127
WHEN: 9pm
HOW MUCH: Free



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COMEDY SHOW



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

PRICELESS COMEDY: Dan Adhoot performs live at the GC ballrooms on Monday, Jan. 7. The performance was free to students and put together by the Student Programming Council at University Park.

Grooming becomes an exchange for monkey sex

GILLIAN WONG
AP Writer

Male macaque monkeys pay for sex by grooming females, according to a recent study that suggests the primates may treat sex as a commodity.

"In primate societies, grooming is the underlying fabric of it all," Dr. Michael Gumert, a primatologist at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, said in a telephone interview Saturday.

"It's a sign of friendship and family, and it's also something that can be exchanged for sexual services," Gumert said.

Gumert's findings, reported in *New Scientist* last week, resulted from a 20-month observation of about 50 long-tailed macaques in a reserve in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Gumert found after a male grooms a female, the likelihood that she will engage in sexual activity with the male was about three times more than if the grooming had not occurred.

And as with other commodities, the value of sex is affected by supply and demand factors: A male would spend more time grooming a female if there were fewer females in the vicinity.

"And when the female supply is higher, the male spends less time on grooming ... The mating actually becomes cheaper depending on the market," Gumert said.

Other experts not involved in the study welcomed Gumert's research, saying it was a major effort in systematically studying the interaction of organisms in ways in which an exchange of commodities or services can be observed — a theory known as biological markets.

Dr. Peter Hammerstein, a professor at

the Institute for Theoretical Biology at Humboldt University in Berlin and Dr. Ronald Noë, a primatologist at the University of Louis-Pasteur in Strasbourg, France, first proposed the concept of biological markets in 1994.

"It is not a rare phenomenon in nature that males have to make some 'mating effort' in order to get a female's 'permission' to mate," Hammerstein said in an interview, likening the effort to a "fee" that the male pays.

"The interesting result of Dr. Gumert's research on macaque mating is that the mating market seems to have an influence on the amount of this fee," Hammerstein said.

Hammerstein said Gumert's findings indicate the monkeys are capable of adjusting their behavior to "different market conditions."

Gumert completed his fieldwork in February 2005 and first published his findings in the November issue of "Animal Behaviour," a scientific monthly journal.



COURTESY PHOTO

MONKEY BUSINESS: Scientists say monkeys like the one above exchange favors for sex.

Turbulent year for recording industry brings change

ALEX VEIGA
AP Writer

When you are not inclined to give your product away for free, make your customers believe they are getting something for nothing.

That's the thinking behind some of the offerings music fans may see this year as the recording industry scrambles to offset losses from plunging CD sales and find new sources of revenue when many consumers simply download music for free.

Among the business models music fans are likely to see more of: music subscriptions bundled with the price of Internet access, and services like Nokia Corp.'s upcoming Comes With Music, which would give users of select mobile phones a year's worth of unlimited access to music, for no extra charge.

Music companies also are expected to license songs for more ad-supported Web sites like imeem, which lets visitors watch videos or listen to full-length tracks posted by other music fans for free.

Major recording labels, long-criticized for being too slow in adapting to changes brought by the Internet over the last decade, are under pressure to explore new ways to get music fans to pay for music, leading to more choices for consumers.

In 2007, the recording industry arguably took the boldest steps yet.

After years championing the necessity of copy-protection safeguards on digital music, three of the world's biggest

recording companies agreed to license their music for sale online as unprotected MP3 files. Many analysts expect the last holdout, Sony BMG Music Entertainment, to follow this year.

That's an important step for music lovers hesitant about buying digital music because songs are generally tied to specific devices - for example, Apple Inc.'s iPod players can't play copy-protected music not bought at Apple's iTunes store.

"It seems clear there's an accelerated pace of change that comes hand in glove with accelerated decline in traditional business," said Eric Garland, chief executive at BigChampagne Online Media Measurement, which tracks online entertainment.

Recording company executives who once saw new technology as the enemy seem to now see it as a lifeline.

The major labels - Sony BMG, Vivendi SA's Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group Corp. and Britain's EMI Group PLC - declined to comment.

In a recent memo to employees, Warner Music Chairman and CEO Edgar Bronfman Jr. touched on the importance of developing new areas of digital music.

The company's stock price has plunged more than 75 percent over the past year.

Bronfman alluded that the industry this year would pursue a way to "monetize the unauthorized flow of our artists' audio content on the Internet."

That could involve striking deals with Internet service providers to help com-

pensate labels for the millions of songs swapped online.

Another approach involves Internet service providers offering a pricing tier that comes with unlimited music downloads or faster download speeds that might be attractive to computer users who download a lot of music files.

Last year, Universal Music began testing an unlimited music download service in France offered through broadband provider Neuf Cegetel.

Then there's Universal Music's Total Music, which is expected to extend what Universal is doing with Nokia's Comes With Music to everything from personal computers to digital music players, with the cost of the music built into the price.

Sales of digital tracks at iTunes and elsewhere surged 45 percent last year compared with 2006, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But digital music still accounts for a small portion of overall music sales, and U.S. album sales in CDs and other physical formats dropped 15 percent during the same period.

Combined, the number of albums sold declined 9.5 percent.

"The industry for the last several years had hoped that eventually the pain would subside and they expected that eventually the market slowdown would level off," said James McQuivey, media and technology analyst at Forrester Research.

Instead, he said, the recording industry saw CD sales falling even faster.

In a research note issued in November,

Pali Capital analyst Richard Greenfield suggested retail floor space for CDs would probably shrink this year by as much as 30 percent.

Despite mixed results trying to breathe life into the CD by adding video and other multimedia extras, the recording industry will roll out a host of new variants to stores this year.

One, dubbed the CD-View Plus, lets customers access a trove of additional content when they go online.

Another is digital gift cards, which enable users to download specific albums, something Starbucks already sells.

"There's a lot of experimentation going on," said Jim Donio, president of the National Association of Recording Merchandisers, a trade group that represents hundreds of retailers, record labels and other music-related firms.

Consumers may also see a bigger push this year for CD singles, dubbed "ringles," that include mobile phone ringtones and other digital content, Milligan said. Universal Music and Sony BMG, which is a joint venture of Sony Corp. and Bertelsmann AG, are among the labels that have plans to release ringles, he said.

"Everyone is looking for a formula that will provide healthy growth for the industry, which I believe will come," Donio said. "The other side of this will be loaded with new kinds of opportunities, for arguably a marketplace that probably doesn't look anything like it looks now."

SUN BELT MEN'S BASKETBALL STANDING

EASTERN DIVISION

TEAM	OVERALL	CONF	PCT
South Alabama	12-3	4-0	.800
Western Kentucky	10-5	2-1	.667
Troy	8-6	1-2	.571
Middle Tennessee	5-9	2-2	.357
Florida International	4-9	1-2	.308
Florida Atlantic	4-11	0-4	.400

*All records up to date as of Jan. 8

WESTERN DIVISION

TEAM	OVERALL	CONF	PCT
New Orleans	11-4	1-2	.733
Arkansa Little Rock	10-4	2-1	.714
North Texas	10-4	1-2	.714
La. Lafayette	7-7	4-0	.500
Arkansas State	7-7	2-2	.500
Denver	6-8	2-1	.429
Louisiana Monroe	6-9	0-3	.400

*All records up to date as of Jan. 8

MEN'S STATISTICS

SCORING OFFENSE

Team	G	W-L	Pts	Avg/G
1. Troy	14	8-6	1176	84.0
2. North Texas	13	9-4	1065	81.9
3. W. Kentucky	15	10-5	1154	76.9
4. New Orleans	15	11-4	1129	75.3
5. South Alabama	15	12-3	1107	73.8
6. La. Monroe	14	6-8	1021	72.9
7. Arkansas State	14	7-7	1012	72.3
8. UALR	14	10-4	957	68.4
9. Midd Tennessee	14	5-9	939	67.1
10. La. Lafayette	14	7-7	933	66.6
11. Fla. International	13	4-9	852	65.5
12. Fla. Atlantic	15	4-11	945	63.0
13. Denver	14	6-8	790	56.4

WOMEN'S STATISTICS

SCORING OFFENSE

Team	G	W-L	Pts	Avg/G
1. Middle Tennessee	15	8-7	1108	73.9
2. W. Kentucky	15	10-5	1100	73.3
3. Louisiana-Monroe	13	9-4	871	67.0
4. Troy	14	8-6	912	65.1
5. North Texas	14	6-8	911	65.1
6. South Alabama	15	11-4	951	63.4
7. Fla. Atlantic	12	4-8	744	62.0
8. UALR	14	9-5	856	61.1
9. La. Lafayette	14	5-9	853	60.9
10. Fla. International	14	5-9	845	60.4
11. New Orleans	14	8-6	845	60.4
12. Arkansas State	15	8-7	887	59.1
13. Denver	13	4-9	766	58.9

THIS WEEKEND IN FIU SPORTS

JANUARY

11

No games being played

JANUARY

12

Swimming vs. FSU and FAMU
(10 a.m.)
at Tallahassee
Men's Basketball vs. Western Kentucky
(7 p.m.)
Bowling Green, KY.

Home games in bold

JANUARY

13

Women's Basketball vs.
Western Kentucky
(3 p.m.)
Bowling Green, KY.

* Conference game

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Sports Replay

The first Sun Belt Conference win of the season came at the expense of the Florida Atlantic University Owls (4-11) Jan. 5 at the Pharmed Arena.

With the 69-58 victory, the Golden Panthers (4-9) snapped a six-game losing streak behind junior guard Kenneth White's game-high, 17-point performance.

White knocked down four 3-pointers in one of the team's most efficient games on offense this season.

The team managed to shoot 55 percent from the field, including an 11-of-19 shooting display from three-point range.

Carderro Nwoji led the Owls with 13 points and Brett Royster added 10 points. Nwoji got the Owls offense going by scoring the team's first five points.

However, the Golden Panthers' early shooting success left the Owls trailing 41-23 at halftime. The Golden Panthers' shooting cooled down in the second half as they scored 28 points and shot 41 percent from the field compared to shooting 70 percent in the first half.

Carl Monroe, the Owls leading scorer and rebounder, was neutralized, scoring seven points and grabbing five rebounds after entering the game averaging 17.4 points and 9.4 rebounds per game.

Freshman guard Russell Tremayne started his first game of the season for FIU in absence of senior guard Michael James.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

By defeating the Florida Atlantic Owls (4-8) 53-44, the Golden Panthers (5-9) men's and women's squads swept the Owls Jan. 5 at the Pharmed Arena.

Senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson recorder her third double-double of the season notching 16 points and recording 10 rebounds. The best distributor of the game was junior guard Iva Cigalr with seven assists.

From the opening layup by senior forward Jasmine Jenkins, the Golden Panthers did not trail in the game. Jenkins finished with nine points and a game-high 15 rebounds.

Despite shooting less than 30 per-

cent from the field, the Golden Panthers out-rebounded the Owls 54-39. They shot just 4-of-21 from three-point range, but the Owls' responded with a 1-of-10 shooting performance from behind the arc.

Carla Stubbs was the Owls' leading scorer with 11 points. The closest the Owls came to taking the lead was when a Stubbs 3-pointer made it 20-19 with 4:25 left in the first half. That would mark the last score of the first half for the Owls as they headed into halftime trailing 26-19.

Every time the Owls made a run, the Golden Panthers held them at bay with their defensive fervor and containment.

With 1:50 left in the game, the Owls inched their way within five points, trailing 49-44, but the Golden Panthers defense did not allow any more points for the remainder of the contest to capture the 53-44 victory.

SWIMMING AND DIVING

The fifth annual FIU Invitational took place Jan. 5 at the Miami Shores Aquatics Center. Participating in the invitational is an FIU tradition for the team.

The FIU swimming team played host to men's and women's teams from American, Iowa, Lake Forest College and Oakland in a meet that consisted entirely of relays.

The Golden Panthers won fourth place in the 200-yard breaststroke relay behind Erin Pavlick, Lindsey Juman, Katelynn Stevens and Sara Giovannoni.

The men's and women's fields were both led by Iowa.

On the women's side, Iowa score 176 points, Oakland 98, FIU 40 and American 38.

On the men's side, Iowa finished with 172 points, followed by Oakland 102, American 52 and Lake Forest 22.

FIU does not have a men's swim team.

The Golden Panthers travel to Tallahassee to take on Florida A&M and No. 20 Florida State on Jan. 12.

Compiled by Sergio Bonilla

Surprise, another Big Ten team gets thumped by SEC

FOOTBALL, page 12

the snoozefest of the title game.

I wouldn't be surprised if most of America watched American Gladiators on NBC that night.

The game felt like it was rerun of last year's contest.

If I wanted to watch a rerun of something, I might as well just flip the channel to Seinfeld or Family Guy, because that's what this contest was.

All you had to do with this year's championship game was take out Florida and replace them with LSU.

The next big day for college football fans is Feb. 6, National Signing Day, the first day that high school recruits can sign letters of intent to attend a university.

More college football fans will tune in to watch some high school kids' news conference announcing his decision to attend school X or Y than watch a national title game and after watching this performance, I can't blame them.

Recruiting has become such a hot topic among web sites, sports radio talk shows and blogs. Fans like uncertainty.

Fans like drama. It's fun to guess and try to gauge an athlete's potential and what they can become in the future.

Why is it that baseball fans hoot and holler when a package of AAA prospects gets traded for a proven All-Star?

Because everyone thinks that their backup quarterback or rookie shortstop can be the next Tom Brady or Derek Jeter.

So if you want some predictability, just tune into TBS. I think they're airing the Seinfeld episode with the soup Nazi.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

More consistent team play needed to defeat Warhawks

BY DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

The women's basketball team (5-9, 1-2) will face conference foe Louisiana-Monroe (10-4, 3-0) Jan. 19 at the Pharmed Arena.

ULM will present the Golden Panthers with one of its more difficult conference match-ups of the season as they are unbeaten in conference play.

So far this year, the Golden Panthers have been fortunate enough to get solid play from its two pre-season all-conference award winners: senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson and junior guard Iva Ciglar.

Ferguson is leading the team in scoring with 18 points per game and has even stepped up in the rebounding game by grabbing double-digit totals twice this season for the first time in her career.

Ciglar is once again providing her teammates with lots of good looks that have her leading the team in assists for the second consecutive season. Ciglar's 10 points per game is another plus she brings to the table.

The rest of the Golden Panthers have not been quite as consistent.

Sophomore guard Monika Bosilj and freshman Fanni Hutlassa have had some great performances this season, but in other games they have been off the mark.

If they can find a way to stay sharp, the Golden Panthers will be hard to keep off the scoreboard.

Thus far, the team's younger players are showing promise as all of FIU's four incoming freshmen have exceeded expectations and taken advantage of their extended playing time.

Hutlassa has played power forward most of the year and has already become

one of the team's go-to players when a basket is needed.

Forward Liene Jekabsons has shown that she has inherited some skills from her older sister Lasma, who was a star player for FIU the last few seasons. Center Maja Krajacic has not played too many minutes but uses her size well and has provided a boost on a few occasions.

Guard Tabitha Drake has played some of the fewest minutes of the freshmen, but always seems ready to go and can put the ball in the basket.

ULM is led by senior center Shannon Lloyd who averages 10 points and seven rebounds per game.

This season, ULM has pretty much won all the games it should have. Its four losses were against more developed programs such as Syracuse, St. John's, Tulane and Southern Mississippi.

ULM is undefeated against its three Sun Belt Conference opponents.



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

DRIBBLE AND SHOOT: Senior LaQuetta Ferguson (bottom) and freshman Fanni Hutlassa (top) have become two of the team's top performers on the team.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Team looking to upset top conference foe

JONATHAN RAMOS
Staff Writer

If the men's basketball team enjoyed the taste of its first Sun Belt conference win of the season against Florida Atlantic Jan. 5, then it will likely have to play just as well or better in order to savor a victory against a more formidable conference foe in Western Kentucky.

FIU (4-9) will travel to Western Kentucky University (10-5) on Jan. 12 looking to upset the No. 2 team in the Sun Belt's East Division and keep hopes of winning the conference.

The Golden Panthers will face a much stronger offense than they did against FAU (4-11), who is second to last in the conference in scoring.

FIU will have to contend against sharp shooting Western Kentucky, who ranks in the top three in the conference in field goal and 3-point shooting percentage.

The Hilltoppers are led by the explosive backcourt of Courtney Lee and Tyron Brazelton, who account for 34 points of the team's 77-point per game average.

The 6-5 Lee averages 20.3 points alone and has



FERNANDO GARCIA/BEACON FILE PHOTO

LEADING THE WAY: Sophomore power forward Nickola Gracesa (left) and junior guard Kenneth White (right) are going to be looked to by teammates to help the Golden Panthers upset the Hilltoppers.

scored as many as 30 points in a game this season. Brazelton, who plays point guard, has 34 3-point field goals in 15 games this season, shooting at a scorching 53 percent from long range.

Western Kentucky also relies on guards A.J. Slaughter and Ty Rogers to contribute to their offense, and both average over seven points to complement the

starting backcourt of Lee and Brazelton.

The Golden Panthers can gash the perimeter oriented Hilltoppers on the inside, where WKU has no player over 6-9.

That can work in favor of Golden Panther center Russell Hicks, who leads the team in scoring thanks in part to his seven-foot, 250 pound frame. Hicks, who averages 13.3

points per game, should get a high dose of touches inside to attempt to exploit the Hilltoppers lack of size. Western Kentucky, who has not lost back-to-back games all season, beat FIU on both occasions last season by an average of 20 points.

Golden Panthers guard Kenneth "Redd" White transferred to FIU from Texas A&M with a reputation as a potential explosive

scorer and he is finally beginning to blossom for the Golden Panthers.

White has averaged 14.5 points over the last two games on 7-of-16 shooting, including a 5-of-10 performance from 3-point range.

The junior guard scored a season-high 17 points in the Golden Panthers' first conference victory of the season against Florida Atlantic on Jan. 5.

Arroyo: This let's me know I made the right decision

BASKETBALL, page 12

had to make the biggest decision of my life and that was to leave my family

behind and come to a place where I knew no body," Arroyo said. "This great honor lets me know that I made the right decision."

After his brief speech, his No. 30 jersey was revealed hanging at the end of the "Wall of Fame."

Earlier this season,

fellow FIU alum Raja Bell's jersey was retired at halftime as FIU faced the University of Miami. Prior to this season, the only FIU

men's basketball player to have his jersey retired was Stewart, who played for the Golden Panthers in 1988-1993.

Arroyo concluded his acceptance speech as the men's and women's team went on to win back-to-back games.

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MD CLINICAL



MAGIC MOMENT

Former Golden Panther Carlos Arroyo has his number retired

BY DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

One of the most heralded careers in FIU men's basketball history was forever commemorated on Jan. 5 at the Pharmed arena as the jersey of former Golden Panther Carlos Arroyo was retired.

The ceremony was held during halftime of the game against Florida Atlantic University.

"It means a lot," said Arroyo, who currently plays for the NBA's Orlando Magic. "It lets me know that I made the right decisions in life, I worked hard for everything I have and this is a blessing."

"It is a gift from the sport to me and I am truly honored to be rewarded this way."

During his tenure at FIU, Arroyo played in 100 games and set the all-time school record for assists in a career, points in a game (39) and points per game in a season (21.2).

He also recorded the second most steals and is the program's second leading scorer with 1,600 career points, trailing only Dwight Stewart.

Following his outstanding

career at FIU, Arroyo was signed by the NBA's Toronto Raptors.

Arroyo played in 17 games, but did not put up any big numbers. Later that season, he was waived by the Raptors and was eventually signed by the Denver Nuggets.

In Denver, Arroyo started to improve and scored in double digits four times and even got his first start of his NBA career.

Arroyo's career would begin to pick-up in the same place as his former FIU teammate Raja Bell, the Utah Jazz.

During the 2003-04 season, Arroyo averaged a career-best 12.6 points per game and he led the Jazz in assists that season with five per game. He also scored a career-high 30 points in November of 2003.

Despite his success with Utah, he was traded to the Detroit Pistons where he would play for a season and a half. Arroyo was lower on the depth chart in Detroit and would only put up about half the stats he produced in Utah.

Currently, Arroyo is playing for the Magic and has been for the last three seasons. So far, Arroyo

has yet to put up the same high numbers he did in Utah, but this season he set a new career high in assists with 14 against Seattle in November.

At this time, the Magic are ranked third in the NBA's Eastern conference standings and seem poised to make a run for the NBA championship.

Arroyo is also well known for being one of the best Puerto Rican basketball players to ever play the game.

He has been the star player on the Puerto Rican National Team for most of the decade and averaged 21.2 points per game in the FIBA Championships in 2006.

In the 2004 Olympics, he averaged 18 points a game and even led the team to a win over the US National Team.

FIU junior forward Alex Galindo is also associated with the Puerto Rican National Team and has practiced with Arroyo over the summers.

"I met Carlos through my national team and I had a chance to practice with him," Galindo said. "He is one of the best Puerto Rico ever had, so the first time I meet him, it was a pleasure."



PHILAN M. EBENHACK/AP PHOTO

AIRBORNE: Former Golden Panther and current Orlando Magic point guard Carlos Arroyo had his number retired at Pharmed Arena.

At the halftime ceremony, Arroyo, his wife, daughter and FIU athletic director Pete Garcia gathered at center court for the jersey presentation. "When I was 18 years old, I

BASKETBALL, page 11

BCS championship nothing more than a rerun

BY CHARLIE GRAU
Editor in Chief

So how did the most exciting and random college football season end? With a stinker of BCS National Championship game that would have put even hardcore sports fans to sleep.

The season opened up with so much promise and it just snowballed into their great big ball of hype that just melted even before spring came.

Football Championship Subdivision - formerly Division I-AA - powerhouse Appalachian State shocked the Michigan Wolverines at home in the Big House.

Whoever was the No. 2 seed in college football kept getting tossed around like some Christmas gift that nobody wanted, a team from Hawaii went undefeated, the Kansas Jayhawks took the persona of their larger than life coach Mark Mangino and a sophomore won the Heisman Trophy for the first time in the history of college football - Florida's Tim Tebow.

Upsets were plentiful and coaching searches took on a life of their own.

All that hype and momentum

came crashing down when Louisiana State routed Ohio State 38-24 at the Superdome in New Orleans.

It was almost like last year's Ohio State whooping. Last year OSU scored on a Ted Ginn Jr. kick-off return to open the game.

Then, the Florida Gators tied the scored on their first drive with a seven-play, 46-yard drive.

After that, the Gators never

championship OSU has lost and, to make matters worse, the losses were back-to-back.

Ohio State coach Jim Tressle looked like a man who had fallen for the flaming bag of pooh trick for the second straight time. Defeat never looked or smelled so bad.

But the Buckeyes weren't just one of the biggest losers this bowl season, their conference - the Big

“ This is the second national championship OSU has lost and, to make matters worse, the losses were back-to-back. ”

looked back and sent the Buckeyes home to Columbus empty handed.

This year, the Buckeyes scored on their opening drive on a 65-yard touchdown run from sophomore running back Chris Wells. They also added a field goal and took a quick 10-0 lead.

Then, history repeated itself. The Tigers marched down the field, eventually tying the game and never looked back.

This is the second national

Ten - was.

The Big Ten got thumped by South Eastern Conference, proving that the SEC is in a class of its own. The Big Ten conference went 3-5 this year in bowl games.

Compare that with the SEC, who went 7-2, the Big Ten has a ways to go before it can claim itself as the dominant conference in college football.

But again, all that got lost in

FOOTBALL, page 9



ROB CARR/AP PHOTO

SWEET VICTORY: LSU quarterback Matt Flynn kisses the BCS National Championship Trophy after LSU defeated Ohio State 38-24.