

VIRTUAL EQUITY

Club learns to invest in online game

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Congressman a bad choice for GOP

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BUZZ BAKE SALE

Rock showcase excites

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FALL SPORTS REDUX

The best and worst fall moments

SPORTS PAGE 12



CARL JUSTE/AP PHOTO

FALLEN STAR: Clinton Portis, Redskins runningback, remembers his former teammate, Sean Taylor on Dec. 3.

FINAL REMEMBERANCE

University opens Pharmed for Sean Taylor memorial

CHRIS MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

About three thousand mourners arrived at the Pharmed Arena on the morning of Dec. 3 to celebrate the life and grieve the loss of the former University of Miami Hurricane, Washington Redskin and father, Sean Taylor.

"You can't take your family, friends and loved one for granted," said

former teammate Lavar Arrington, delivering a poignant remembrance while displaying the type of emotion that only results from the loss of a close friend.

Sean Taylor was shot and killed during a botched robbery while protecting his family and confronting burglars. After slipping into a coma – upon being shot in the leg – Taylor died before dawn on Nov. 27, sending shock waves through the football

community.

"Four men, all age 24, have lost their lives in the past year," said NFL commissioner Roger Goodell.

"Honor Sean with how you carry yourself from here on forward."

Many people were in attendance at the memorial service. All mourned the loss of Sean Taylor the football star, family member and friend: from Goodell to Chicago Bear's linebacker Brian Urlacher, to current UM coach Randy Shannon, to former UM

TAYLOR, page 11

Venezuelan students cast vote in exile

JAIME RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Victoria de Armas and Marly Garcia, both sophomores at FIU, finally found a parking lot near the Venezuelan consulate on Brickell Avenue. They made sure to bring their Venezuelan flags.

"If [President Hugo Chavez's] referendum passes, we [will] never go back home," Garcia said. If he loses, democracy survives another day. Not much is on the line.

Garcia and Armas joined a line already stretching along Brickell Avenue. There, Venezuelan émigrés

by the thousands casted votes on Dec. 2 for what turned out to be a rare defeat for Chavez and his proposed constitutional changes, which would have made him president for life and hastened the transformation of Venezuela into a socialist state in the Cuban model.

According to *The Miami Herald*, only 88 percent of the vote was certified when the trend was declared irreversible by Elections Council Chief Tibisay Lucena shortly after midnight in Venezuela.

However, hours before the results were released, students from local uni-



JOE CAVARETTA/AP PHOTO

VOTERS: Venezuelans protest after voting in referendum.

versities screamed and waved their flags at curious observers and incoming voters who couldn't

help but admire the resiliency of the Venezuelan

VENEZUELA, page 3

Students join 9-mile march for workers' pay

PETER M.T. AGBEYEGBE
Staff Writer

FIU students joined the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a community-based worker organization in Florida, on a nine-mile march to the Burger King headquarters in Doral, on Nov. 30.

"Students don't support exploitation," said Marc Rodriguez with the Student/Farmworker Alliance during a protest in front of the Burger King in the Graham Center on Nov. 28. "We don't want it in our schools. We don't want it [on] our tables."

Among the CIW's demands to Burger King: a penny per pound raise for workers who pick tomatoes.

The CIW persuaded Yum Brands and McDonald's to increase wages of migrant workers and impose a code of conduct on tomato suppliers in Florida. So far, Burger King has not given in to demands of protestors.

"The workers are demanding that Burger King follow in the steps of Yum Brands and McDonald's by paying a premium for its tomatoes to directly improve workers' sub-poverty wages and work with the CIW to address the labor abuses endemic to Florida agriculture," said a Nov. 30 CIW press release.

During the protest in GC, flyers for the nine-mile march to Burger King's corporate headquarters were handed out.

"I think it's time for students to have a hand in social justice," said senior Ashley Richards, who attended the march. "It's going on in our state, so we have to do something about it."

Robert Alvarado, a 66-year-old blind man, came from San Antonio, Texas, to attend the protest.

"I'm blind but not crippled. All these poor people work so hard and they're only asking for one penny,"

Alvarado said.

A statement issued by Burger King Corporation to *The Beacon* demanded that CIW suggest alternatives to current business practices.

"The CIW's 'penny-per-pound' slogan is a PR catch phrase that fails to provide any solutions for the real issues facing farm workers. The CIW has done nothing to explain how ... Burger King can overcome the legal and technical hurdles associated with the money transfer scheme," said Denise T. Wilson, senior analyst, communications for Burger King Corporation.

However, Burger King cannot set wages for tomato pickers because Burger King does not directly employ them, according to Reggie Brown, executive vice president of the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange.

The FTGE – which employs tomato pickers – represents 90 percent of the state's growers, and will not allow any of its members to collect the extra penny for farm work.

Hannibal Travis, a professor of law at FIU, thinks there's a way around the legal hurdles.

"An exemption to anti-trust law exists to allow agricultural cooperatives to set prices during tough times," Travis said. "The exemption would not apply if the cooperative is attempting to squelch legitimate forms of competition."

Even though allegations against Burger King are unresolved, Dean Jarrett, a tourist from Atlanta who witnessed the protest, will not be eating at Burger King anytime soon. "We just ate over at Burger King this morning," Jarrett said. "Because of [the protest] – even though McDonald's is closed and Checkers is closed and [Burger King] is the only thing around here – I don't think I'll be going back to eat at Burger King."

NEWSFLASH

The First Jose Antonio Echeverria scholarship awarded

The first Jose Antonio Echeverria Scholarship was given to FIU student, Joaquin A Pedroso, a senior with a double major in philosophy and political science.

Family and friends of Echeverria created the Echeverria scholarship March 2007 to mark the 50th anniversary of Echeverria's attempts to overthrow Cuba's, then, military dictator, Fulgencio Batista on March 12, 1957. The attack was unsuccessful, and Echeverria was killed by police.

Students interested in applying for the Echeverria scholarship are required to write an essay on the life and political views of Echeverria and must complete a certificate in Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at FIU.

The scholarship awards \$2,000 each academic year which will go to tuition, books and other school expenses. For more information on the Echeverria scholarship contact the Department of Political Science at 305-348-2226.

Volunteers needed for Fall 2007 Commencement

The Fall 2007 commencement staff is looking for volunteers to help with operations during the Dec. 17 and Dec. 18 commencement ceremonies at Pharmed Arena at University Park.

Interested faculty and staff, who have received approval from their supervisors, should contact Commencement Volunteer Coordinator, Sarah Hammill, at 305-919-5604 or hammills@fiu.edu. Volunteers for the commencement will receive one credit hour of professional development.

The Frost Art Museum will host 5th annual Breakfast in the Park

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum will host the fifth annual Breakfast in the Park event with special guest, Tom Otterness a renowned American sculptor on Dec. 9, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. in front of the MARC building at University Park.

Admission to the breakfast is free and open to the public. Breakfast in the Park is officially sponsored by Art Basel Miami Beach, an art show which will place at the Miami Beach Convention Center from Dec. 6 through Dec. 9.

In addition to the outdoor breakfast, attendees will be given guided tours of the sculptures around UP, guided tours of the Frost Art Museum's exhibition "Pip Brant: The Flying Carpet & Other Re-usables" and an informal lecture by Otterness.

For more information on Breakfast in the Park, contact Amy Pollack at 305-348-0401 or pollacka@fiu.edu.

– Compiled by Ben F. Badger Jr.

GIVING SEASON BEGINS



GAUDRY PUECHAVY/THE BEACON

BETTER TO GIVE: Physics Graduate student, Vashti Sawtelle, donates a toy to the Nicaraguan Student Association toy drive in the Graham Center, on December 4th.

Greeks discuss lifestyle stereotypes

ASHLEY ARTILES
Staff Writer

Fall semester marks the beginning of formal recruitment for sorority and fraternity men and women.

It also marks the time when Greek stereotypes are at their height.

"The goal of the Greek lettered organizations is to enhance and compliment your academic experience at FIU. Our groups strive to increase their academic performance and participate in leadership and service opportunities," said J.D. Louk, assistant director of Campus Life for sorority & fraternity life.

But many students who have perceptions formed by movies like "Animal

House" and "Old School" and may think otherwise.

"When rush season begins, the infamous rumors of Greek life swirl around the FIU campus such as: 'all they do is drink and party' or 'you pay for your friends when you join a sorority or fraternity,'" said Laura Dominguez,

senior and vice-president of Panhellenic Council.

Greeks who gather in the Graham Center are usually conspicuous because of the color of their T-shirts and mascots, which represent a specific organization.

However, what distinguishes sororities and fra-

ternities from one another are their rituals and beliefs, which only members of that specific group know.

The secrecy is meant to form bonds of sisterhood or brotherhood.

"I rediscovered true brotherhood because of

GREEK, page 3

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RELEASE PARTY



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

MAKING MUSIC: Freshman Taylor Leonard of the Fall 2007 MUM 4301 class speaks with Alexander Torres from MTV.

Fraternities foment leadership skills

GREEK, page 2

my fraternity. Everybody can talk about it, but only a few stick to it and show it. Amongst my fraternity, I have seen the best example of brotherhood and everlasting friendship," said Benjamin Klotz, a sophomore and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity member.

In the 2007 Student Government Association elections, more than 50 percent of the candidates who ran for a position were Greek affiliated.

According to *www.southfloridapikes.com*, more than 48 percent of the United States presidents have been Greek affiliated.

Greek organizations help students become leaders through the various positions available like executive board, chairs, committees, even positions in other councils, according to Dominguez.

"Networking opportunities are endless when you go Greek, such as meeting many amazing people from different organizations that become everlasting friends who, in the future, can



Benjamin Klotz, Pi Kappa Phi fraternity member

As long as you find the right niche, your dedication to Greek Life will be life enriching for you and the people you will work with throughout college.

assist you in getting your next job, internship, or even tutor you in a class," Dominguez said.

Greek organizations also build ties with the community by working with charitable organizations.

Every year, each sorority or fraternity adopts one or more non-profit foundations and raise funds for the foundation with the support of other Greeks.

This year, Sigma Sigma Sigma's Backward Pageant raised about two thousand dollars. The proceeds of the male pageant went to Sigma Sigma Sigma's national philanthropy, The Robbie Page Memorial.

"Being Greek motivates you to do great things like participate in community service and philanthropy events. It sounds cliché, but you don't know the feeling

until you are a part of a Greek organization," said Brittany Silva, a member of the sorority Phi Sigma Sigma.

For many, joining a Greek organization has endless opportunities to offer to students.

Given that FIU is a melting pot, there is almost an organization to fit every individual.

"I would recommend Greek Life to anybody coming into college, especially FIU. As long as you find the right niche, your dedication to Greek Life will be life enriching for you and the people you will work with throughout college," Klotz said.

For more information, visit the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, located in GC 2240.

Students flee Chavez, join FIU community

VENEZUELA, page 1

youth.

"Students like my nephew [sophomore] Julian Beltran just might be the ones who rescue our democracy," Freddy Briceno said.

The democratic defeat is the first ever for Chavez after nine years of electoral victories. For

with study and hard work," said Joanna Casco, while taking a break from studying for final exams. "As soon as that disgraced criminal is taken down from power, I will go back. I will not be losing contact with our roots."

Many students however, have now become accustomed to the



Joanna Casco, FIU student

As soon as that disgraced criminal is taken down from power, I will go back. I will not be losing contact with our roots.

many at FIU the election results reached personal levels which could impact the University community.

In the last 10 years, Venezuelan students and their families have emigrated to South Florida to escape Chavez - more than 10,000 Venezuelans in South Miami alone, according to *www.city-data.com*. Their children enrolled in local universities. According to International Student and Scholar Services, there are 265 international students from Venezuela with an F1 visa for the 2006-2007 academic year.

Many of them say the length of their stay always depended on whether they could oust Chavez.

"What Chavez has done is steal what my family has earned

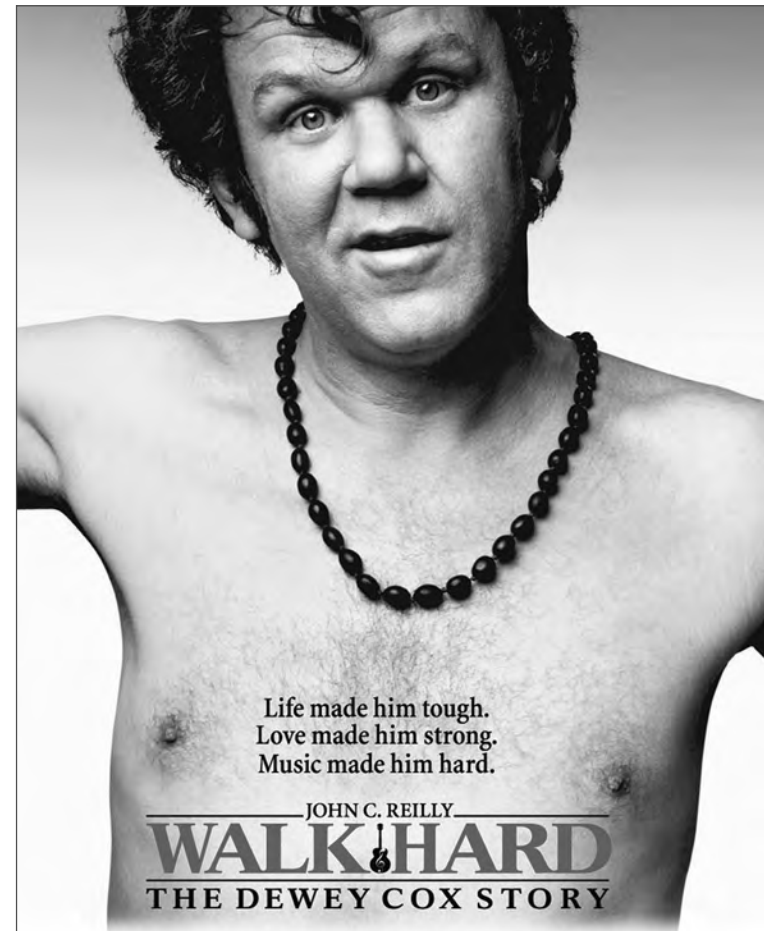
United States and its cultures.

"I'm happy here," said 21-year-old Carla Marconi, a junior and member of The Alpha Xi Delta sorority. "I don't have any plans to go back regardless of whether the referendum passes or not."

As students and Venezuelans gathered in Doral later in the evening to celebrate the results, some think Chavez's defeat was not a complete loss for him.

"This defeat has two sides to it for Chavez," said Santiago Dominguez an FIU alumna, while taking a break from cheering.

"He came out the loser after a tough campaign but he also gets rid of the accusation that he is a dictator. It is an episode that is far from over for us Venezuelans in Miami."



Life made him tough.
Love made him strong.
Music made him hard.

JOHN C. REILLY

WALK HARD

THE DEWEY COX STORY

The Beacon and Columbia Pictures invite you to an advanced screening of Walk Hard: the Dewey Cox story Dec. 6. For tickets, pass by GC 210.

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For more information, visit us at our offices located in GC 210 and WUC124.

Students play stocks on the Web

VANESSA A. ALVAREZ
Staff Writer

The Equity Management Club at the Biscayne Bay Campus is a hands-on business club open to all students interested in investments.

"[It's] a very good way for students to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it," said Andrew Gunn, founder and president of EMC and a senior majoring in international business. "We're really just trying to breed intelligent investors."

The club revolves around Virtual Stock Exchange, an interactive, online stock market simulator. The game is convenient for club members who are unable to meet more than the Student Organization Council's four meetings per semester requirement.

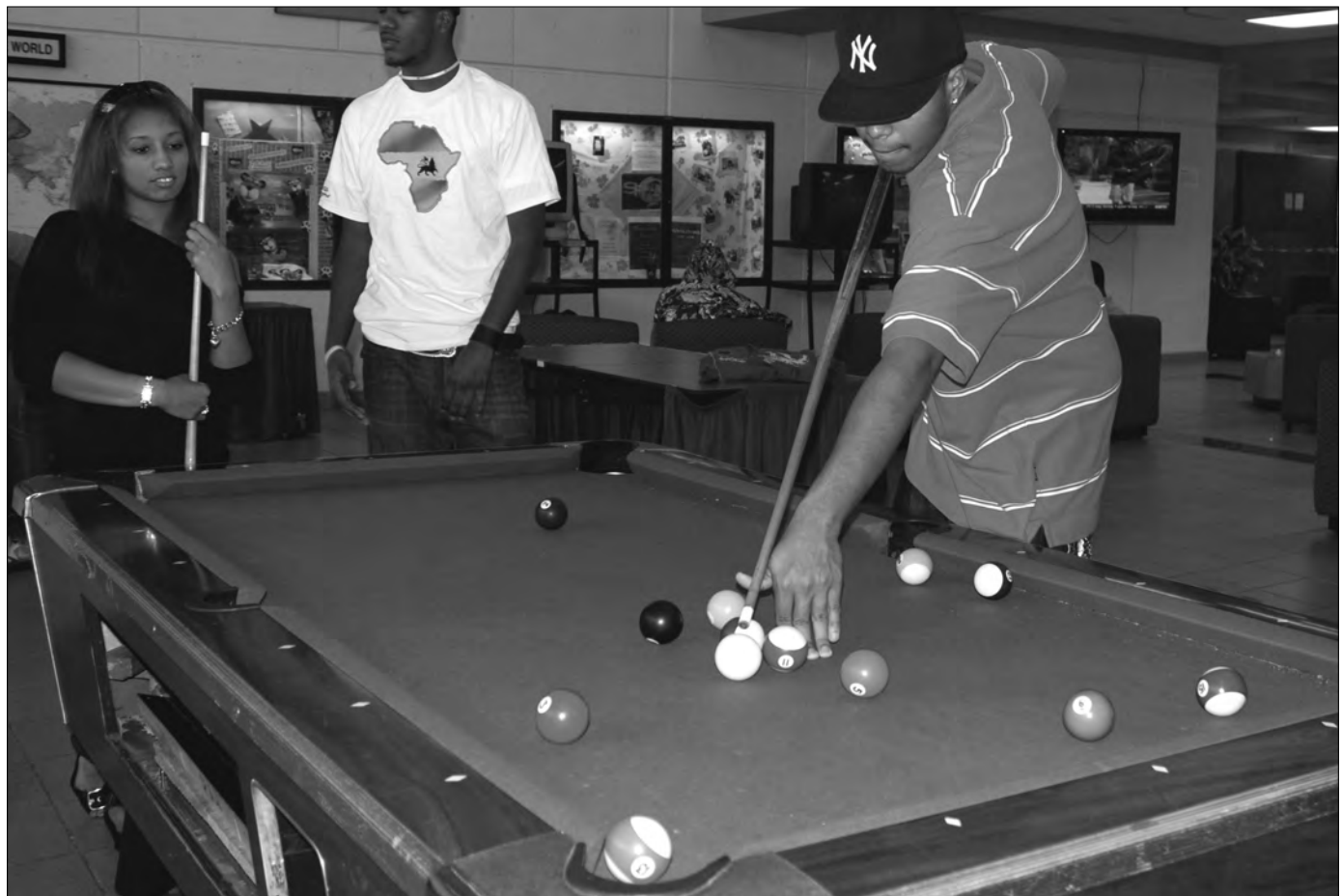
"That's one of the reasons why I joined the club," said Silvia Lorenzo, a member and SOC representative. "It's all online and it fits with your schedule."

There is no fee to play and members can create risk-free portfolios. Each member gets \$100,000 in virtual money to invest, their outcomes mirroring real world market values.

Kenasha Paul, a junior and one of two non-business major members of the club, is catching on to the game. Fifty days after investing in Google, she is \$38,000 richer. Her portfolio has increased more than 36 percent, making her the club's top competitor.

"It's a cool feeling because this is their

POOL SHARKS



JESSICA KERTZINUS/THE BEACON

SCRATCH-PROOF: Fiorelly Castillo, left, Omar "Slim" Jeffrey, center and Gabriel Coles, right, unwind between classes over a game of pool in the Wolfe University Center's Panther Square.

major and I'm kicking [their] butt," Paul said. "It's awesome."

Paul may be on her way to the \$100,000 grand prize that Gunn is offering to which-ever club member earns the most money by the end of the semester. The prize money is sponsored by Gunn's father, a portfolio manager for Evergreen International Equity Funds, and gives members an incentive to play.

As next year's vice president, Lorenzo plans to see the game incorporated into

the College of Business Administration's curriculum.

"The game gives you the hands-on experience that you don't get from the books when you're in school," Lorenzo said. "The game compliments the course work."

Currently, Gunn is working on expanding the club with a University Park chapter, hoping to have the campus' compete with one another and other colleges.

"I think an important part of having the intercollegiate investment competition

involves bringing talent in from the south campus," Gunn said. "It's a friendly competition. Thirty schools have been contacted around the country and five have accepted the challenge."

The University of Southern California and Lynchburg College in Virginia are among those that have accepted.

"The point is to get bigger and bigger," Gunn said. "It doesn't matter who wins."

For more information on the EMC, contact Gunn at agunn333@yahoo.com.

Radio station cheers up patients

LORGIA GONZALEZ
Contributing Writer

“ Yendi Valdes, Radio Lollipop Coordinator

This foundation is important because the children have a sense of distraction from [the] different treatments that they are going through.

Bringing smiles, laughter and entertainment to hospitalized patients may seem as daunting as dead air, but Radio Lollipop of Miami Children's Hospital doesn't fail to modulate such tasks.

The in-house radio station allows patients to request songs, win on-air prizes and hear their own voices on the radio, according to Yendi Valdes, coordinator for Radio Lollipop.

"This foundation is important because the children have a sense of distraction from [the] different treatments that they are going through," Valdes said.

The concept, which began in 1978 at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children in Surrey, England has since expanded internationally, according to RadioLollipop.org.

"Radio Lollipop was founded in August 1996 at Miami Children's Hospi-

tal," Valdes said. "It came on the air the same year, spending and injecting the best sweet sound medicine to the children."

The radio program also provides volunteer opportunities. Volunteers, some of which are FIU students, entertain the patients in their rooms, encouraging them to get involved in different educational projects and activities.

"We celebrated Halloween the whole week doing different activities," said David Berry, marketing coordinator for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and a volunteer at Radio Lollipop. "On Thanksgiving the children made turkeys with their hands, [and] for Christmas the children are going to

decorate Christmas trees drawn on papers."

Volunteers also work with patients at their bedsides by playing games and reading to them, according to Valdes.

"Without volunteers the program would not exist," Valdes said. "They work together as a team, and if one of the volunteers is missing, the night will not be the same because it is a program based on a commitment the children depend on."

The radio show goes live on "Terrific Tuesday," "Wacky Wednesday" and "Thrilling Thursday" from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; on "Super Saturday" from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A nonprofit organization, Radio Lollipop organizes

community partnerships to garner donations.

"[They] have fundraising activities at Dadeland Mall where they sold [food and shopping discount] tickets for \$35, which Radio Lollipop took 90 percent for each ticket sold," Valdes said.

Lazaro Mendez, better known as DJ Laz from radio station *Power 96*, helped celebrate Radio Lollipop's 11th birthday bash with an American Idol-style talent show.

"It is a very rewarding feeling working for Radio Lollipop at the Miami Children's Hospital and the patients really appreciate you being here. [It] is a place that makes you feel welcome," Valdes said.

For more information, visit RadioLollipop.org.

NEWSFLASH

OLLI to present review of Isaacson's Einstein

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the Biscayne Bay Campus will be presenting a book review of *Einstein* by Walter Isaacson as part of its lecture series Dec. 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$20 and will be held at the Kovens Conference Center. Contact Clara Barman at 305-919-5910 to register.

SGC-BBC to hold finance meeting Dec. 11

BBC's Student Government Council will hold a finance committee meeting Dec. 12 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in room 141 of the Wolfe University Center, the Campus Life office. Students are encouraged to attend and voice their opinions on how their money is being spent.

Fitness classes available at BBC's Fitness Center

BBC's Fitness Center will hold classes Dec. 6 in yoga, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. and hip-hop dance, from 6 to 8 p.m. Classes in kickboxing, from 3 to 4 p.m., and body sculpting, from 4 to 5 p.m., will be held Dec. 7.

Grades available online, at kiosks Dec. 20

Grades for the Fall semester will be available through Panthersoft online and at campus kiosks Dec. 20.

University to close Dec. 24 and 25

FIU will close Dec. 24 and 25 for winter break. University operations will resume Dec. 26.

-Compiled by Eddith Sevilla and Susana Rodriguez, Beacon staff

FAUX REPUBLICAN

Presidential candidate boasts elitist ideals, political views

JOSE MARTINEZ
Asst. Opinion Editor

While walking around University Park throughout the course of the semester, I have come to notice a viral campaign of propaganda that has been replicating itself like some horrendous plague with countless hosts.

Flyers, stickers, signs and other vessels of propaganda have been placed in every nook and cranny of the University, proclaiming a single name, as if it were the coming of a contemporary prophet.

I speak of the Ron Paul campaign, which has drawn many devout followers who believe that the Libertarian doctor turned congressman from Texas is the right man for presidency.

They have taken to aggressively promoting Paul, whose extremist beliefs set him apart from the rest of the Republican primary candidates.

In spite of his strong anti-war stance, which makes him appealing to the slew of pacifists inhabiting college campuses throughout the country, Paul also advocates the abolition of almost every government social program, including financial aid, Medicare, Medicaid and social security; all programs many Americans depend on.

Paul has expressed the so-called necessity of the United States withdrawing from the United Nations, which has been an effective forum for international diplomacy for nearly 60 years. He advocates further privatization of health care, which nearly 50 million Americans lack, due to the efforts of the Republican Party and insurance lobbyists, in pushing for deregulation of the health insurance sector.

One can only infer that Paul's logic is that health insurance should only be made available to those who can afford the ridiculous premiums and co-payments, while all others die slowly and painfully.

It strikes me as a cruel and elitist concept, reminiscent of something conceived by Hitler. Another example of Paul's malicious beliefs is his view on higher education. He supports the privatization of the entire higher education system, and has in the past, staunchly voted against any measures to allocate funds to public universities, including measures to increase financial aid.

This leads me to infer that yet again, Paul believes that higher education should be made available to only those individuals who can pay the extravagant tuitions that pri-

vate institutions are so fond of charging. Yet again, Paul makes no effort to hide his elitist attitudes with regard to social issues.

Paul has made no secret of his racist sentiments toward minorities, either. In a 1992 political newsletter, Paul commented on the alleged criminal inclinations of African-American males in the city of Washington, D.C.

"Given the inefficiencies of what D.C. laughingly calls the criminal justice system, I think we can safely assume that 95 percent of the black males in that city are semi-criminal or entirely criminal," said Paul in a 1992 newsletter.

This was not the first, nor the last insult Paul directed toward African-Americans in the very same newsletter, "If you have ever been robbed by a black teenaged male, you know how unbelievably fleet-footed they can be," he also said.

These statements are indicative of an elitist in every sense imaginable.

It's ludicrous that in a public institution, such as FIU, individuals supporting a candidate who advocates the privatization of higher education could actually exist.

It seems like the ultimate form of masochism, or even hypocrisy.

The fact that this individual, who happens to pander to the belief that government intervention in all our lives is inexcusable and indomitable



PAINTED PAUL: Supporter Avery Knapp poses besides part of a sign that reads "Google Ron Paul." Bottom: Vandals leave 'Ron Paul' spray painted on the sidewalks in front of the Lakeview North dorms.

(LEFT) TINA FINEBERG/AP PHOTOS AND (BOTTOM) FERNANDO GARCIA /THE BEACON



supports the reversal of Roe v. Wade, is another example of the glaring hypocrisies that underlie Paul's ideologies.

He caters himself to shallow-minded anti-war sympathizers who are willing to overlook all the other extreme

beliefs he posits.

Think twice the next time you see a poster or are approached by someone asking you to consider supporting Paul for president. He represents something much more sinister than his drone-

like supporters are willing to tell you.

His campaign is a great misrepresentation of what the Republican Party stands for. He is a libertarian extremist masquerading as a Republican.

Health bill may dissolve private insurance providers

JOSEPH MARHEE
Staff Writer

Currently passing through Congress is a bill entitled, H. R. 676.

The bill is a huge step forward toward improving health care in the United States and was drafted in the wake of widespread calls for improvement.

The government should be providing such health care measures when, in reality, only 'radical' members of Congress have been calling for such developments.

H.R. 676, in short, states that Medicare would be extended and improved so that all individuals residing in the United States receive high quality and affordable health care services.

The largest support for this bill was filmmaker, Michael Moore, in his documentary, *Sicko*.

"They would receive all medically necessary services by the physicians of their choice, with no restrictions on what providers they could visit," Moore said on his Web site, www.michaelmoore.com.

thirds majority vote, the United States National Health Insurance Act would cover primary care, dental, mental health, prescription drugs and long term care.

This is a much needed step in the direction of socialized medicine.

Apparently, the bill is met with so much opposition because of its potential blow to the American economy, a claim being thrown around in recent Republican Party debates.

The cause for concern is almost entirely because health insurance has grown so out of control that the government is dependent on the 1,500 plus private insurance companies across America.

These issues are only exacerbated by the explosive inflation currently plaguing America.

But why does any of this matter to future generations?

Annually, 18,000 people die because they do not have health insurance.

Once the baby boomers of the '40s and '50s grow older, this will dramatically increase selectiveness and premiums in health

insurance.

By the time we, as students, are senior citizens, health care may be outrageously expensive and virtually unaffordable if this bill does not pass.

Students all over America are concerned that in the not-too-distant future, they won't be able to afford insurance, despite higher education putting them at an employment advantage.

"The health care system is a business and will continue to run that way," said Daria Lai, an FIU student majoring in nursing.

Lai means that the employment of health care workers will suffer as well, as a result.

However, the bill creates more jobs through the expected increase in preventative medical treatments covered by the bill.

If the bill doesn't pass in 2008, then all of our medical advances may be in vain because it could be virtually unaffordable.

A cure for cancer may be found unavailable to many who can not afford the treatment.

"In a world where insurance companies can cut-off coverage

“ They would receive all medically necessary services by the physicians of their choice, with no restrictions on what providers they could visit. ”

when someone gets cancer or they can't get treatment because they're only in stage or two [of cancer] is what is wrong with America's health care," said Holly Stein, an FIU student majoring in health science.

H.R. 676 needs to pass for these people to be able to get coverage before they're given a death-sentence by our current system.

Common opposition to this bill includes such erroneous claims as additional taxes and that it will raise unemployment in medical fields, according to Dr. Edward Annis, president of the American Medical Association.

Annis has also been outspoken about his opposition to any form of socialization of medicine, which the bill is said to be the first step to universal or socialized

medicine.

The bill does not entail either of these claims. In actuality, it will require more doctors and medical professionals and the taxes will only be paid by a smaller national health care premium than what many Americans pay to their current insurance companies.

If this bill passes, the students of today – possibly future patients themselves – can fully expect full coverage for whatever ails them and for a reasonable cost without the worry of their insurance premiums going out of control because of an accident.

While the bill seems idealistic and slightly unfeasible, any improvement from our system now is certainly a step up.

Fulfilling a lifelong dream



When I was seven years old, I was in the hospital for more than three weeks. A case of food poisoning almost killed me. Needless to say, I was not a happy camper and, as I laid in the hospital bed flipping through the few viable stations on my TV, I came across a team of multiethnic super heroes called the Power Rangers.

It was the weirdest show I had ever seen and I could not get enough of it. I saw the first three episodes of the series while I was in the hospital and the actors became my heroes. On Dec. 1, I had the opportunity to meet two of my childhood heroes, Steve Cardenas and Karen Ashley.

The two were guests at a convention in Ft. Lauderdale and I had purchased a ticket to have dinner with them. Service was horrible and the hour and a half dinner turned into a three-hour affair. But I wasn't complaining about the extra time, just the service.

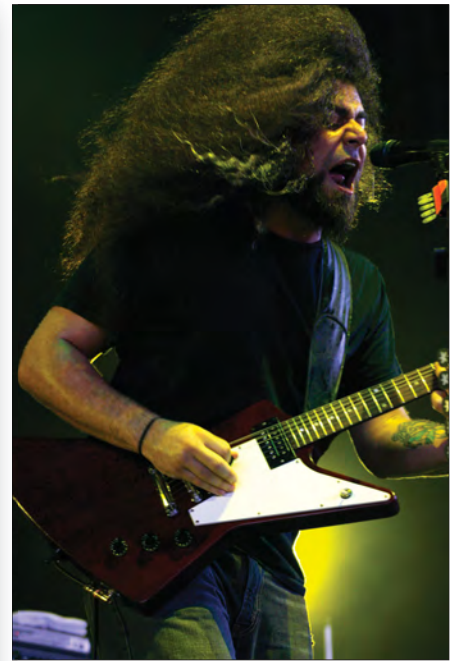
I went to dinner ready to ask all those nerdy Power Ranger questions I had dreamt up, but never asked. Another fan was doing that across the table from me and the look on Cardenas' face said, "I don't mind that this guy is asking me these questions, but I really wish he would stop."

So the first chance I got, I changed the subject. It was a lot of fun after that. Everyone at the table talked about their favorite kinds of movies and the food they liked to eat.

It was a memorable night that kept getting better. For the rest of the convention, whenever I saw either of the actors, they made a point to stop and say hello and shake my hand. It really made me feel special that they were taking that little bit of time to say hello, they were under no obligation to do so.

I was even able to have a short breakfast with them the morning following our dinner. It was weird how it happened. I was just walking into the hotel restaurant when Ashley saw me and asked if I was going to join them.

She was such a sweetheart. Overall, I think the Power Rangers were only brought up once or twice during my conversations with the two. They were really interesting people. Cardenas seemed like any other guy you would hang out with and Ashley



COHEED CONCERT: Rock band Coheed and Cambria performed at the annual Buzz Bake Sale, a rock festival in West Palm Beach on Dec. 1 that featured other bands such as Papa Roach and The Used.



ALL PHOTOS BY FERNANDO GARCIA

Coheed and Cambria

Buzz Bake Sale's stars rock the stage

PROFESSOR MAKES THE GRADE

Student based Web site takes notice

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

“No,” responded Professor Kimberly Miles emphatically to those who asked whether or not she was going to follow in her grandmother’s footsteps and become an English teacher.

Nearly 15 years have past since that incident and Miles began her teaching career shortly after. She is now ranked 30th on the Web site *RateMyProfessors.com*, where FIU’s faculty in general is ranked number 13 in the nation. According to the site, the rankings are entirely determined by the student’s ratings.

In 1992, on the path of becoming a technical writer, Miles was approached by the director of composition and was asked to become a teaching assistant.

After some convincing and consideration she accepted the job at Mississippi State University where she was pursuing her Master’s degree in English.

At MSU, Miles began teaching composition for two semesters until she was transferred to the technical writing program where she taught Writing for Engineers at the Engineering Research Center.

In 1994, Miles and her husband

moved to Miami where she applied to both Miami Dade College and Florida International University.

She was accepted to both schools and until August 2006 she was teaching at both at the same time.

Due to budget cuts, Miles is no longer a full time employee at FIU and is now an adjunct.

As stated in the *RateMyProfessors.com* top 50 lists ranking methodology, the Web site uses a five point scale as well as a binary scoring system for student generated professor ratings. Professors are ranked by having each individual rating standardized around their mean score. Using this system from the years 2005 to 2007 the scores were computed. Only professors with 30 ratings or more were included to provide statistical significance. All professors were verified as actively teaching in the current semester by each school at the time the lists were compiled. In an attempt to break ties, professors with a greater number of ratings were ranked higher. If ties occurred, the next available rank was given.

RateMyProfessors.com has also launched a new “Professor Rebuttal” feature that enables every professor rated on the site

the opportunity to address how his or her teaching ability has been characterized by students.

They will also have the chance to counter any criticisms by presenting their side of the story.

When asked if she would ever consider responding to her students comments on the website, Miles responded with a “no,” stating that the website is really for students but that she was curious to know if teacher’s responses would be defensive and that it might be entertaining to read once in a while.

When it comes to teaching, Miles dislikes a professor-centered environment.

“Instead, I try to create a student-centered or learner-centered classroom,” she stated. “This forces the students to be active participants in their learning – and it creates a lively classroom, which is much more fun than a lecture-based classroom.”

To facilitate the learning material for her students, Miles likes to joke with them, use analogies and examples to break down the lesson, making it easier for students to understand.

Literary analysis student, Lisa Santos, feels Miles has done an amazing job teaching her English



COURTESY PHOTO

TOP TEACHER: Adjunct English professor Kimberly Miles is ranked #30 among FIU faculty on *RateMyProfessor.com*.

class.

“She is always prepared for class and she will do research for us that she believes is helpful to our assignment,” she stated. “She is constantly trying to assist us with any information as possible to help any struggling students.”

Besides teaching enc. courses such as freshman composition, literary analysis, and report and technical writing, Miles finds the time to continue doing technical writing on the side and enjoys reading empirical research studies

specifically focused on candid genetics and domestication.

In the future she hopes to accomplish her personal goal of becoming a successful fiction writer in the fantasy genre.

The most gratifying thing about teaching, for Miles, is when her students finally understand the lesson for the day.

“I love seeing what I call the ‘light bulb’ moment when they ‘get it,’” she stated. “When they understand a particular concept they keep me young mentally.”

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Name: Universe at War
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Name: Showtime Championship Boxing
Release Date: December 11, 2007
Price: \$29.99

Name: NiGHTS: Journey of Dreams
Release Date: December 18, 2007
Price: \$49.99



WEEKEND

THURSDAY • DECEMBER 6

WHAT: Anos Felices
WHERE: Hard Rock Live
5747 Seminole Way
Hollywood, w 33314
WHEN: 8 p.m.
PRICE: \$45 - \$75

WHAT: Tony Bennett
WHERE: Bwrld Ctr for the
Perf Arts Amaturro
201 SW 5th Ave.
Ft. Lauderdale, Fl 33312
WHEN: 8 p.m.
PRICE: \$50 - \$125

FRIDAY • DECEMBER 7

WHAT: Christmas Concert
WHERE: War Memorial Auditorium
800 NE 8th St.
Ft. Lauderdale, Fl 33304
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
PRICE: \$25 - \$50

SATURDAY • DECEMBER 8

WHAT: Alejandro Sanz
WHERE: American Airlines Arena
601 Biscayne Blvd
Miami, Fl 33132
WHEN: 8 p.m.
PRICE: \$57 - \$97

WHAT: Keith Urban
WHERE: BankAtlantic Arena
2555 Panther Pkwy
Sunrise, Fl 33323
WHEN: 8 p.m.
PRICE: \$17.25 - \$56.75

SUNDAY • DECEMBER 9

WHAT: Between the Trees
WHERE: Studio A
60 NE 11th St.
Miami, Fl 33132
WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
PRICE: \$9

WHAT: Chemlab
WHERE: Culture Room
3045 N. Federal Hwy
Ft. Lauderdale, Fl 33306
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
PRICE: \$13

- Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*

Green fairy goes stateside

Absinthe now available in U.S.

JULIANA BARBASSA
AP Writer

Green fairy, opalescent muse, bottled madness, the essence of life: absinthe has answered to many names over the centuries, feeding inspiration and insanity in equal measures to artists from Baudelaire to Degas before facing a ban that lasted nearly a century.

Now the emerald witch is stepping out of the shadows.

Since the federal government approved the sale of absinthe in March, two brands of the high-proof liquor, Lucid and Kubler, have been introduced to the U.S. market.

Both made according to original recipes, they are fueling a revival among the inquisitive and quenching the thirst of cultish devotees.

Drawn out by the dissolution of national barriers in the European Union, absinthe also is newly legal in its birthplace, Switzerland, and in France, whose fin-de-siecle painters and writers enshrined its allure in masterpieces that survived the drink's prohibition on the eve of the first World War, and ensured its reputation.

"I'd read about it in Henry Miller and Anais Nin, and I was curious," Stephanie Palmer, who works in software sales, said while sipping Kubler absinthe on the night of its sponsored debut in a San Francisco bar. "It has this mystique, all the stories about wormwood."

Wormwood, an herb that grows wild on the slopes of Val-de-Travers, in the Swiss Alps, is absinthe's key ingredient, and counterbalances the mouth-numbing sweetness of the dominant flavor, anise.

A relative of tarragon and mugwort, it imbues the drink with bitter undertones and, reputedly, the drinker with a clarity of vision that made it both beloved and banned.

"After the first glass you see things as you wish they were," Oscar Wilde once said of absinthe. "After the second, you see things as they are not. Finally you see things as they really are, and that is the most horrible thing in the world."

A chemical present in wormwood, thujone, has long been credited with keeping the drinker lucid even as he succumbs to the pleasant lull of alcohol. Recent studies have shown that wormwood excites the nervous system, said Barnaby Conrad III, author of "Absinthe: History in a Bottle."

"It's a little like stepping on the gas and the brakes at the same time," Conrad said.

As he spoke, he prepared a

glass of absinthe in the traditional way: placing a flat, slotted spoon across a tulip-shaped glass, balancing a sugar cube on top, then opening a thin-spouted spigot on a tabletop fountain and allowing the trickle of water to melt the sugar into the clear absinthe below.

On other tables, patrons tried it for themselves, enjoying the ritual involved in preparing the drink using the old-fashioned glass fountains supported by elegant metal pedestals.

When water was added, the mixture turned a milky, alabaster hue, a process known as the louche, a French word meaning "shady," which could be applied

of 19th-century absinthe, he said.

"The real high is the associations," he said. "Absinthe is pre-1915 Paris, when time unfolded differently."

That's precisely what is drawing new consumers to the old spirit, said Lyons Brown, importer of the Kubler brand. Both brands retail for \$50 to \$60 for a 750-milliliter bottle.

"There's been this legend, this lure to absinthe that never went away" in spite of its ban in 1912 in the United States, said Brown. "American consumers aren't being introduced to absinthe, they've been waiting for it. The demand is already there."

Using an 1863 recipe passed down through four generations of the Kubler family, distiller Peter Karl macerates the herbs, steeping them for a day in wheat- and rye-based alcohol warmed just above body temperature. Then he distills the mixture

slowly, ridding it of the chlorophyll present in French absinthe and which lends it stronger flavors and a green tint.

Indeed, shimmering in the dim recesses of a bar, its warmth making conversation flow above the din of music, Karl's mixture does seem to work the San Francisco crowd into an exalted state, "a different buzz," according to patron Tracey Grant, a San Francisco graphic designer.

Even a century later and a continent away, the poets' muse lives up to her reputation, leading drinkers into a seductive realm, though perhaps falling short of the transcendence alluded to by the 19th-century French poet Raoul Ponceon in his poem "L'Absinthe:"

"...in your opalescence I see the full heavens of yore,

As through an open door.

What matter, O refuge of the damned!

That you a vain paradise be, If you appease my need..."

“Oscar Wilde, Absinthe consumer”

After the second, you see things as they are not. Finally you see things as they really are, and that is the most horrible thing in the world

to the drink's opaque appearance or to the allegedly dubious virtues of those who consumed it.

Bohemian artists in Paris at the end of the 19th century lived a life beyond morality, spent in search of sensual experience, even at the expense of madness. Their drink of choice, absinthe, came to embody those qualities in the public's imagination.

The underground, even dangerous image of absinthe was displayed in Edouard Manet's life-sized portrait of a Parisian street bum dubbed "The Absinthe Drinker," in the prostitute Nana, from Emile Zola's novel by the same name, who drank absinthe to forget "the beastliness of men," in the portraits of dissolution and folly left by French 19th century poets Paul Marie Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud and Charles Baudelaire.

The reputation wasn't entirely undeserved, Conrad says in his book, reporting the findings of a 19th century doctor who studied absinthe drinkers at a French psychiatric hospital.

Describing its effects on a hardworking sculptor who was prompted to leave work and family and consume a dozen glasses of the stuff at a go, the doctor wrote in his 1859 thesis, "He drank ... without the ability to get drunk: he was like a beast."

And an excess of wormwood can indeed be deadly, Conrad said.

But the chemical reputed to carry the hallucinogenic qualities is present in such low quantities in both current versions, as required under the federal approval, and the alcohol content so high at more than 100 proof, that the consumer would die of alcohol poisoning long before being seriously affected by thujone, Conrad said. That also was true



REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

MUSIC *Jay-Z: American Gangster* Film inspires concept album

DOUGLAS FORTE
Contributing Writer

Jay returns to his roots on his 10th solo LP, *American Gangster*, a concept album inspired by the recently released film of the same name, starring Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe.

He takes familiar emotions from the film and elaborates on them in an album that sonically reflects the 70s, with lyrical content describing his life before rap stardom. By drawing parallels between himself and the title character of the *American Gangster* film, he sends listeners back to the era of his classic first album, *Reasonable Doubt*.

The rapper starts with the menacing sounds of the descriptive intro, emphasizes exactly what a gangster is, at least in his opinion.

Then he begs everyone to "Pray" for him on the second track, as he dives into a life of crime to secure his future. The instrumental

includes frantic strings, complete with Beyonce's smooth voice layered on top to create a serious tone.

On "American Dreamin," Jay spends some time rapping on his wants and intentions along a breezy soulful backdrop courtesy of Diddy and his production team, The Hitmen, who produced a majority of the album.

Jay spoke about how he ended up working with Diddy in several interviews, stating that Diddy had some instrumentals that he felt would mesh perfectly with the concept album.

With Diddy and co. producing the bulk of the material, the album is cohesive and stays true to the concept and theme.

On the left-field minimalist track, "Hello Brooklyn 2.0," featuring a wailing Lil' Wayne on the chorus, Jay opens up to his true love and home town, Brooklyn, New York. It is a turn in a different direction and is sonically

more reflective of today's southern rap music.

"No Hook," evokes a dark mood, where he justifies the dirty actions of his past, and announces his state of desperation with sincere lines such as, "poor me, dad was gone/finally got my dad back/liver bad, he wouldn't live long/it snatched my dad back/guidance I never had that/streets was my second home."

The album then takes on a lighter tone as the funky celebratory "Roc Boys," and the sweet pop-sounding love anthem, "I Know" follows after. The latter features Pharrell doing what he does best on the chorus and production.

Like any successful gangster, whose career inherently attracts controversy and notoriety, Jay focuses on the gangster image on both "Ignorant S*," featuring a quick verse from fellow Rocafella artist, Beanie Siegel, and "Say Hello".

Producer Just Blaze

provides a smooth Isley Brother's sample for "Ignorant S*," while DJ Toomp adds some southern thump for the latter mentioned track.

"Success" featuring Nas, isn't a bad rap track by today's standards, but a pairing of arguably the two greatest rappers of today should have produced a much better creation. Nas' verse leaves much to be desired, and constant repetitive shouts over a stuttering dry drum track leaves the song feeling, well, dry.

Jermaine Dupri handles the production duty on the final song, which is a fitting and satisfying closer to a well-rounded and interesting album. The track features Soul artist, Bilal, who lends an insightful chorus, while Jay details the dramatic fall of a drug dealer, with the verses: "life is like a deck of cards/now ya tumbling, it's humbling/ya' fallin', ya mumbling/under ya breath like you knew/this day was

coming, fallin'."

There is also the catchy 80's rap flavored ode to drug dealing, "Blue Magic," featuring Pharrell.

Unfortunately "Blue Magic" is not quite formatted to the album's theme, along with the ironically titled Just Blaze produced gem, "American Gangster", and

so those two tracks are bonus additions. They are great additions to an intellectual and grown up rap album.

Even if Jay is getting old in rap years, he's sure far from being washed up. *American Gangster* is right below his other two classics, "The Blueprint" and "Reasonable Doubt."

A night out with the Power Rangers

COLUMN, page 6

was so unbelievably nice.

I doubt the two will remember me for very long, but I think I made an impression. I was pretty much one of the only fans not drooling over their Ranger days. I'm not saying those who were drooling were doing anything wrong, but because I wasn't I stood out a bit. Or at least I hope I did.

One thing is for certain; I will definitely remember them. How

often do people get to meet their childhood heroes in such an intimate fashion? The encounter has not changed my life or anything like that, but it has really made me appreciate the show about teenagers in spandex a lot more.

It may be a dumb kid's show, but it's a dumb kids show that I grew up with and would not change for anything in the world. Well, except maybe a dinner with Lucy Lawless, but that's a different story.

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MONDAY NIGHT LIGHTS



NICK WASS/AP PHOTO

SACKED: Former Golden Panther and current Baltimore Ravens linebacker Antwan Barnes sacks New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady on Monday Night Football Dec. 3. Barnes' is still tied for the Golden Panthers' single game sack record. Barnes was drafted in the fourth round of the 2007 NFL draft by the Ravens.

Best, worst of fall sports highlighted

BONILLA, page 12

allowing two goals in the final 10 minutes to lose 3-2 against No. 9 ranked Tulsa, the two upset wins are the best moment of 2007.

The two games were not only the two lone upsets of the year by any team, but they came from an unheralded team and even less recognized offense.

If the best moments of 2007 didn't make fans cry, the worst moments surely will.

THE WORST

3. It's an obvious move, but a necessary one. The football team starts off the worst list with their 27-24 loss against Arkansas State with two seconds left in regulation.

This loss gave fans reason to believe the Golden Panthers would go winless in 2007.

The back and forth game reached a stalemate at 24 with 1:31 left in the game. ASU rallied down the field to cash in a field goal to extend the losing streak then to 21 games. The team's best shot at victory all season had been smashed by the late field goal.

2. Injuries are an inevitable risk when playing sports on any level. The women's soccer team already

had a short roster throughout the season. The team's roster would lose one more player on Sept. 23 when senior midfielder Francesca Chong tore three ligaments in her knee as her parents watched in the stands.

Chong screamed on the floor and could not walk under her own power. Chong's season ending knee injury is the second worst moment of 2007.

1. The last game was inspiring, but the first game was just embarrassing. Yes. The Golden Panthers' 59-0 loss at Penn State is the worst moment of 2007.

Besides playing horribly in front of more than 100,000 people at the stadium, Gracie's Grill held a watch party in which Golden Panther fans assembled to watch the Nitanny Lions tear apart their team.

The game is a blur of miscues and destruction.

Fans at Gracie's Grill should've suspected the game would not go their way when it took the Golden Panthers nearly the whole first quarter to obtain one first down.

That first humiliation would foreshadow the football team's next 10 games, but it could not predict the inconsistencies and poignant moments of the remainder of the 2007 season.

MEN'S BASKETBALL FGCU 73, FIU 70

Abysmal free throw shooting downs team again

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. Sports Editor

Following the pattern of its season, FIU was unable to overcome tentative play and terrible free-throw shooting and dropped to 2-3 on the season following a 73-70 upset at the hands of the Florida Gulf Coast University Eagles (3-5) on Dec. 2 at Pharmed Arena.

FIU's woes continued in the paint as FGCU forwards Landon Adler and Casey Wohlleb combined for 44 points and 16 rebounds to lead the way for the Eagles, who are in their first season of Division I play.

The Golden Panthers' offense reached above 50 percent shooting from the field for the first time this season, led by sophomore Erick

Nsangou, who came off the bench and provided 17 points.

Despite the efficient offense, FIU's inability to hold onto the ball ultimately led to its downfall, as the Eagles scored 27 points off of FIU's

lead changes, but the final one would take place with 48 seconds remaining in the game when FGCU's Adam Liddell hit a lay-up to put the Eagles up for good at 69-68.

Following the score, FIU senior

cement the victory.

FIU shot just 58.5 percent from the free throw line, a pattern that has become all too familiar for Rouco, who has seen his team shoot just 63 percent from the line on the season.

"We had

17 assists and shot 54 percent from the field; that should be enough to win" he said. "But when you shoot

only 10-of-17 from the line, there's no place to hide."

Despite the efficient offensive day for the squad, only one other Golden Panther aside from Nsangou had double figures in scoring, junior

Kenneth White, who had 10 points.

All in all, 10 Golden Panthers scored during the course of the game, but aside from Nsangou, none of the players seemed to want to take the initiative to take over the game.

Alex Galindo had a subpar offensive outing, scoring just eight points on 3-of-8 shooting and 1-of-5 from 3-point range.

The game was the fifth of a seven-game home stand that opens the season for the Golden Panthers.

Following a game on Dec. 5 the University of Buffalo, the University of Miami travels to University Park for a Dec. 8 meeting.

"We've got to strap it up," Rouco said. "This is no time to feel sorry for yourself. It's time to move forward and it's time to go."

Sergio Rouco, head coach

At home, you've got to be able to put people away and we didn't. With 23 turnovers you can't win. This is no time to feel sorry for yourself.

23 turnovers.

"At home, you've got to be able to put people away and we didn't. With 23 turnovers you can't win," said coach Sergio Rouco.

In the second half, there were 13

guard Chris Fuller attempted a 3-pointer to retake the lead. He had hit one prior to Liddell's score to put the Golden Panthers up, but this time his attempt bounced off the rim and FGCU grabbed the rebound to

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GIVING BACK



FIU MEDIA RELATIONS/COURTESY PHOTO

VISITING: Women's soccer players Nitza Maldonado (left), Jessica Vaccarro (middle) and Kisten Hurst (right) visit children at Baptist Children's Hospital, along with other student-athletes from the women's basketball and swimming diving team.



LYNN SLADKY/AP PHOTO

MOURNING FAN: Washington Redskins' fan Zena Williams, dressed in full Redskins' colors, stands outside of the funeral service for Sean Taylor, at Pharmed Arena on Dec. 3. Fans, players and students came to commemorate him.

Slain NFL player's funeral draws players and fans alike

TAYLOR, page 1

coach Butch Davis, to Redskins coach Joe Gibbs, to Reverend Jesse Jackson, to fans and students. Many took time off of their busy schedules to pay last respects.

Jackson, delivered a speech with Sean Taylor's father, Pedro Taylor. Florida City Police Chief Pedro Taylor took the opportunity to show why his son's death needd to be a realization of the violence engulfing the world.

"We've accepted violence as the norm [and] it must be rejected," Jackson said.

Clinton Portis, a teammate of Taylor's both at UM and in Washington, reflected eloquently on a side of Taylor the public didn't always see. Speaking without any cue cards or prewrit-

The opening portion of the service was allocated towards remembering Taylor as a football player and teammate, but it wasn't until Taylor's agent, Drew Rosenhaus, took the stage that the startling realization hit many – more than just a football player was lost.

"I want to thank Sean for being a hero, and giving your life to protect your Jackie and Jackie," said Rosenhaus, referencing Taylor's fiancée and child, who were in the home on the night of the shooting.

Jackie's sister, Carolina Garcia, elaborated on that note. She told a story about how Sean first met Jackie; Taylor went home and told his parents that he had to learn Spanish so that he could 'woo' Jackie. Caroline concluded her tearful eulogy by thanking Sean for "showing

“ Jesse Jackson, Reverend

If we turn tragedy into triumph then brother Taylor's death will not be in vain.

ten speech, Portis was met with resounding applause upon saying that Sean played with more heart and passion than anyone he had seen take the field.

The service began with a slide show displaying Taylor's career from a young teenager playing at Gulliver Prep, to succeeding and excelling at the highest point of competition, the NFL. While the slide show played, mourners and fans could be seen fixated on Sean's highlights, a reminder of how magnificent a talent was lost.

Pastor Alphonso Jackson III began the service with a simple reminder.

"The earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal," Jackson III said.

A recurring, acknowledged theme was the passion and dedication Taylor had for his craft, as tales were told of his isolated workout sessions and intense training.

me the meaning of unconditional love."

The four suspects in Taylor's murder were held in Ft. Myers due to the family's wishes not to move them to Miami until after the funeral.

Taylor won a national championship with the Hurricanes in 2001 and joined the Washington Redskins as the fourth overall pick in the 2004 NFL draft. Taylor reached the 2007 Pro Bowl and was acknowledged as having as much talent as any other safety to ever play the position by many sports followers.

The Redskins honored Taylor in their game against the Buffalo Bills on Dec. 2 by putting ten players on the field for the opening defensive play of the game – symbolizing the loss of a teammate.

"If we turn tragedy into triumph," Jesse Jackson said, "then brother Taylor's death will not be in vain."

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VOLLEYBALL

THE GOOD: Yarimar Rosa was selected as three-time Sun Belt Player of the week.

THE BAD: The team was knocked out of the conference tournament in the semifinals.

THE UGLY: The team was swept by rivals Middle Tennessee, winning just 2 out of 11 matches.

FOOTBALL

THE GOOD: the team ended it's 23 game losing streak with a 38-19 win over North Texas...

THE BAD: ... but lost every other game they played, and usually by a wide margin.

THE UGLY: They gave up 42 points in the first half of a loss to Middle Tennessee, a team that went on to a 5-7 record.



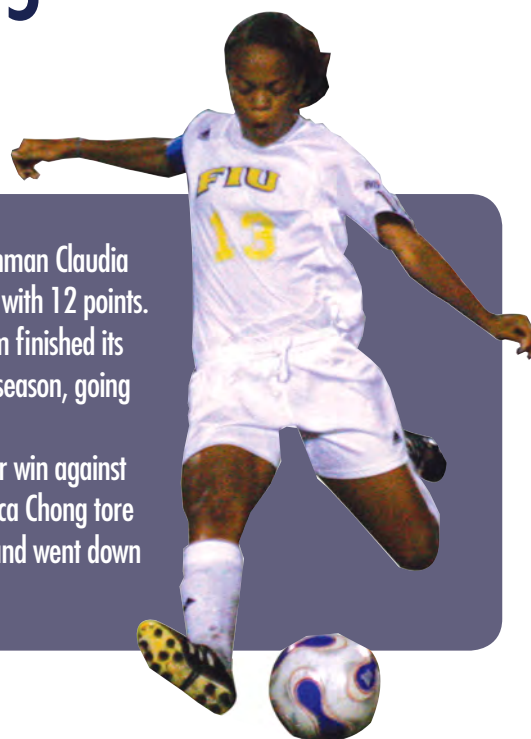
MEN'S & WOMEN'S SOCCER



THE GOOD: they made it to the C-USA finals before losing to No. 9 ranked Tulsa.

THE BAD: They won just 3 games during the regular season.

THE UGLY: On the verge of a conference title, they allowed 2 goals in the final ten minutes to lose.



THE GOOD: Freshman Claudia Cardenas led the team with 12 points.

THE BAD: The team finished its 7th consecutive losing season, going 3-11-3.

THE UGLY: In their win against Stetson, senior Francesca Chong tore three knee ligaments and went down for the season.

The good, bad and ugly of fall sports



Commentary

Sergio Bonilla
Sports Editor

Football coach Mario Cristobal was doused by the traditional Gatorade bath, poured on a coach when his team wins the Super Bowl, but FIU won just one game.

Men's soccer regular season record was 3-12-2, yet it nearly won the Conference USA championship title.

And a women's soccer team player suffered the most severe injury of any player in any sport.

As the football team played its final game Dec. 1, the wacky Fall 2007 season concluded as well.

With so many highs and lows (perhaps more lows) this season, what was the best moment of the season? What was the worst moment? The top three best and worst moments of fall are revisited through this sports editor's objective eyes. Well, at least in

my opinion.

THE BEST

3. Entering the 2007 season, the volleyball team expectations were as high as any other programs, albeit more realistic than the football and soccer programs. Coming off the program's best record of 24-8 and a loss in the Sun Belt Conference Championship game last year, the volleyball team had aspirations of returning to the championship and winning in 2007.

However, the team was eliminated by Middle Tennessee State in the semifinals of the tournament. As easy as it would be to tag the volleyball team as another FIU program falling short, its entire season is best moment No. 3. This is the same program that three years ago posted a 3-23 record. Coach Danijela Tomic is steering the program in the right direction and has shown that a complete transformation is possible.

Perhaps the volleyball squad should play in the new football stadium next season.

2. Sophomore quarterback Paul McCall had never started a collegiate game, but the Orange Bowl's farewell was extra sweet for Golden Panther fans as the 23-game losing streak was snapped Dec. 1, in the final game of the season.

The football team winning its first game since current juniors were freshmen is moment No. 2.

For the first time in two years, fans had reason to celebrate. Players like McCall were greeted and patted on the back.

A drenched Cristobal bumping chests and hugging players capped off what in many people's minds is the best moment of the 2007 season. But the one win in a 1-11 season could only take the football team so high on this list. What can overtake the biggest win in Golden Panther history? No. 1 on the list can.

1. In the beginning of its season, the men's soccer team resembled the football team as it could not score or win. Fortunately, the Golden Panthers finished their last seven games

with a 3-4 record while entering the Conference USA Tournament thanks to a couple of wins against conference opponents.

After gaining a tournament bid with a 3-12-2 regular season record, the upsets ensued.

No. 5 ranked Southern Methodist University defeated the Golden Panthers 2-0 in the regular season. The Golden Panthers' lackluster offense that only scored 12 goals in 17 games exploded with three goals and defeated the strongest opponent they had faced all season 3-1.

Had the Golden Panthers stopped there, they wouldn't have grabbed the No. 1 spot, but they were not done yet.

Marshall, a team that defeated the Golden Panthers 1-0 during the regular season, was their next opponent. Sophomore Juan Guerra lifted the Golden Panthers to euphoria and the title game in the second minute of overtime.

Although they melted down in the championship game by

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