

See Thailand, Czech Republic when you study abroad

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Errors cost baseball team third victory in a row

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SPOTLIGHT

AT THE BAY PAGE 4



Students cooked, danced and had a taste of the biz at this year's SoBe Wine and Food Festival.

LIFE! PAGE 9

COLUMN: Susana Rodriguez helps you not look like a noob when it comes to personalizing your laptop.

OPINION PAGE 8



Gerrymandering is an unfair power play by politicians to keep their seat.

LIFE! PAGE 9

COLUMN: Eddith Sevilla breaks down flu season in the latest Pulse installment.

SPORTS PAGE 12



Softball goes 2-3 during weekend series. No. 15 ranked team sweeps Panthers.

OPINION PAGE 8

Obama's new attorney general has made a controversial statement on race.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Environmental Awareness, Feb. 25, 3 p.m.: It's not too late to get green, come on, everyone's doing it! Give in to the social pressure at the GC Pit.

Talent Show- Relay For Life, Feb. 25, 6 p.m.: Got talent? We highly doubt it, but come and enjoy your brave peers dueling it out for their 15 minutes at GC Ballroom East.

Rock Band competition, Feb. 25, 10 p.m.: Compete for the fake audience applause and temporary glory at Transit Lounge.

Pi Kappa Alpha Pageant, Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m.: Watch the Greek lifers enjoy even more attention at GC 305.

Anything Goes Anime Club film, Feb. 26, 8 p.m.: Watch a film brought to you by the anime club, where anything goes except doubting anime's entertainment value.

For the complete calendar, please see page 11 or visit FIUSM.com/calendar.

WEATHER



WEDNESDAY
Mostly sunny
LOW: 61 HIGH: 76



THURSDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 61 HIGH: 78



FRIDAY
Sunny
LOW: 62 HIGH: 80

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University focuses on international curriculum

ELSIE PUIG
Staff Writer

Globalization is a term used to describe the interconnectedness of our lives to global processes. At FIU, a group of dedicated faculty and administrators would describe it as an essential component of our education.

On Feb. 17, the Faculty Senate voted to give full support to the Global Learning Quality Enhancement Plan, a campus-wide effort to internationalize the framework of the University's curriculum.

"The soul purpose of any QEP is to enhance student learning," said Stephanie Doscher, associate director of the Global Learning Initiative. "But FIU chose global learning because it was already part of our initial mission, ingrained in the plaque outside Primera Casa, which is to achieve greater international understanding."

The QEP is one of the steps taken toward being reaccredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2010. Reaccreditation ensures the University is in compliance with standard regulations and allows for federal grant money and student financial aid.

Currently there are four courses that have been tweaked to follow the QEP structure, but the core foundational courses will be assessed in Summer 2009.

"The courses are going to be largely interdisciplinary and hands-on, and we will pilot four of the foundational courses to do some research of how students are learning in these courses and how effective they are," Doscher said.

The QEP will require students to take at least one global learning course as part of their University Core Curriculum and one upper division course designed to give a global angle to any given major. Doscher assured it will not increase the amount of credits students need to take.

Doscher observed that for most universities, the idea of global learning entailed increasing classroom diversity or sponsoring student study abroad programs. FIU, however, will strive to make the connection between the curriculum and its international implications right from the classroom.

The Global Learning QEP follows the idea that education in the 21st century must be able to mold glob-

QEP, page 3

SoBe

wine and food festival '09



PHOTOS BY NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

For more Wine and Food Fest coverage see pages 4-7

Festival succumbs to recession

SERGIO MONTEALEGRE
Staff Writer

The Eighth annual Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival couldn't come out unscathed from the economic downturn, but tried to make the best of the situation.

Hosted by the University and Southern Wine & Spirits of Florida, the SoBe Wine and Food Festival remains one of the largest exhibitions of its kind in South Florida, with prominent representation from Food Network and more than 130 sponsors.

However, according to a *Miami Herald* article, "the number of sponsors has dropped 12 percent, the biggest drop in festival history."

Top sponsors that dropped this year include Macy's, Target, Publix Supermarkets and the Turks & Caicos Islands, which withdrew an \$100,000 sponsorship of the Surfs and Turks event held at the Mandarin Oriental.

Last year, according to a report from *Reuters*, the festival celebrated one of its best years in the eight years it's been running, breaking all records, attracting

40,000 participants and raising over \$2.26 million for the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

In contrast, this year's festival is expected to be much more subdued, with money to SHTM predicted to be \$1.89 million and an attendance of approximately 20,000 – half of last year's total.

SOBE, page 3

SGC-UP

Code revisions spark debate

DAVID BARRIOS
Senior Staff Writer

Heated debate ensued as senators walked out from deliberations over the Elections Code Revisions of 2009 on Monday night's SGC-UP Senate meeting.

The bill, calling for the establishment of political parties for student government elections and the disclosure of candidate's resume and elections records to the voters, was debated for almost two hours and was not voted upon.

"Right now, there are several ways for students to get elected into SGA through clubs and social connections, but I feel that there isn't an apparatus in which students can be elected solely for ideology," said Chris Cabral, co-author of the bill and senator for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Senator Jeffery Molinaro for the College of Law debated in opposition to the bill, claiming that the financial guidelines for the parties were vaguely established, with no bylaws being established in the bill

on how parties were to keep track of their budgets, which could go up to \$10,000.

"We know who votes overwhelmingly on college campuses," Molinaro said. "Greeks vote. The University of Florida has political parties, including the Gator Party. The Gator Party has never lost an election and is made up of fraternities and sororities. They have essentially locked out all of the other parties and anyone who isn't a Greek."

SGA, page 3

NEWS FLASH

FIU

Discounted Youth Fair tickets now on sale

Students, faculty and other University employees are now able to purchase tickets to the Youth Fair at a discount price off the gate price. Tickets went on sale Feb. 20 and will go on until March 24 at the Graham Center in the first floor ticket office.

This year's fair will be held from March 26 until April 12.

For more information, call Greg Bryant at (305) 348-2187.

LOCAL

Florida governor proposes cuts in property taxes

Republican Florida Gov. Charlie Crist proposed three additional state constitutional amendments and another law regarding cuts in property taxes on Feb. 20.

Legislation and an amendment passed in 2007 and 2008 helped cut property taxes an average of 3 percent annually after a stream of increases.

One proposed amendment would put spending caps on local governments. Another would give breaks to first-time homebuyers and non-homeowner taxpayers. The third would bar tax increases for primary homeowners if their property values go down.

LOCAL

Fraternity suspended after drug bust

Zeta Beta Tau's University of Miami chapter has been temporarily suspended after two of its members were accused of drug dealing.

According to Coral Gables police, marijuana and other pills were being sold from the house.

University officials, as well as the national executive director of the fraternity, are working with police during the investigation.

NATIONAL

Gas prices inch down

The price of a gallon of regular gasoline appears to be going down, according to the American Automobile Association Auto Club South.

Greg Laskoski, the managing director of public relations for AAA South, said that for the first time in 2009, prices are moving in conjunction with crude oil prices as Americans drive fewer miles.

In South Florida, the average price of a gallon of regular is \$1.97, which is down from the \$2 average during the week of Feb.16.

- Compiled by Paulo O'Swath

U.N.'s lawmaking efforts addressed

JONATHAN DAVILA
Staff Writer

Protecting the international human rights of citizens who are from member states of the United Nations is an arduous task, said a U.N. chairman the morning of Feb. 20.

Rafael Rivas Posada, chairman of the U.N.'s High Commission for Human Rights, spoke to a crowd of 55 at the University's College of Law. His lecture clarified confusion about the process the United Nations goes through to create international human rights laws.

"It's not an easy topic," Posada said.

He explained his commission makes recommendations to member states based on covenants created by experts not affiliated with politics. The experts have different areas of concentration such as creating rights for women, migrant workers, children and people with disabilities. Some countries accept their recommendations, while others do not.

"If a state denies its compliance, then there is nothing to do but apply political pressure within the frame of the U.N.," Posada said, noting this is one of the criticisms of the commission.

After explaining the intricacies of U.N. policy-making, Posada discussed the side of the commission that deals with processing individual citizens' complaints of their respective states.

"The emphasis is not only on the legislation, but on the reality," he said. "It's a very complicated



JOEY KOSANKE/THE BEACON

HUMAN RIGHTS: U.N. chairman Rafael Rivas Posada speaks to students at the College of Law as part of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Distinguished Lecture Series, Feb. 20.

world."

Individual complaints submitted to the U.N. take anywhere between one and four years to process, according to Posada. Once the committee receives a complaint, it must translate it, research and meet with the state's government to determine if it was not compliant with the established, international human rights laws.

"International law is not superior, but it has to be taken into account," Posada said.

The Colombia native then addressed some issues the committee is currently dealing with, namely the modern view of terrorism.

"After the tragic events of Sept. 11, the world tried to create a way to defend member states from terrorism. The question is: 'What is terrorism?'" he said. "Some states have approved laws which are very general. Some have approved legislation which

is very restrictive. The concept of what is terrorist behavior is going to be very difficult and probably never reach consensus."

The lecture was followed by a question and answer session in which some students and faculty asked Posada what he thought about Darfur, abortion, the place of international law in civil cases, the process of filing a complaint against a state and other issues.

The crowd of mostly students was silent throughout the lecture, but Posada was well-received: The crowd applauded his speech and some in the crowd stayed around to chat with the chairman afterward.

"The lecture was perfect. He hit on two specific topics that me and a partner are presenting on," said junior political science major Raimondo Gugliotta. "I wish he had some more time for questions."

Posada holds a doctorate in political science from Princeton University and has served as the president of the *Universidad de los Andes* in Bogotá, Colombia. He was brought to the University in collaboration between the Latin American and Caribbean Center and the College of Law.

The lecture was a part of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Distinguished Lecture Series, sponsored by the LACC and the Colombian Studies Institute.

"I think it was great – very interesting and informative," said director of the LACC Cristina Eguizabal. "I'm very glad he came and accepted our invitation."

The lecture series' next guest is Teodoro Petkoff, a Venezuelan journalist and politician. He will be at the University on March 6, at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

POLICE NOTES

Feb. 12

Unknown persons removed an FIU student decal from a student's vehicle. The decal was set at a \$10 value.

Feb. 13

A young woman was found at the courtyard between Lakeview South and Lakeview North bent over, conscious but not fully alert. The young woman suffered from a heart condition and was in need of her medication. After refusing to be transported to a hospital, she signed the "Florida International University - Release and Liability Waiver For Emergency Medical Attention."

Feb. 17

A student left his wallet at some point between Feb. 14 through Feb. 17. While the student believes the wallet was lost in the Green Library, he is not certain. The wallet contained a pilot license, scuba license, sky diving license, Wachovia debit card and \$10 in cash.

Leaving his bookbag unattended in the Green Library, a student fell victim to theft. Stolen items included a Physical Therapy textbook, tape recorder, Bank Atlantic credit card and debit card, Florida driver's license, Under Armor bookbag and rolling suitcase.

Feb. 18

An FIU employee did not respect warning signs outside BBC Academic I, with postings of "CAUTION," falling on the steps to the building. The victim injured her knee and was sent to Aventura Hospital.

- Compiled by Cheryl Malone

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SoBe raises scholarship money despite economy

SOBE, page 1

According to SHTM, in the eight years that it sponsored the event it raised approximately \$5 million. The figures for this year's event weren't available at press time.

Despite the downturn affecting the event, not all the news is negative. Though Publix retracted its sponsorship of the Grand Tasting Village event in order to offer the public cheaper milk and Cheerios, Whole Foods quickly filled in the hole the supermarket chain left.

Student participation is still strong, according to Caroline Karlberg, a student associate coordinator for the festival.

"We've had almost 1,000 students sign up, with 700 assigned to events," Karlberg said. "Some have helped us with planning for the past six months, while others are showing up right now to help us set up."

The festival features more than 40 events, with students assigned to serve as sous-chefs and servers in several of the cooking seminars.

The students participating

We've had almost 1,000 students sign up, with 700 assigned to events.

Caroline Karlberg, *student associate coordinator*
SoBe Wine and Food Festival

are being compensated both with experience and financially for their time and dedication.

"They get to have the experience of the festival, meeting lots of people and chefs from around the country," Karlberg said. "It's a large chance for exposure. The money raised by the event will go toward scholarships for the students, which is a benefit for those involved."

An estimate of how much money generated by the event would go toward scholarships couldn't be determined at press time.

According to the festival's official Web site, the event holds its origins with Biscayne Bay Campus in 1996, when it began as a one-day festival known as the Florida Extravaganza, held on campus.

For six years, the Florida Extravaganza showcased wines from national and

international wineries paired with food from local restaurants and chefs working with students of SHTM.

In 2002, Lee Brian Schringer, director of special events and media relations at Southern Wine & Spirits of America, relocated the event to South Beach and renamed it the Wine and Food Festival.

From 2002 to 2006, attendance exploded from 7,000 to 20,000, requiring the addition of more days to the festival and receiving sponsorship from Food Network in 2006.

For more information about SHTM, visit <http://www.hospitality.fiu.edu>. For more information about Southern Wine & Spirits, visit <http://www.southernwine.com>. For more information on the Wine and Food Festival, visit <http://www.sobewineandfoodfest.com>.

Senators debate students' readiness for party system

SGA, page 1

Cabral continued to defend his bill.

"If students have the right to be in political parties in federal and state elections, I feel that students have the right to be in a political party in a school election," he said. "Some people have told me that FIU students are not ready for it. Well, you know what? I don't think that FIU students are any less capable of creating a political party system than anyone else."

"I just don't think that our University and student government is ready for this at this moment," said Mykaelle Figueiredo, senator for the College of Public Health. "It's going to hinder other students from getting involved in our campus and University. As you can see, most of the people in SGA that aren't Greek, sorry to say, belong to small colleges where there isn't much competition."

"When it comes down to it, those without the support to campaign won't be able to survive without backing. A political party needs help and why would somebody choose a random student to join their party if they don't have that support backing that student up?" Figueiredo said.

Molinaro and Senator David Dial, co-author of the bill and Senator for the College of Nursing and Health Science, walked out of the meeting in protest to the continuing debate. Soon thereafter, the meeting ended as the rest of the senators followed them.

OPEN SEATS

Following a semestral GPA check for all of the members of student government, several seats were left open including the position of speaker pro-tempe, previously occupied by Christopher Ponce.

Currently, the seats open in the senate include



JAVIER DE LA VEGA/THE BEACON

FLOOR DEBATE: SGC-UP Senator Chris Cabral discusses proposed election code changes.

one senator at large, two College of Education seats, one seat for the College of Nursing and Health Science, one seat for the colleges of Social Work, Criminal Justice and Public Administration/Affairs and one College of Medicine seat.

According to the SGA Constitution, senators must maintain a 2.0 semester GPA and a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

ELECTIONS CONTINUE IN SGA

Senator Helena Ramirez was elected as Senate speaker pro-tempe early in the meeting by 13-2.

She promised to support Jean Roseme, Senate speaker.

"I will keep an open dialogue with Jean and support him in whatever way I can," said Ramirez during her speech to the body after being nominated.

As speaker pro-tempe, she will have power to oversee meetings if Roseme is ever absent.

Spirit of University renewed in reaccreditation

QEP, page 1

ally-conscious individuals aware of how they're chosen career is evolving internationally.

"We also hope that students graduate with an attitude of shared responsibility for solving problems at the local and global level," Doscher said.

With that in mind, the faculty involved with strategizing for the QEP drafted a set of goals and outcomes that include intercultural communication skills, understanding the relationships of global dynamics, gaining multiple perspectives on real world problems and knowledge of how global dynamics affect any given field.


"We cannot only worry about things happening in our backyard because our actions can have an indirect or direct impact on the world," said Ophelia Weeks, associate professor of biological sciences.

Biology of AIDS, taught by Weeks – who is also involved with the QEP – is one of the courses that aims to follow an interdisciplinary global approach by not only studying the biological processes of the infectious disease, but by exploring psychosocial processes and group dynamics.

"It will essentially aim to make students richer citizens of the world," Weeks said.

AMIGAS

AMIGAS is a health program that creates a comfortable setting for women to discuss topics related with health, in particular the risks dealing with VIH/SIDA.



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Celebrity chefs cook up a victory at BubbleQ

SHERVIN BAIN
Staff Writer

Recipe for a BubbleQ: Mix 150 FIU students with 26 celebrity chefs and about 3,000 hungry guests. Place evenly along the Delano beachside, add a DJ and let sizzle for four and a half hours. This event is best served with champagne.

About 150 students woke up early on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and/or Friday to get to the "Perrier-Jouët BubbleQ hosted by Tom Colicchio & Friends," the event they had signed up for by the South Beach Wine & Food Festival. The event was hosted and organized by the University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management students.

"Have you ever used a knife?" said Jouvens Jean, a SHTM alumnus and team leader for the team in charge of working with Al Roker, one of the celebrity chefs to showcase one of his recipes prepared by SHTM students. Jean was getting his team ready to work.

Students were split into 26 teams to work with different celebrity chefs. Some students worked in the "Cold Kitchen," where different ingredients were peeled, sliced and portioned, while others worked in the "Hot Kitchen," where food was cooked.

The students had a choice between three different shifts, ranging from 8 a.m. until 11 p.m.

"I've been in the kitchen all day. I'm exhausted," said Heather Wheeler, SHTM first-year grad student. "This is my first festival, so I'm really excited."

On Thursday, Michael Moran,

chef instructor and BubbleQ culinary coordinator, and the students finalized all the prep for Friday's event. According to Moran, they prepared 22,500 portions of food.

Moran guided students throughout the entire process.

"Working with students is a great collaboration," Moran said. "This is something that they do and I am their guide along the way. I'm honored to be a part of it."

The event was completely planned, prepared and produced by the SHTM students.

"They're very dedicated to this project and understand that it's a difficult industry," Moran said. "There's a lot of hard work that goes behind the scenes to make a great party."

"It's long hours, but when you're enjoying it, it doesn't feel like work," said Andres Villabona, SHTM senior and BubbleQ student intern.

The students were not the only ones excited about getting their hands dirty. Many of the chefs put aside their celebrity status and were thrilled to work with the students.

"It's fantastic. We're talking about foodies, students that are enthusiastic about food, that are ready, willing and able to help us," said Chris Lilly, from Big Bob Gibson Bar-B-Q, a restaurant in Decatur, Ala. "These students are great and they're part of the reason that I come back every year."

"Every time I come down, the first place I always come is wherever the young chefs are," said Tony Neely, from the Neely's Bar-B-Que restaurant in Nashville, Tenn. "I expect great things. The world is theirs."



CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES: Ilan Hall shakes it up with his student associate team, who helped him serve BubbleQ guests. Hall's menu was bacon wrapped matzoh balls and decadent chicken skin sandwiches.

Many chefs focused their efforts on inspiring students and said they felt humbled to work with them.

"I think it's smashing. It's important for chefs to work along with students," said Jon Ashton, food correspondent of the nationally syndicated morning show "The Daily Buzz." "We all start at the bottom and we try to work up the ladder. The most important thing is to have good manners to pass down, so when they're up the ladder they'll have good manners to pass down, too."

The event started at 7 p.m. and

ended at 11 p.m. with many of the students dancing and singing to the music the DJ played. They amped up the crowd and enjoyed the rest of the night from the other side of the booths. Chef Moran and season 2 Bravo's "Top Chef" winner Ilan Hall also let loose and danced to the music.

"The most difficult thing was probably the beginning, because we didn't expect that many people to come in all at once," said Raina Chemaly, senior hospitality management major. "I was working with Al Roker, he was very friendly with us, he wasn't

stuck up."

From cut fingers to dirty clothes and exhaustion, the students felt it was all worth it.

"I feel like this was one of the greatest experiences of my life, I loved doing this," said Vincent Tien, an SHTM alumnus and teaching assistant. "The most difficult part was those students that worked their [butts] off. I feel like saying, 'Without you guys these celebrity chefs wouldn't be celebrity chefs because they couldn't do this by themselves. Without your help they are nothing, so today, you are the stars.'"

Wine, Food Fest offers students a taste of the biz

CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Editor in Chief

As the sun started to set on Feb. 22, marking the end of the eighth annual South Beach Wine & Food Festival, close to 1,000 FIU students breathed a collective sigh of relief after four days of helping make the festival a reality.

The student associates were involved in almost every aspect of the Whole Foods Market Grand Tasting Village, one of the main events of the festival, hosted and organized by the University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. They worked on everything from the logistics to the actual execution of the events themselves.

At the festival, hundreds of exhibitors, from wine makers to local and national restaurants, provided an excess of food and drinks to the festival's estimated 56,000 patrons, and celebrity chefs mingled with revelers.

Patrick Jong, a University alumnus, was involved in the festival when he was a student. Since he graduated, he has worked for the festival full-time and served different roles, his most recent being marketing director for this year's festival.

"It offers a world of experience for

students interested in getting into the food and wine industry," Jong said. "It's such a complex event ... We have anything from sponsorship interns, interns that manage the Grand Tasting exhibitors and restaurants, to interns that manage media and marketing for us."

Mohammed Quereshi, assistant dean for SHTM, has worked with students throughout the planning process and during the festival itself.

Students chosen as lead organizers have been planning for the festival since last October.

"They have various roles," Quereshi said. "Some work as the leads, in the planning and organizing committees, while those students who come in Friday, Saturday and Sunday help us do things like making sure the sponsors, exhibitors and restaurants have what they need to have a successful day."

Quereshi sat in the SHTM's tent, located in the heart of the Grand Tasting Village, where the sound of knives against chopping blocks and the sizzle of grills could clearly be heard as students next door prepared food for festival attendees.

With her back to the ocean and eyes long immune to the effects of onions, graduate student Rachel-Marie Reppert stood,

chef's knife in hand, chopping what seemed like endless amounts of vegetables for the student-prepared lamb and hummus wraps being offered to patrons.

"It's a great networking opportunity and some real-world experience," said Reppert, who also serves as a teaching assistant for culinary classes. "To see professional chefs in a setting where they can learn from them and even be mentored; you really can't get that anywhere else, even labs."

Adam Jessup, the University's culinary Student of the Year, was in charge of handling the prep work for the many demonstrations held throughout the weekend. He assisted the likes of Iron Chef Cat Cora who, he said, was the only one whose name he could remember.

"I'm not very good with all the celebrity chef names," Jessup said, a grin on his face. "I'm just one of the cooks. We're helping to do prep work for all the celebrity chefs ... [We did] lots of prep at the Loews hotel, transferred it all over here in separate bowls, made everything look pretty."

Students' roles were not just limited to preparing food. Besides the dozens of students working the grounds answering festivalgoers' questions or thanking them for recycling the thousands of Evian mini-

bottles offered to the guests, some students had the privilege of working directly with and assisting the celebrity chefs present at the event.

"Can you hold on just a minute?" said Heather Wheeler when asked for an interview. The hospitality management graduate student then disappeared and reappeared with folders and papers in her arms which she handed to Sandra Lee, host of the Food Network show "Semi-Homemade," who had just finished her cooking demonstration and was preparing to leave the stage.

"I'm not just her assistant, I'm pretty much all of theirs," Wheeler said. "I was here all day yesterday, I helped everyone from Rachael Ray to Emeril [Lagasse] and today, everyone from Paula Deen to Sandra Lee."

The chefs themselves had nothing but good things to say about the student support they had been receiving.

"This is my third year here and every year it just gets better and better," said George Duran, host of "Ham on the Street" from the Food Network. "It's almost like these kids don't need training, they were born to do what they are doing. I'm telling you, in the next 10 years, the best chefs in the world are going to be from here, they're going to be from FIU."

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SoBe

Wine and Food Festival '09

BUBBLES ON THE BEACH:

1. The BubbleQ chefs posed for a picture with their Romero Britto decorated champagne bottles.
2. Andres Villabona, Bianca Rojas, and Paul Castronovo await the judges decision from Emeril Lagasse at the Big 105.9 cook off.
3. Bobby Flay throws down his dance moves for the crowd that gathered to watch his cooking demo, and end the last day at the Grand Tasting Village.
4. Students prepped food at the Centerplate kitchens in the Miami Beach Convention Center for the BubbleQ event.
5. Christy Cooper and Priscilla Urrea handed out Misha's cupcakes to guests at the BubbleQ.
6. Janiece Sarduy and Jouvens Jean grill beef short ribs for the guests at Al Roker's station at the BubbleQ.
7. Guy Fieri pours tequila into a gigantic bender to make margaritas for the audience during his cooking demo at the Grand Tasting Village.

READ THIS NOW!

Peers face problems we don't always see

It's halfway through the semester and I already know the one lesson that I am going to walk away with from these couple of months: never assume anything about anyone.

The first revelation of this message actually came back in 2006, as I was still intending to be an education major when I entered college, and was flipping through television channels and saw part of *The Ron Clark Story* on TNT, where Matthew Perry played a determined teacher in a rough neighborhood.

Perry's character was frustrated by one particular student who never turned in work and always caused trouble, but when he went to the student's house to talk to her mother, he found that the student was home alone, not doing homework because she had been left to take care of her many younger brothers and sisters - including needing

me: *Slumdog Millionaire*. In *Slumdog*, the main character is accused of cheating on a game show because someone of his social status could never have known all the trivia answers.

The movie consists of flashbacks to a life tougher and more challenging than I could ever imagine, consisting of traumatic and devastating experiences throughout his life that explains how he knew each question.

I am part of a couple of programs this semester that have thrown me into interesting activities with new people.

I have always appreciated the honesty that my peers have put into these activities, and since these are all the sort of things that happened in confidence and shouldn't be disseminated outside of the room, I'll have to be unfortunately vague.

In one instance, to demonstrate how everyone has been through such different experiences in life, everyone I was with started out standing in a straight line and had to step forward or backwards based on certain experiences, such as going without dinner one night because their family couldn't afford it. I already do not remember which people stepped back for that question because it doesn't matter, but I will never forget being shocked by the number of people that did.

Between that and a couple of other instances sitting in a circle, just learning about other people, I don't ever think that I can look at someone new again and think that I know them very well. Everyone has a story.

This isn't to say I won't ever mess up. I know what it's like to wrongly assume that someone isn't putting effort into their work and to feel like a fool afterwards because you didn't consider everything else they are going through.

But please, try to avoid this.

COLUMN



ERIC FELDMAN

I don't ever think that I can look at someone new again and think that I know them very well.

to make dinner. (At least that's how I remember the scene, which is what is important here.)

From that night on, I told myself that when I became a teacher, I would never degrade my students in class (even if they were poor performers) as so many of my own teachers did, because I would have no idea what was going on once they walked out of my room.

I am no longer an education major, but I still carry this message with me daily.

I have more than a handful of personal experiences this semester which reinforces this, too, but first, one more movie that resurrected the lesson for

DISTRICT REDO

Gerrymandering cannot be tolerated

ALEJANDRO DIAZ
Contributing Writer

Art these days has never taken such a creative form. Drawings and renderings of mythical creatures such as dragons and other flying beasts have been sprouting up all over the country.

I'm sorry to break it to you, art majors, but this is not a story on the latest craze in the art world. It's the political one.

New computer-based software that is being used to apportion voting districts has made the job easier for politicians, who have access to someone who can maneuver their way around a computer. What's sad is that these hired map makers now have more power than voters and even politicians themselves, and the districts they're drawing can have some awfully weird shapes.

A Feb. 14 *Miami Herald* article reported that Florida Republicans have been accused of creating new voting districts by re-sizing them based on demographics and predicting how certain groups will vote.

The apportionment of these districts is completely legal yet immoral. This allows the incumbent in Florida to keep his seat safe and reduce the chance of losing future

Gerrymandering isn't fair; if they give voters the right to vote, then politicians shouldn't interfere with what vote goes to whom.

Yanelee Diaz, freshman
FIU

elections.

"Gerrymandering isn't fair," said freshman Yanelee Diaz. "If they give voters the right to vote, then politicians shouldn't interfere with what vote goes to whom."

Gerrymandering is not a new political strategy. Wrongful division of voting districts has roots backed up to the late 18th century, right when our country was young and vulnerable. This makes the United States a country built on unfair apportionment.

This is a no-win situation for the voters. If we decide to do something about this and petition this wrongful distribution, we would have to take this plan to the very people who are executing it. And believe me, they're doing it with more precision than a German rocket engineer did in the

1950s with a Saturn V rocket.

"The things these politicians are allowed to do is ridiculous," said psychology major Alex Costa. "I don't understand how these people sleep at night knowing they do this."

There's at least one group in Florida who's trying.

FairDistrictsFlorida.org is composed of a group of Floridians trying to eradicate gerrymandering in the state by asking us, the powerless voters, to stand up to this political monster that alters our final decisions.

But the site isn't going to do it all by itself. Unless these hired "geeks" get the idea, this is a hopeless task for all of us. The politicians believe that since it's legal they have the right to alter districts as they please. This is wrong, and so are their platforms when they campaign through your area.

Computers or not, gerrymandering is wrong and should be stopped. The ability to convert voters through a central processing unit just makes those who think they're making a difference feel betrayed.

Let's keep this out of their control and put democracy back in our hands.

We are not 'a nation of cowards'

MATT RUCKMAN
Staff Writer

Eric Holder, President Obama's pick for the Office of Attorney General, won high marks for re-defining water boarding as torture. He then took one giant step backwards after his speech to the Justice Department.

In his speech, Holder urged people to use Black History Month as a chance to discuss racial matters, ending with, "Though this nation has proudly thought of itself as an ethnic melting pot, in things racial we have always been and continue to be, in too many ways, essentially a nation of cowards."

Cowards?

In the year of the election of the first African-American president, I thought that would be the last descriptor of America, especially given Holder's own "first" as Attorney General. These words come off as a slap in the face to most Americans. The overly confrontational and deliberately provocative nature of Holder's speech shows an inflammatory streak in him, that he seems content to use his position to fan.

To me, it's simply not appropriate for such an authoritative figure within the U.S. government to be speaking in such trite stereotypes and sweeping

"Racial issues will cease to exist once race no longer matters. There needs to be only American history, a complete history."

generalities. To call only a region of the country racially confused could have a grain of truth to it. But to name the entire country, with its 300 million people, as "cowards" is an utter farce, and Holder is either being intentionally divisive or plainly ignorant of our vast and diverse country.

As if Holder's comments were not pretentious enough, he went further and called for a "legitimate debate" concerning affirmative action: "... the conversation that we now engage in as a nation on this and other racial subjects is too often simplistic and left to those on the extremes..."

Here lies the rub. Holder at one time calls for more dialogue, yet in the same vein disregards other views of affirmative action as extreme. This contradiction can't exist, and only does for those arrogant few who delude themselves into thinking they listen to other views, while in the same breath label them as

fringe.

His call for a greater observance of Black History Month is wrong if his aims are integration. Racial issues will cease to exist once race no longer matters. This continual emphasis on black history is a nullity, a straw man. The moniker of "black history" needs to go.

There needs to be only American history, a complete history.

In the future I would hope Holder and those like Holder take a step back and realize emphasizing race issues only makes the elephant in the room larger. The mere debate and constant reinforcement that we're different and can never be the same is a road to nowhere. True integration, the social integration Holder espouses, comes as a result of looking at each other, seeing that we're different and acknowledging we're not so different after all.

COME FLY AWAY

Adventure, education abound abroad

FRANCESCO SALOMONI
Contributing Writer

If you feel the need to take a break from Miami but you don't want just a regular vacation, take a look at the University's study abroad programs.

From Thailand to the Czech Republic, students can choose from an array of countries in which to spend a term learning abroad while experiencing a different culture. And if money is an issue, scholarship opportunities ranging from \$300 to \$500 are available, according to the Office of Education Abroad Web site.

One of the longest running University programs in Europe is in Czech

Republic, where students learn about literature, history, film studies and more.

"Students will really get a chance to see a country in transition," said Barbara Weitz, director of the program and professor in the English department. "[The Czech Republic] is becoming a strong democracy and it is vital for students to understand everything going on in Europe."

Some of the learning will be done in the classroom, but a lot of time will be spent on walking tours and trips around the country. One week in particular will be spent in Slovakia, now a separate country from the Czech Republic.

This program is available for Summer B semester, and students can register for three, six or nine credits. Costs vary between \$2,850 and \$4,450 and include housing in small historic hotels.

But if Asia is what you're feeling, then the Cultural Communications Patterns of Asia is the program that will take you to Thailand.

Students will visit Bangkok, Phuket/Phi and Chiang Mai, while learning the relationship between cultural identities and lifestyles and interviewing local members of the community. Course instruction will be in English and students will have the chance to learn the

basics of the Thai language.

"Students will be changed forever based on this or any study abroad experience," said Pawena Sirimangkala, adjunct associate professor for the Department of Speech Communication.

Programs give students the opportunity to gain more than just cultural and academic experiences.

"Students will discover who they are in terms of what they want to do with their lives, careers and academic interests," Sirimangkala said.

This program is available during Summer A and is worth three credits. The estimated cost is \$3,032 per person and includes airfare, accommodation in a four-star hotel, ground transportation and activities.

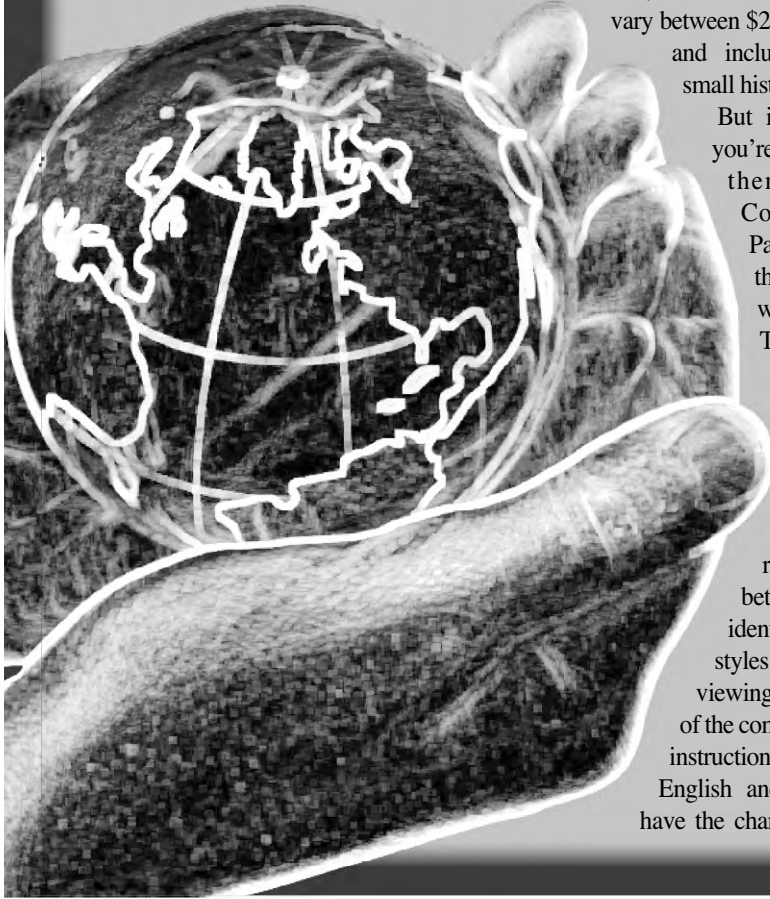
However, even though the programs are fun, realizing that there are people out there with different lives than what we have is challenging, according to Weitz.

The programs also allow students to take on a different approach toward school. In some countries, for example, students will only have to take a final exam as opposed to a series of tests or quizzes.

"Students not only learn the subjects of the specific programs, but they are also exposed to a broader learning experience," said Lisa Carbajo, director of the Office of Education Abroad. "When they come back from these educational programs, students have a different view of the academics as well."

To learn more about the various study abroad programs go to www.educationabroad.fiu.edu or e-mail educationabroad@fiu.edu.

Additional reporting by Eddith Sevilla



Keep the cold, flu at bay this year

Stop and take a look around. You may see people coughing, blowing their nose or eyes so red, you'd think the owners were high.

Chances are, no one is high. And actually the reason everyone around you is sick is because, you guessed it right, it's the flu season.

In the United States, the peak of the flu season occurs anywhere from late November through March, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



EDDITH SEVILLA

But if you've been able to avoid a viral attack, consider yourself lucky. Be cautious, though. When the bugs assault, it's best to know what you're dealing with in order to stop them from sending you crashing to bed and missing that test you've been looking forward to all week.

While the symptoms for the common cold and the flu may be similar, these illnesses are not the same.

A cold is a weak respiratory ailment that begins with a sore throat. This is followed by a runny nose, congestion and a cough by the fourth or fifth day, according to WebMD.com.

The flu, an influenza virus, may hit harder. Symptoms for the flu include sore throat, fever, headache, congestion, cough and – my dead giveaway – muscle aches and soreness, according to the Web site.

Now, if it becomes difficult to breathe, the fever persists or if vomiting or an inability to keep fluids down develops, the Web site suggests you call your doctor.

Some complications resulting from the flu include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And if you've never had pneumonia, let me tell you the chest pain associated with it is no joke. Trust me, you want to take your precautions to avoid such agony.

The CDC suggests you get a flu shot. The flu vaccine protects against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illnesses during the flu season, according to its Web site.

Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze, and avoiding close contact with sick people are some of the everyday preventive precautions the CDC suggests.

Finally the CDC recommends you talk with your doctor to discuss antiviral drugs that may help you fight off the virus.

Although a cold may not lead to deathly complications as with the flu, take precautions at all times with your health. You certainly don't want to be stuck at home playing video games while the rest of the world arduously works to make a buck.

Pulse is a weekly column examining the state of college health.

TECHNOLUST

Getting personal with your computer

If you're a self-respecting geek, you've probably got the hippest laptop ever booted into existence: a 160 GB hard drive, 4 GB of RAM, the latest Nvidia graphics card, you know – the works.

But the real question is, does it look like it's yours? Does it have that certain something that your friends can tell it apart from all the other laptops humming together in the middle of a midnight cram session?

Technolust is here to save you some face by helping you pimp your laptop.

DESKTOPS

Is that the default, rolling hills image on your desktop? Ew! Get rid of it right now by going to

www.pixelgirlpresents.com and picking out something that doesn't scream "noob."

From abstract, geometric designs to candy-colored illustrations, Pixel Girl Presents has something for everyone and then some.

Lean to the higher resolution images to make sure they look sharp on every screen setting.

If the site has nothing to suit your discerning palette, you can always use a personal photo to make your desktop your own. Just stay away from party shots where you're all bleary eyed, hair tousled and in compromising positions – no one needs to know that much about you so soon.

ICONS

Often overlooked because they're so functional, changing your system icons can change the way you work: a pretty desktop is a lived-in desktop.

Pick out some fresh icons at www.iconfactory.com and dress up your system. Whether you go with a shiny, cartoonish feel or a classic pixelated set, new icons help not only customize your computer but also organize items better.

Pick out a set based on your favorite show or movie for your favorite folders like picture sets or your dogs or use a loud danger or biohazard sign for your least favorites, like homework and term papers.

Mac users will have to make a pit stop at www.macupdate.com to pick up the freeware program, LiteIcon, to be able to change hidden system icons like Finder

and the ones that only show up when external devices are plugged in.

SKINS

Stickers, while a simple personalization solution, don't do much else but hang around and look pretty. Get some substance with your style by investing in a protective skin.

Made of non-stick plastic, laptop skins offer fashionable protection without a commitment. Liberating, no? You'll never have to debate whether or not a sticker is worthy of your precious laptop cover real estate ever again!

You can visit www.gelaskins.com and pick out a ready-made design for about \$30 or make your own at www.uniqueskins.com for \$20.

COLUMN



SUSANA RODRIGUEZ

CABRALITICS

A few simple suggestions to dive head first into the future

With Twitter sweeping the nation, politicians and journalists have been quick to grab hold of this new technology.

Everyone from Karl Rove to David Schuster can now update Americans with short, usually one-sentence-long ruminations on the State of the Union and their daily lives.

This is all part of a transition to a brave new digital age, where online communication is supplanting traditional means of information exchange. Which brings to mind a few important questions, most importantly: Who has time to read an entire column anymore?

I mean, let's face it, people are working harder than ever and in this fast-paced world, few people have the time to read an entire sentence, much less a column as lengthy as this one. Now that Twitter makes it possible to communicate so briefly and efficiently, why even bother with this column? How can we keep people interested?

This is an important question, and it has become apparent that "Cabralitics," not to mention *The Beacon*, must adapt to these changes. That's why I'm considering implementing a few minor adjustments to keep this column at the forefront of collegiate pseudo-journalism.

First, I suggest we replace at least half the text in the newspaper with giant LOL-Cats style pictures with funny captions. It's funny, it's entertaining, and it allows the paper's Web site (*FIUSM.com*) to stay competitive with cutting-edge feline news sites like *icanhazcheezburger.com*.

The adjustment wouldn't even be that hard. Most of the opinion section for the past few weeks, for example, would be summed up by a picture of either a member of the Israeli or Palestinian government with the caption: "I can haz Gaza?" See what I mean?

That was very easy to come up with, much easier than writing an entire article on the subject. It's topical, mildly amusing and it doesn't force the reader to strain their eyes or mind by reading small text and having to process complex arguments.

Next, I say we publish more articles in text message style English, complete with emoticons

and such. It's simpler and much more emotive. Sure, it'll seem shocking to those stodgy old journalists and English majors, but if text messaging were around in the 19th century, this transition would have happened long ago.



CHRIS CABRAL

Oscar Wilde and Mark Twain would certainly have peppered their witty musings with emoticons. "Nvr put off til tmrrw what u can do da day afr tmrw. LOL!" Twain might have said.

Moreover, such an adjustment could be instrumental in avoiding confusion. In the past, this column has delved into the realm of satire, and some have been offended by sentiments that were merely articulated for irony's sake.

Of course, I never really supported housing Guantanamo Bay prisoners in the University, but when it was suggested in a satirical edition of this column, *The Beacon* received hate mail nonetheless from outraged people.

This, of course, is *The Beacon's* own fault. One can't always tell when someone is joking when the joke is in written form, as just about anyone who has ever attempted to use sarcasm in a text message can confirm.

However, if I were able to end every paragraph in such articles with the letters "jk" and a smiley face, much consternation and mental anguish could be averted.

Finally, I propose we focus less on campus news and more on TMZ-style gossip. After all, who cares about what's going on in SGA? What does that have to do with Rihanna? Or Britney Spears? These are the important, relevant topics of the day. TMZ and Perez Hilton's Web site get far more hits than FIUSM. Why? Because they aren't afraid to tackle the big issues or post tasteless pictures of domestic violence victims. We need to follow their lead.

More LOL-Cats style pictures, more emoticons and abbreviations and more celebrity news. That's where the journalism train is headed, and *The Beacon* needs to get on board or risk drifting into obsolescence.

Cabralitics is a bimonthly column exploring the lighter side of the world of politics.

Poorly written script handicaps latest musical

DAVID BARRIOS
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: The Beacon decided to review The Birds a second time due to concerns brought up about the original review's integrity.

The Birds, a musical update by Len Jenkin of the original Greek play by Aristophanes dating back over 2,000 years, is the story of two down-on-their-luck hacks: Las Vegas nightclub comedian Venable Smoke (Dixon Gutierrez) and his manager, Arnold Sand (Alex Moreno).

After piling a \$50,000 debt to residential gangster Buddy Barracas (Alain Messa), Smoke and Sand escape Las Vegas, chased by Barracas' two highly alluring yet "vicious" henchwomen: Ms. Heckyl (Lal Navarro-Watts) and Ms. Jeckyl (DeAnna Drayton).

Wandering in the desert, the two men come upon a lone bird vendor who manages to sell Smoke and Sand a pair of birds that lead them to Popsy, Queen of the Birds (Morgan Howland-Cook), a former nightclub dancer turned into a bird and now in charge of the Sky; the barrier between the gods in the heavens and the humans who live on Earth.

Smoke, being ever the opportunist and looking to run away from his debts on Earth, convinces the birds to build a barrier between humans and gods, subverting the influence of the gods and forcing humans to worship the birds as their new rulers.

Yes, it sounds ridiculous if taken at face value, but remember what is being adapted: a Greek play in which the gods are actual characters in the piece.

Meanwhile, humans try to climb over the barrier into "Cloud Cuckoo Land," the paradise of the birds, including a pedophile priest (because we don't already get enough child molestation jokes), computer nerds who promise infrastructure and pornography (ah, the fruits of the digital age), politicians (toting law and scandal) and real-estate developers (offering to build a 56 screen megaplex theater and a Starbucks).

Sounds like a commentary on American society of the 21st century, no?

No.

The interpretation is predictable, shallow, pedantic and uninteresting.

This commentary is not enlightening.

The humans who make it across the wall are meant to represent the hypocrisies of society that the birds try to shut themselves from.

But nothing new is said about these religion and politics that wasn't said by Aristophanes more than 2,000 years ago.

Interspersed throughout the play are also horribly drawn out parodies of scenes from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, inserted without context or purpose.

That said, for any fan of the 1963 film,

these are entertaining if overly drawn-out moments of humor with the trio playing Annie, Mitch and Melanie (Michelle Moreno, Douglas Reilly, Sonia Sheron) having fun at the expense of their 1963 counterparts (Suzanne Pleshette, Rod Taylor and Tippi Hedren).

And then there's the musical numbers, comparable to Sesame Street on LSD without the wonderful lyrics of the late Joe Raposo.

Instead, we get the hackneyed and pointless lyrics of Mr. Jenkin.

The lyrics reflect the dialogue, which was trite and filled with far too many F-bombs and few memorable exchanges.

With all of these script elements going awry, the play seemingly was chaos.

An unsung hero of this production is Armando Tranquilino, musical director for the play, who was also at the keyboard during last Saturday's performance.

His music, written to accompany Jenkin's lyrics, was well composed and is about as good a job as could be done.

Tranquilino also led a swinging band that night and is to be commended for his musical talents.

Production design on the play was also exceptional along with scenic design by Gregory Contreras.

His imaginative, if sometimes minimalist, designs for scenes in Las Vegas and for the land of the birds were well conceived and constructed.

Lighting design by Tony Galaska was also impressive, with lighting for the play highlighting key moods but also staying naturalistic throughout most of the piece.

As for the acting, it was a decidedly mixed bag. Gutierrez and Moreno perform well as buddies; Gutierrez fully embodying the roguish, opportunist nature of his character that seems quite at home in a production of *Guys and Dolls*.

Moreno does a great job as his sidekick and shows considerable talent, working off good chemistry with Gutierrez.

Howland-Cook performs well as Queen Popsy and has great stage presence, proving herself to be a good comedienne.

Messa, playing Barracas, does a serviceable job with henchwomen that are far more sexually alluring than threatening.

Apparently, not everyone is intimidating while holding a machine gun.

One of the more memorable sequences came, however, during a musical number between the albatross (Ryan Rodriguez) and the ornithologist (Jennifer Jean-Louis) in a duet that showed great vocal prowess by both but again, hampered by Jenkin's lyrics.

The Birds was ridiculous and unoriginal and despite honest attempts by the actors on stage to bring some semblance of order and purpose to the stage, it is Jenkin's text that is to be blamed.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 25

WHAT: Rock Band competition
WHEN: 10 p.m.
WHERE: Transit Lounge
CONTACT: 305-377-4628

WHAT: Grand Groove
WHEN: 11 a.m.
WHERE: Jazid
CONTACT: 305-673-9372

WHAT: NeoHooDoo
WHEN:
WHERE: Miami Art Museum
CONTACT: 305-375-3000

WHAT: Environmental Awareness
WHEN: 3 p.m.
WHERE: GC Pit
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Music Saves Lives
WHEN: 3 p.m.
WHERE: GC 343
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: talent show Relay For Life
WHEN: 6 p.m.
WHERE: GC Ballroom East
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26

WHAT: Artopia
WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: Charcoal Studios
CONTACT: 786-942-2815

WHAT: Live Suicide
WHEN: 10 p.m.
WHERE: Churchill's
CONTACT: 305-757-1807

WHAT: Anything Goes Anime Club film
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: GC 140
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Pi Kappa Alpha pageant
WHERE: GC Ballroom middle
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
CONTACT: 305-348-2138

WHAT: College Democrats
WHERE: 6:30 p.m.
WHEN: GC 305
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

Compiled By: Mariana Ochoa

diversions

My Cousin Tony by Alex Ferrer



SPORTS REPLAY

Men's, women's basketball teams drop road games

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

The Golden Panthers lost their last regular season road game as they fell to the Western Kentucky University Hilltoppers (19-8, 13-3 Sun-Belt) 79-66 on Feb. 21.

The Hilltoppers got win No. 1600 for their program, becoming the 14th team to do it in NCAA Division I history.

Freddy Asprilla scored 21 and Alex Galindo poured in 13 as the Golden Panthers (11-18, 6-10) made a late run, but FIU had no answer for WKU's offense, which shot 50 percent from the field and got 26 points from Sergio Kersch.

"They're a good basketball team. It's always fun to come in here and play them," head coach Sergio Rouco told *fiusports.com*.

"This is the Mecca of our league and the kind of program we all aspire to be."

Kersch had 12 rebounds as well, but he was helped by Steffphon Pettigrew, who

dropped 17 points of his own for WKU.

The Golden Panthers sliced the deficit to 70-61 with 1:23 minutes left in the second period, but the Hilltoppers converted 10-of-11 attempts from the foul line the rest of the way to seal the loss for FIU.

FIU closes out the season with home games vs. Middle Tennessee on Feb. 26 and Florida Atlantic on Feb. 28 as they look to get a better position in the upcoming SBC tournament.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Monika Bosilj got her offensive game started in the second half, but it was not enough as the Golden Panthers (6-21, 4-12 Sun Belt) fell 83-74 to the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers on Feb. 22 at Western Kentucky. She finished with 21 points in the game, and Ashley Traugott scored 15 points.

The Golden Panthers headed into the halftime trailing 30-23.

Once the Hilltoppers took a 10-point

lead with six minutes left, the Golden Panthers could not get any closer.

TENNIS

The Golden Panthers improved to 5-3 by defeating Troy University and Jacksonville University on Feb. 21-20 at University Park.

The two matches marked the first home games for the team this season. The two wins boosted the Golden Panthers' rank to No. 48 in the nation.

Troy managed to win two games against FIU, but still lost 5-2. Jacksonville, on the other hand, was shut out.

No. 101 ranked sophomore Liset Brito defeated Rawia Elsis in straight sets. Meanwhile, No. 58 ranked Mariana Muci also won in straight sets against Annabelle Bares.

SWIMMING

The swimming and diving team finished seventh out of eight teams with 210 points

at the Sun Belt Conference Championships in Nashville, Tenn.

Western Kentucky won the women's championship with 851 points and Denver won the men's championship with 1,226 points.

Nomiko Shibata placed fourth in 1-meter diving and third in the 3-meter dive. The freshman will compete in the NCAA Zone Diving Championships in Knoxville, Tenn. March 13-14 after qualifying earlier in the season in 3-meter diving.

Senior Sara Giovannoni finished fourth in the 200 backstroke with a time of 2:19.29 minutes and 15th in the 200-individual medley with a time of 2:08.56.

The Golden Panthers set new school records in the 200-medley relay with a time of 1:50.15 and in the 800-medley relay with a time of 7:50.75.

Charlie Grau and Sergio Bonilla contributed to this report

Softball team loses three of five weekend games

SOFTBALL, page 12

the Tigers with five strikeouts in six scoreless innings.

FIU 4, PROVIDENCE 1

The Golden Panthers laid down their least amount of hits this season with one, but they were able to score four runs and improve to 10 wins in the season in a 4-1 decision over Provi-

dence on Feb. 21.

Barrett (4-1) got the start and pitched her fourth complete game of the season with three strikeouts and none walked to pick up the win.

Danielle Bertolette picked up the loss for Providence by walking six and giving up four runs in 5.1 innings pitched.

FORDHAM 3, FIU 2

The Golden Panthers dropped their final game of the weekend after leading 2-0 in the fourth inning on Feb. 22 in Miami, Fla.

Gniadek (5-3) gave up all three runs which were scored in the final three innings to lose 3-2 against the Fordham Rams.

Welch recorded a two RBI single in the fourth inning, scoring Bell and Rodriguez to give FIU the 2-0 advantage they held for half of the game.

In the top of the seventh Barrett came in to relieve Gniadek who landed one Providence runner on first base. Catcher Jessica Landau tried to catch the runner stealing but it ended up as an error, allowing the player to advance to third. Lindsey Bright then nailed a single for the Rams, bringing in a runner to give them the first lead of the game at 3-2.

The loss set FIU's record at 10-7 for the season after finishing 2-5 for the weekend.

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BASEBALL: JACKSONVILLE 9, FIU 3

ERRORS STOP SWEEP

Pitching staff hurt by 10 errors; team still wins two of three

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

For the first time in the three-game series, the Jacksonville Dolphins' bats came alive to avoid a sweep.

Just 12 hours after losing 20-1, the Dolphins (1-2) took advantage of four Golden Panthers miscues to defeat the Golden Panthers 9-3 on Feb. 22 at University Park Stadium.

Despite the Golden Panthers' first series win of the 2009 season, head coach Turtle Thomas would like to see his team's defense commit fewer errors.

"I'd like to see something different than a four; you just get more base runners, more guys on base. In college baseball, for every two guys that get on, normally one of them is going to end up scoring over the course of the season."

Of the allowed runs so far this season, six of the 14 are unearned. The team committed 10 errors in three games.

The Golden Panthers tacked two runs in the first inning vs. Dolphins' starter Andrew Carson. But after a shaky beginning, Carson settled down and used his off-speed pitches to throw the Golden Panthers off balance.

It was during the fourth inning that the Golden Panthers relinquished the lead and never claimed it back. Right fielder Tyler Townsend made the first error of the inning when he dropped a fly ball. Third baseman Garrett Wittels also mishandled a ground ball, and the Dolphins did not waste these opportunities against lefty Corey Polizzano.

"Corey wasn't on his game today," Thomas said. "He wasn't at his best. He didn't have a good fastball today, so he



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

HACKING: Junior outfielder Greg Wadell takes a swing during the series against Jacksonville last weekend. Wadell walked in the at bat, but the Golden Panthers lost the game 9-3 after winning the first two contests of the series.

went with a lot of changeups and breaking balls. Last Sunday, he threw the best I've ever seen him pitch. He'll be back."

The Dolphins scored three runs in the fourth. Shortstop Junior Arrojio also made an error in the sixth, when the Dolphins added four more runs to their score.

Designated hitter Tim Jobe began the seventh inning with a rocket shot off the scoreboard for his first home run as a Golden Panther. Jobe's homer made the score 7-3. The Dolphins scored two more

times in the eighth to salvage a win in the weekend series. During the series, the Golden Panthers team's earned run average (ERA) was a miniscule 2.00. Outfielder/infielder Tyler Townsend was impressed by his team's pitching during the three-game stretch.

"The last three games, we had a great starting pitcher," he said. "Definitely, the pitching is night and day from last year."

But Townsend agrees with his coach about the team's questionable defense this

season.

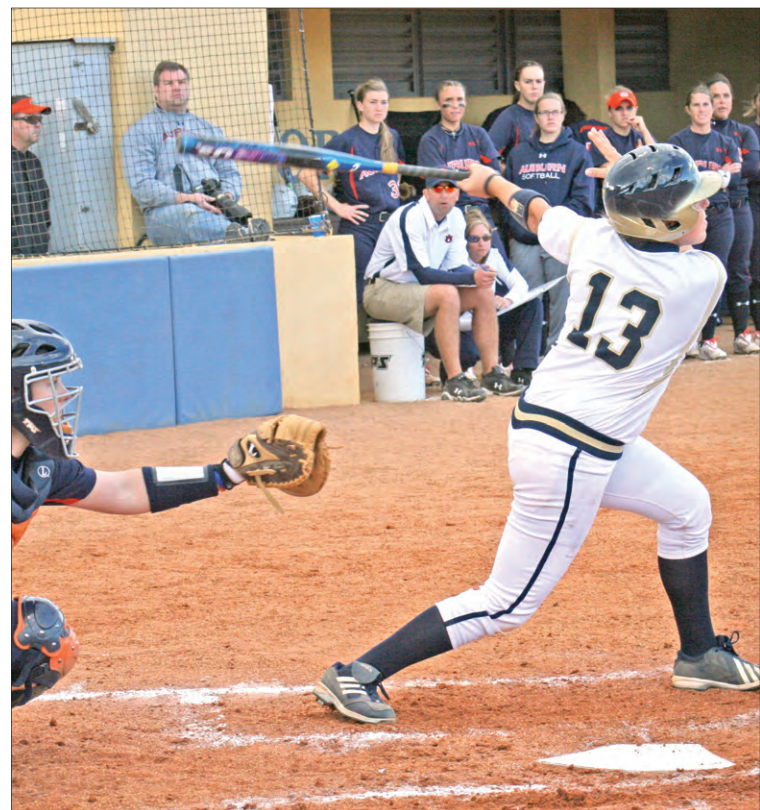
"We need to work on errors," he said. "We're going to work on the little things. Making routine plays, throwing and catching. It's just one of those things that's going to get better with time."

Even with the improvements, Thomas said his team should've taken advantage of the 2-0 series lead.

"When you have a chance to get a knockout punch, you want to take that and get the sweep if you can," he said.

SOFTBALL WEEKEND WRAP UP: 2-3

Nationally ranked team sweeps Golden Panthers



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

SWING IN A LOSS: Infielder Jessica Landau swings at a pitch against Auburn earlier this season. FIU lost three games last weekend.

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers had a quiet weekend on the offensive side, forcing the pitching staff to take control of keeping the softball team in the winning column. However, some of the competition proved to be too much as FIU finished the weekend with two wins out of five.

MISSOURI 7, FIU 0

An unusually anemic offense couldn't keep up with No. 15-ranked Missouri University at the FAIU "Strike Out Cancer" Tournament on Feb. 20 in Boca Raton, Fla. The Golden Panthers recorded just three hits by Kim Rodriguez, Louren Spiers and freshman Ashley McClain, who each went 1-for-3 in the 7-0 loss.

Paige Cassidy, the starting pitcher for FIU, walked the lead-off hitter in the first inning who then scored the game's first run. Cassidy got FIU out of the first inning after Missouri batted in another run, making the

score 2-0.

The junior pitcher gave up four more runs in the second inning, putting Missouri up 6-0, before freshman McClain came in to her relief.

MU's Chelsea Thomas picked up the win, allowing only three hits while walking none. She didn't allow any FIU runners to advance passed second base.

FIU 10, ARKANSAS 1

The Golden Panthers were able to focus on their offense which had been stagnant just hours before, meanwhile starting pitcher Kasey Barrett took control of the defense with nine strikeouts in her second complete game of the season.

FIU (9-5) recorded at least one hit in every inning, enabling the team to defeat Arkansas (6-4), 10-1, in six innings.

Senior Desiree Fink and freshman Jenny Welch both went 3-for-4 while Jessica Landau contributed by going 2-for-3 with two doubles.

The Golden Panthers scored the

final run on a wild pitch.

MISSOURI 5, FIU 0

The rematch proved to be a shut out once again as the FIU offense went frozen, recording seven hits but no scored runs against the Missouri Tigers on day two of the tournament.

Bell and McClain each had two hits while Rodriguez went 1-for-3, extending her hitting streak to eight games.

Gniadek (5-3) pitched five innings for the Golden Panthers. She struck out the first two batters of the game, but gave up a double followed by a single that scored the first run of the game for Missouri. Gniadek would give up four more before she was lifted for Barrett in the sixth inning.

MU had the bases loaded and no outs at this point but Barrett got out of the jam and pitched two full innings without giving up a run. Stacy Delaney picked up the win for