

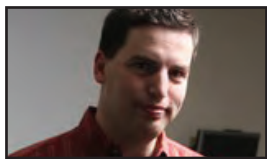
the BIRDS Adaptation proves entertaining but cluttered
PAGE 7

Young coach and tennis team off to good start
PAGE 12



SPOTLIGHT

AT THE BAY PAGE 4

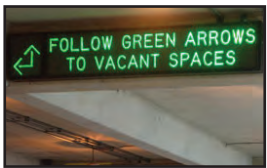


The Daily Show producer Adam Chodikoff set to speak on Thursday.

LIFE! PAGE 7

Column: Eddith Sevilla gives you tips to keep your heart healthy and happy.

OPINION PAGE 6



A simple device could greatly relieve our parking woes by letting us know at a glance which garages have available spaces.

SPORTS PAGE 12

Softball wins third consecutive game in dramatic fashion.

OPINION PAGE 6

If you've ever felt like giving up on a lost cause, there just might be some inspiration to stand up for what you believe in.

AT THE BAY PAGE 4



Big wiener rolls into campus bringing internship opportunity.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Bohemia Room, Feb. 18, 9 p.m.: Do you enjoy feeling like a rebel without a cause while having your mother do your laundry? If so, visit the Miami Improv.

Students of the National Association of Teacher, Feb. 18, 12 p.m.: Get prepped and ready for protest. Go learn the fine art of putting marker to presentation board at GC 343.

South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Feb. 19: Over 21? Feel like having endless glasses of wine? Then head over to sexy Delano hotel and mingle with celebs.

Jam @ MAM, Feb. 19, 5 p.m.: What is the main concern of the contemporary art world? Stuffing free cheap wine down your throats. The cheaper and fouler the better. Oh yeah, there's art too.

For the complete calendar, please see page 9 or visit FIUSM.com/calendar.

WEATHER



WEDNESDAY
Mostly sunny
LOW: 62 HIGH: 78



THURSDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 54 HIGH: 82



FRIDAY
Sunny
LOW: 47 HIGH: 70

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University discusses tech fee implementation

DAVID BARRIOS
Senior Staff Writer

Students can expect to pay up to an additional 5 percent on their tuition thanks to a new technology fee being considered to begin this Fall. This is in addition to the 15 percent tuition increase also expected to be effective in the Fall.

The money from the fee will be invested in the enhancement of instructional technology for students and faculty, including the possible expansion of the University's wireless network and the expansion of computer labs on

campus.

Cathy Akens, assistant vice president of student affairs, will chair the tech fee committee that has been established. The task of the committee is to report recommendations on whether to establish a fee and if so, to recommend how large the fee should be.

"The Technology Fee Committee will make recommendations to administration by mid-March. These recommendations will then be reviewed and submitted to our Board of Trustees for final approval," said Rosa Jones, vice president of student affairs and member of the committee.

With the amendment of Section 1009.24 of the Florida Statutes, the University Board of Trustees can choose to establish a technology fee to be paid by all students, starting in Fall 2009. The fee may be up to 5 percent of the tuition charged per credit hour. During the first meeting of the tech fee committee on Feb. 11, possible usage of the funds was discussed including the expansion of the University's wireless network.

"We installed over 625 wireless access points that cover all general purpose classrooms and

FEES, page 3

Golf cart thefts continue unchecked

CHERYL MALONE
Staff Writer

As of last May, the Department of Public Safety has been on constant theft call. Though the theft reports may be coming in from all over campus and by many different people, the calls are all for the same reason: stolen golf carts.

The stolen golf carts are showing up all over campus in odd locations, often damage-free, according to police reports.

The latest case of a stolen golf cart was Feb. 6, when a report was made regarding a golf cart being driven in circles in the courtyard. Just as before, the person(s) responsible for the crime were nowhere to be found.

Public Safety explained that security cameras would be a necessity everywhere golf carts are parked on campus to find the person, or group of people, responsible for the crime. However, the level of security cameras needed would come at a high cost.

Aside from courtyards, the golf carts are being found outside office buildings and housing and apartments.

The golf carts are often stolen from the International Studies Department and rarely returned to their point of initial theft, according to various case reports.

The greatest degree of damage to the golf carts was seen on Sept. 3, 2008, when one of the carts' ignition switch and the plastic casing were damaged.

Public Safety believes that due to the insufficient security features on the golf carts, they are easily accessible.

"Most of the golf carts are being stolen via their key holes," said Madeline Baro, assistant director of Media Relations. "They are not designed for high security locks. The golf carts are made for the golf course."

The golf cart reports themselves often have no witnesses, only sightings of the actual golf cart, according to police reports.

At this point, no extra precautions are being made in preventing the theft due to the manner of the crime, Baro explained.

"There is no way of telling who is authorized to be on the carts," Baro said. "The only way to prevent the thefts currently is to secure the steering wheel with a cable and padlock. This is the same concept of the club device for cars."

GOTCHA



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

FUN GAME: Anthony Baribato, sports management major and Samantha Andino, hospitality major, react to getting a faceful of shaving cream during the "Pie-a-Pi" event. The event, organized by Alpha Omicron Pi and Beta Theta Pi, was intended to raise money for Relay For Life.

Afrodita's Garden in bloom

BRIAN ALONSO
Contributing Writer

Right across the University Park's Bookstore in the Graham Center and next to the information desk there is a small shop that can easily be overlooked: Afrodit's Garden, a store specializing in floral arrangements and specialty items.

Some of the special services Afrodit's offers include linen

rentals, floral and event planning and delivery on and off campus. For Greek students, it offers some custom merchandise and T-shirts, journals, picture frames and keychains.

The store has been open for more than three years and one of the employees, freshman Katerina De La Rosa, explained that it was only last year that they added the Greek portion to the store.

"We're a full service flower

shop and we also take care of Greek life," De La Rosa, who has been working there for a year, said. "We make the shirts, we take custom orders and we do flower arrangements."

Last week was very busy as the store dealt with flower and teddy bear orders for Valentine's Day, according to De La Rosa.

"So far our sales have been

FLOWERS, page 3

NEWS FLASH

FIU

Four Generations of Dr. Bennie Osborne's family will be examined for a new exhibit

"Five Women: From Sharecroppers to Doctorates, Survival Strategies for the Generations" is currently on display in the Gallery at the Green Library.

The exhibit, a series of paintings, poems and drawings, profiles five generations of women in her family from the late 19th century to the present day, showing the evolution of African Americans in the U.S. during the last century.

LOCAL

High school steroid testing program cut

Florida's new program to test for steroids among high school athletes has been canceled after becoming a victim of budget cuts. State officials said that in the tough economy, they can't justify spending the \$100,000.

Tests were randomly administered at 53 schools at a cost of \$166 apiece. Of the 600 students tested for drugs and steroids, only one student has tested positive for steroid use.

NATIONAL

Lincoln voted best president

Abraham Lincoln was voted best U.S. president in a poll held by C-Span that ranked presidents from George Washington to George W. Bush. Bush was ranked at No. 36 on the list of 42 presidents. The list was compiled by 65 historians who ranked the presidents by effectiveness on a scale where 1 meant "not effective" and 10 meant "very effective." George Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt and Harry Truman rounded out the top five best presidents. James Buchanan, the 15th president, was ranked the worst president.

– Compiled by David Barrios

Lecturer talks veganism, animal rights

LAUREN AGOSTO
Staff Writer

A vegan who was banned from five countries came to the University and explained why he thinks every human is a natural herbivore and clarified his so-called "radical" views on animal mistreatment.

On Feb. 11, Gary Yourofsky, president and founder of Animals Deserve Absolute Protection Today and Tomorrow, spoke at a lecture sponsored by Earth-Save Miami, the FIU Yoga Club and the FIU Environmental Club.

ADAPTT is a non-profit animal rights organization geared toward abolishing the use of animals in medical research, product testing, circuses, rodeos and other entertainment. The organization opposes hunting as a sport, wearing animal skins as clothing and eating meat, dairy, eggs and honey.

"I understand that we're all on a journey in life, we all have different likes and dislikes, different religions and nationalities. But there's one thing that we need to have in common with each other and that's peace, genuine compassion and genuine peace for our planetary companions," Yourofsky said.

Yourofsky has been banned by five countries and arrested 13 times for what he refers to as "random acts of kindness and compassion" toward all animals.

He was banned from Canada for releasing 1,542 minks from the Eberts Fur Farm in Blenheim, Ontario. He was also banned from England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland because the United Kingdom felt that his presence there would not be conducive to the public good.

Yourofsky has not always been a vegan. He ate meat for the first 25 years of his life and wore leather shoes and belts before he began to feel that it was wrong.

"I love the way meat tastes. Love it. Cheese, love it. Cows' milk, love it. Eggs, love it. I didn't stop eating that stuff because of a taste

Eat what comes from the earth, every vitamin and nutrient that exists. They have an original source and it's not the animals.

Gary Yourofsky, president

Animals Deserve Absolute Protection Today and Tomorrow

issue. I stopped for ethics and morality, altruism and compassion for my animal brothers and sisters," Yourofsky said. "Nowadays, it's never been easier to be vegan: You can have the same smell, taste and texture of meat, cheese and milk without anybody having to suffer and die for your dinner anymore. They make all the products you like to eat from soy, wheat, rice and hemp."

Linda Bower of EarthSave Miami said she really enjoyed Yourofsky's presentation.

"I think that his lecture is just the most amazing lecture I have ever heard about compassion, kindness and going back to a way of living that is going to improve our planet, not only for the animals, but for our own health and for the health of our planet."

According to Yourofsky, there is a common misconception that animals cannot think for themselves.

"We all agree that animals can use their eyes to see, ears to hear, nose to smell, mouths to eat, legs to walk, feathers to fly and fins to swim," Yourofsky said. "I'm always perplexed that most people don't believe that they can also use their brains to think and feel. Am I supposed to believe that every body part on the animal functions just like it's supposed to except the brain?"

Ten billion land animals are mass produced every year, according to Yourofsky, in order to feed about three million meat-eating Americans. He continued saying that 95 percent of all the soy, 80 percent of all the corn and 70 percent of all the oats in America are set aside as animal food, but every two seconds a human dies from starvation.

"In America today not one pig, chicken, cow or turkey missed a meal. They got all

the food they wanted to eat, while little babies are starving to death," Yourofsky said. "Sixty-five percent of the world's grains are set aside for 50 billion land animals that are killed every year instead for feeding six and a half billion people."

"We're trying to make excuses for things that we do," said Ricardo Reillo, a senior. "It's just a matter of us realizing what we're doing and making a change. There have been points in society where we have oppressed others, like slavery and genocide, and right now we have the opportunity to make a change."

The human body was designed to be herbivorous, according to Yourofsky. He said that, like other herbivorous animals, the lengths of the human intestines are very long compared to the length of the torso, seven to 13 times. Carnivorous animals have much shorter intestines, only three to six times their torso, because they are built to quickly push out the animal flesh, protein, cholesterol, saturated fat and trans fatty acids, making it impossible for genuine carnivores to clog their arteries.

He said humans have carbohydrate digestive enzymes in

their saliva, in order to digest all the carbohydrates humans consume. Humans have broad, short, blunt, flat teeth with canines, incisors and molars to eat harder foods like apples. Human jaws are built to move from side to side, like other herbivores, not just the up and down motion that carnivores have.

Yourofsky explained that humans are not born with carnivorous instincts. He said all humans are born vegan, but only acquire a taste for meat, cheese, milk and eggs when they are force-fed these things during childhood.

"All I'm asking people to do is something that's normal and natural. It's funny how people always think that vegans are radical. Enslaving billions of innocent beings, murdering them, cutting them up into pieces and consuming their corpses, flesh consumption, gnawing on somebody else's rib cage – that's radical behavior," Yourofsky said. "Eat what comes from the earth, every vitamin and nutrient that exists. They have an original source and it's not the animals. We eat animals after they eat from the earth. Stop filtering your nutrients through somebody else's body, it's irrational and illogical."

POLICE NOTES

Feb. 9

A student lost her wallet on the south side of the Graham Center. The wallet was valued at \$35, containing a Hello Kitty Bank of America credit card and \$10 in cash. The student never returned to the scene of her lost wallet.

The windshield of a Honda Sedan was broken while parked in Lot Six. The owner of the vehicle had parked his car on Feb. 6 and did not return to it for two days. Additionally, the vehicle suffered from scratches to the right rear door panel and the upper right quarter panel.

Feb. 10

A motorcycle was reported missing from Parking Lot Nine. The black 2005 Yamaha motorcycle was reported stolen and placed in the Florida Crime Information Center/National Crime Information Center.

A student lost his cell phone in DM 100. When he realized and tried calling it, the call went straight to voicemail indicating that the phone was shut off.

Feb. 12

An officer responded to a call regarding a golf cart driving in circles in the courtyard. Upon his arrival, the golf cart, No. E-38, had been abandoned.

– Compiled by Cheryl Malone

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CORRECTIONS

The Feb. 16 editorial titled "With cancelling of Legend event, SGC-UP should reconsider its lecture strategy," incorrectly stated the location of SGA's Fall Lecture Series, featuring Ivanka Trump. It took place in the Graham Center Ballrooms, not room 243 and it reached full capacity.

The Feb. 16 article titled "Deep Seascape" showcase sounds of nature," wrongly stated Erik Deluca's title. He is actually an instructor of Sound Reinforcement.

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



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Discreet flower shop flourishes on Valentine's

FLOWERS, page 1

doing well," she said. "Right now we're trying to pick up Valentine's Day sales as well as picking up on our marketing."

They just created a Facebook page as part of their marketing efforts and it helped them during Valentine's week.

"It was a success on Valentine's," said senior Antoinette Guaba-Ortiz, store manager and an international relations major. "We used it to show pictures of our merchandise."

The week of Valentine's Day did, however, pose a challenge to the store.

"Considering that Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday, in the flower business that's a really difficult position to be in," De La Rosa said.

One of the difficulties they faced Valentine's Day, explained Guaba-Ortiz, is that flower shops traditionally do not open on Saturdays because they do not perform that well.

"It was a challenge getting a lot of people in on Saturday," she said.

Afrodita's is usually not open on Saturdays, but Valentine's Day was an exception. Specials for Valentine's Day included free gifts with early-placed orders such as boxes of chocolates and teddy bears.

"We had a good show," Guaba-Ortiz said.

Scott Sakowski, a freshman who was hired last week, helped with the growing number of orders.

"I'm appreciative that they gave me something to do to make some money on the side and make people happy," Sakowski said.

"A lot of students don't realize we do both flowers and the Greek store. People coming in seem to forget [we



JAVIER DE LA VEGA/THE BEACON

FULL CAPACITY: Afrodita's Garden in the Graham Center offers flowers, gifts and Greek life souvenirs.

offer] one or the other," De La Rosa said.

Guaba-Ortiz added that her main concern is that there is a "lack of knowledge" about who they are and what they offer.

On the new Facebook page, customers are able to check merchandise prices, leave comments and place orders.

They are also focusing on passing flyers in the residential areas and setting up e-mail lists.

"We really want to pick up on our marketing so everyone on campus knows exactly what we do," De La Rosa said. "It seems our name is getting out there, a lot of people have been stopping in."

"I can order some

merchandise, but they definitely need a little more variety," said Shirley Armenteos, a student passing by.

A regular customer showed support for the store.

"I've always been satisfied with the merchandise," said Ruth Ann Maranto, senior financial assistant for the student financials department.

Making the flower arrangements and seeing customers walk away with a smile is what De La Rosa said she enjoys the most about her job.

"This morning I had a customer come and thank me for the job I had done and that makes me happy," she said.

Tuition may rise 5 percent if tech fee is put in effect

FEES, page 1

most popular open areas that students visit. However, due to limited resources, we didn't cover classrooms and labs that are operated by colleges or units and we couldn't cover all open areas where students often use their laptop computers," explained Min Yao, chief information officer and another member of the committee.

The creation of a virtual student lab was also mentioned, which would allow students to use lab software, such as PhotoShop and AutoCAD, 24 hours a day and seven days a week anywhere and anytime as long as there is an Internet connection.

"We have done so much in such a short time. We take pride in our progress and achievements. On the other hand, during this rapid growth, the funding for technology infrastructure and services did not grow as rapidly as other areas," Yao said.

A few years ago, EDUCAUSE, a national consortium for college and university technology organizations, did a survey of university funding on technology.

It found that research universities typically spent about 5 percent or more of their budget on technology services and infrastructure per year, teaching universities spent about 4 percent and community colleges spent about 3 percent. FIU's funding on technology services and infrastructure is about 3 percent.

Student Government Association members from Biscayne Bay Campus and University Park were also asked to sit on

the committee to represent student concerns about a possible increase.

"I feel that students at first will have objections to the tech fee," said Kenasha Paul, vice president of BBC's Student Government Council. "Especially during these economic times, an increase in anything is the last thing students want to hear. I personally want to evaluate all the options before stating whether I object or not to the increase."

Nick Autiello, lower division senator, holds a similar viewpoint.

"I sympathize with students in these difficult financial times. Just as our University is facing financial challenges, so are our students," Autiello said. "At the same time, our University is extremely underfunded compared to other institutions throughout the nation. Our technological infrastructure is not on par with other major urban research institutions and technological updates are clearly needed."

In the coming weeks, student government is planning to distribute a survey to the students to gauge reaction to the tuition increases that faces them. One of the questions on the survey asks students if they would support a technology fee and if so, how large of a fee.

Marketing to the student body to get opinions on the fee was also discussed at the committee meeting with the possibility of future forums to get students' opinion.

"We talk about being a large research university. Well, this is what large research universities invest in," Yao said.

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SPC-BBC

Students, poets come together

MAUREEN NINO
Contributing Writer

Fans of poetry and music can attend the "It Was All a Dream" event, which will consist of poetry and musical performances at the Wolfe Center Ballrooms at 7 p.m.

Students and professional poets will be displaying their skills at this free event.

Both On Point Poetry, the University poetry club and the Student Programming Council will provide headliners who combine poetry and music.

Black Violin, with members Kev Marcus and Wil-B, will present their mix of hip-hop and classical violin music. Shihan, known for appearances on HBO's "Def Poetry," will perform his hit poem "I Wanna Love Like," which has had over one million hits on YouTube. Throughout the show DJ Push Play will provide music for performers on stage.

"It's not your momma's poetry," said Kertus Toussaint, director/producer and one of the hosts of the event and president of On Point Poetry. "It's the true nature and reflection of what we're going through."

There are several extremely talented, enthusiastic University students headlining, Toussaint added.

According to the event's organizers, the purpose is to bring back the passion behind words that are becoming obsolete. Both SPC and On Point Poetry said they wanted to remind students about the substantive power of words to unite and strengthen. Poet and senior biology major Linsie Fleurizards said that writing is an outlet to convey her message and felt that events such as these educate and allow students to release their emotions.

"[My poems] are to educate an individual, whether it be in love or life," Fleurizards said.

Several performers will also appear from the Write Side Poetry, which has worked with On Point Poetry since 2007. Write Side Poetry is a non-profit organization designed to inspire young writers. Its main mission is to "empower the next generation of leaders, self-defined artists and visionary activists through written and oral literacy," according to the organization's MySpace page.

Advertising majors Orane Carney and Ray "Knowledge" Dominguez, who is also president and founder of Write Side Poetry, will join Toussaint in hosting the event.

"This event is not a show, it is an experience," Toussaint said.

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

Jon Stewart's secret weapon to give lecture

DAINELYS MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

He was dubbed by the *Washington Post* as an "investigative humorist." He watches C-Span and searches news footage for stories that are either ignored or overlooked by the mainstream news media.

Senior producer of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show" Adam Chodikoff, 37, will speak at the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater on Feb. 19 at 9:30 a.m. as part of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication's Hearst Lecture Series.

"It was great luck getting him," said David Berry, SJMC marketing coordinator. "We couldn't believe we got him. Students will get a kick out of him. Chodikoff has been booked since November."

In his lecture, "Finding the Funny: Thrilling Tales and Awkward Pauses from the Investigative Humorist," Chodikoff will talk about his years with "The Daily Show," his zeal for news and the enjoyment he takes from it.

"At its best, Chodikoff's work goes beyond satire and into the realm of cold truth-telling," according to an April 30, 2008 *Washington Post*

article by Paul Farhi.

Kate MacMillin, instructor and chairwoman of the Hearst Lecture Series, was reading the *Washington Post* story on Chodikoff and thought he would be a great Hearst Lecture Series guest.

"Students need to see who are the people behind the scenes of these television programs. These are the jobs that most of them are aspiring to have," MacMillin said. "Comedy is a serious business. A lot of extensive research has to be done in both video and print to come up with these segments."

Chodikoff, a Moorestown, N.J., native, started as a researcher on "The Daily Show" when it first began in 1996.

"He has this amazing memory for sound bites about anything political or about policy," said David Javerbaum, executive producer of "The Daily Show" in the same *Washington Post* article. "What's remarkable is how many ideas he initiates because he remembered that this guy said this or that a year ago."

One popular segment, "Mess O'Potamia," accuses the Bush administration of lying on the

100 YEARS OF SERVICE



JACOB KAISER/THE BEACON

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People student chapter celebrated the 100th anniversary of the foundation in Panther Square, Feb. 12. Petra Haven, Robert Jenkins, Melissa Binns and Christin Battle, president of the NAACP FIU chapter, sing the Negro National Anthem at the event.

reasons for going into Iraq, citing different hearings and reports.

"Without credibility, the jokes mean nothing," Chodikoff said in an Oct. 17 article on *Women's Wear Daily*, a publication for business news and fashion trends.

More than 150 people are expected to attend the event, according to Berry. Everyone from the community is invited to the free lecture.

The William Hearst Foundation, founded in 1945 by publisher and philanthropist William Randolph Hearst, funds the Hearst Lecture Series. About \$2,500 are paid to bring each speaker and there are

usually two speakers per semester, Fall and Spring, according to Berry.

Instead of the usual two guest speakers, there will be a total of four this semester. The other speakers are: Lena West, media consultant, journalist, technologist and CEO at xynoMedia Technology will speak on Feb. 26; Bruce Shapiro, author, will speak on March 26 and Byron Pitts, the newest correspondent of "60 Minutes" will speak on April 2 during communications week, a week to celebrate mass communications at the University.

For more information, contact David Berry at (305) 919-4411.

Oscar Mayer seeks fresh 'hotdoggers'

JOSH GARCIA
Staff Writer

While a student at the University, public relations alumna Magaly Estrella never thought she would spend a year driving in a 27-foot hot dog-shaped vehicle.

After attending an information session last year, she found herself behind the wheel of the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile.

But Estrella's time with Oscar Mayer is coming to an end and the company is looking for 14 interns to serve as official representatives, or "hotdoggers," to ride in the Wienermobile throughout America to promote the brand.

"Driving in the Wienermobile is a lot of fun and it's a lot of responsibility," Estrella said.

Career Services at Biscayne Bay Campus will be hosting an information session about the internship opportunity with Oscar Mayer on Feb. 19, in WUC 255.

The event starts at 5:30 p.m. and the session is open to all students.

"It's a great opportunity for students to develop skills in public relations and learn about marketing," said Natasha Stubbs, assistant director of Career Services at BBC. "It counts as an internship experience."

"Oscar Mayer is a major corporation that can offer really great opportunities. Having a company such as this one come to FIU during these difficult economic times can prove to be an asset to FIU communication students,"

said senior Nelda Figueiredo, a public relations major.

In 1936, the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile was introduced to the streets of Chicago as a way to promote the hot dogs the company makes. Ever since its launch, the Wienermobile has become one of the most recognizable symbols of the lunch meat industry as it travels across the country, according to the official Oscar Mayer Web site.

Estrella, also known as "Meaty Magaly" by her fans from her journey on the Wienermobile, was offered a position as a "hotdogger" last year, a title she still holds.

She said that riding in the Wienermobile was a great opportunity for her to gain experience in public relations and marketing and recommends the internship to communication majors.

"Driving the Wienermobile has given me many professional opportunities," said Estrella. "For example, you meet a lot of contacts on the road because you are always doing media interviews. Also, a lot of PR and advertising agencies know about the program and although we drive a Wienermobile, there is so much more that goes on behind that. We are getting so much experience, from contacting media in every city and doing TV interviews to being the face of Oscar Mayer's 125-year-old brand."

Estrella said her position with Oscar Mayer will end in June and that she appreciates the opportunity she has had to travel the country in the past year.



JACOB KAISER/THE BEACON

INSIDE THE RIDE: An inside look into the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile reveals the bright ketchup and mustard themed interior design.

"It's buns of fun. I wish I could keep doing it after June," Estrella said. "The experience I gained from doing this job is amazing. I've seen more than half the country and I've been to places that I would have never dreamed of going to."

It's recommended that students who attend the information session come dressed in business casual attire and bring a resume along with a Panther ID. Food and beverages will be provided to those who attend.

For additional information on the internship visit www.oscarmayer.com or call BBC Career Services at (305) 919-5770.

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Uphill battles are still worth the effort

Despite its prevalence in the English language, the term “lost cause” is really an oxymoron. If the fight was truly lost, why would there still be people fighting for it?

This particular column is inspired by the several times in my life that I was told that I shouldn't bother trying to change something I didn't like because I would fail; but it is not about any of these issues, it is meant to be

a manifesto to you, my reader, to realize that whatever fight you want to take up, whether it be petty or life-changing, never back down in the face of opposition, no matter how daunting the task may be.

I should mention that, in the examples I am going to give you from my life, I “failed.” This column is not about success. You will not find any inspiring stories about overcoming the odds and bringing about change, but you will hopefully find inspiration to refuse to be trampled over and to use your right to free speech, which is afforded to you with few conditions and which many people in the world would die to have.

In high school, my senior class president was removed from office by the school administration over a controversial situation. I was one person who led an effort among our class to reinstate him, including making shirts and a petition. Never in all of the years that I was given a copy of the Student Code of Conduct to take home did I ever think that I would actually need to reference it, but it would turn out to be one of my first real lessons in civil activism.

The Code stated that so long as I gave them a day's notice and did not interrupt

class time, the administration could not reject my request for a petition. Despite this, getting administrators to approve the petition was much harder than it should have been. Even after taking all of the measures to make sure that it complied with district regulations, I was met with an administrator who told me not to bother because there was no chance in them letting the president back.

She clearly missed the point, however, which was showing that we cared. It didn't matter to me that he did not get his office back, it mattered that by the time we were done, every administrator knew what the hundreds who signed the petition and the large group that bore the shirts thought.

Anyone who has ever supported a third party, or even an underdog candidate for the U.S. presidency also knows how I felt to be looked at by someone in power as some trouble-making teenager. I would know, because I've done that too. Which candidate it was is irrelevant, but I spent many hours during the primary election season last year holding signs on street corners in the sweltering heat for the guy that I thought was the most sensible and able to lead the nation.

There was literally a guy who rolled down his window and said he thought what I was doing was great, but that I shouldn't waste my time on a lost cause.

Another person who just doesn't get it. Whether my actions had any impact on who our president is today, it feels a lot better knowing that I tried.

Granted, I am no savior of the First Amendment. A lot of things in society make me uneasy and a lot that the government does makes me upset, as I'm sure is the case for many of you and I do spend more time on Facebook than writing letters to my congressmen.

But the point here is not to fight every battle, or to fight them to the death. At the very least, stay informed of the news and when something strikes you that you're really passionate about, let the world know.

COLUMN



ERIC FELDMAN

Anyone who has ever supported a third party, or even an underdog candidate for the U.S. presidency knows how it feels to be seen as a troublemaker.

NO VACANCY

Parking continues to evolve through initiatives, construction of new garage

VANESSA ESPINEL
Staff Writer

I do not know what possessed me to take an 11 a.m. class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but whatever it was, it took over the minds of hundreds of other students as well. It's not even that 11 a.m. is that early, more so the fact that it's when parking on campus is at its worst.

Given that the time spent on scoping out a parking spot is the equivalent to four or more songs on a track, you can devote that time to either being irritated about why the car in front of the line won't ask if the person is leaving, finishing your math homework or just thinking.

That's what I was doing as I was stuck in line on the fourth floor of the Red Garage when it occurred to me that the University should adopt the same system that airports and beach parking lots use: a parking availability indicator.

It would be beneficial to students if Parking and Transportation developed a system that could monitor the parking spaces and display “Full” on a screen outside the entrance.

When approached with the idea, Executive Director of Parking and Transportation Bill Foster said that they had done some research into this, but discovered that it would not be an option to pursue at the moment.

“First, the signs are used effectively at airports, hospitals, etc., where people are usually not daily users. At universities, people already know when the garages are full – they come here every day,” Foster said.

You would think that after attending classes (presumably) semester after

semester, you would know at what times certain garages and lots are full. However, some people – at least I do – hold a, “Today I'm finally going to get that first spot in the first row” kind of optimism. Why else would we be daring enough to enter the parking garage

construction of a new garage.

“We are beginning construction in the summer, which will add more than 2,000 spaces to our inventory and provide added convenient parking spaces to the area of campus along 8th Street,” Foster said.

“At universities, people already know when the garages are full – they come here every day.”

Bill Foster
executive director, Parking and Transportation

with people driving and turning the ramps at 30 mph?

“Even if the sign says ‘Full,’ people will still look or try to sit idling, waiting for someone to leave. Also, many times there are misconceptions about availability. If the sign says ‘Full’ and a car is coming out, people think that they just left and a space is open. Of course, this could be a car that was driving around hoping for a space to open,” Foster said.

Foster also identified cost as an issue. The signs are about \$100,000 per garage for a basic package.

While Foster's points are valid, perhaps an investment into the system, at least one garage at a time, would still be helpful to students as they would know the status of at least a few garages.

In the meantime, Parking and Transportation have taken alternative actions to make parking more available to students, including the GreenRide Carpool Program and the

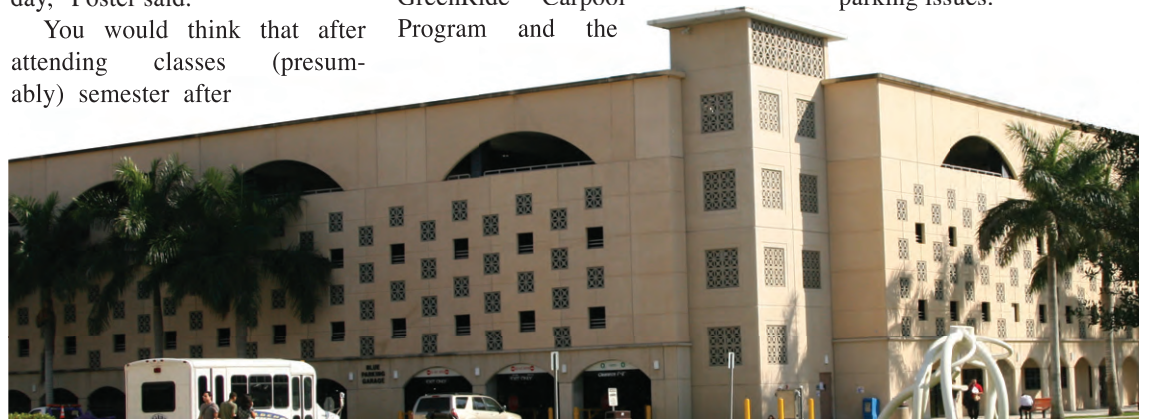
The garage will be located adjacent to the existing Red Garage.

Other new initiatives include the University's first valet program.

“We are beginning a valet parking pilot program on Feb. 16 by the Graham Center to make parking more convenient in that area. We are also evaluating a possible shuttle option to help students travel around campus more easily,” Foster said.

The valet parking is very expensive for students at \$5 per hour or \$20 per day, but perhaps could come in handy on those days when they're just really late for an exam and the program can also bring in some revenue from visitors to the University.

With the parking sign idea unlikely becoming a reality, at least not in the near future, take comfort in these newly implemented measures that will surely help in addressing the ubiquitous parking issues.



STEP ONTO THE SOAPBOX

Officer of a student organization? Student government member? University official? Have something to say?

Contact us at opinion@fiusm.com and we'll give you 500 words to share your opinion with the FIU community.



REVIEW

Flighty play brightens the Center's Main Stage

ANDREW CALIENES
Contributing Writer

The Birds is a surprisingly colorful blend of comedy, emotion and song. The show forces you to suspend reality and enter a world where Greek mythology and modern settings collide to form a sometimes confusing yet colorful show.

The Birds is a play by American playwright Len Jenkin who adapted it from Aristophanes, an Athenian playwright.

The show centers on Ventable Smoke (Dixon Gutierrez), a pathetic lounge comedian and Arnold Sand (Alex Moreno), his nervous talent agent, who both work at the Solar System Casino in Las Vegas.

Mr. Smoke and Mr. Sand find themselves owing a considerable amount of money in gambling debts to a local gangster, Buddy Barracas (Alain Mesa).

After being beat up by his beautifully murderous henchwomen, Ms. Jeckyl (Lali Navarro-Watts) and Ms. Heckyl (DeAnna Drayton), they are kicked out of town and into the desert.

During their wanderings through the desert, the two run into a makeshift bird seller who tries to sell them two birds that can lead them to Popsy, Queen of the Birds (Morgan Howland-Cook).

At this point, down on their luck, they decide they should go in search of Queen Popsy and see if she can help them hide from their debts.

If the play weren't already crowded and somewhat cumbersome, perhaps the musical numbers would give it the tools it needed to make complete sense.

Instead, they are mostly haphazard and largely irrelevant.

Despite the great performances from the cast, it is a wonder how they were able to turn such a confusing mess into something your average FIU student could even partially understand.

Though the performances were highly entertaining, the soap opera moments sprinkled throughout the show left the audience wondering what was going on every time they walked on stage.

Nevertheless, the performances from most of the cast are inspiring.

There are a few that bear mention, especially those by Denise Schwartz, Michelle Fraioli and Andrea Bovino who played *The Finches* that are slightly reminiscent of the Three Stooges with their refreshing brand of comedy.

The other honorable mentions are Morgan Howland-Cook (Queen Popsy) and Jennifer Jean-Louis (The Ornithologist) who both stole the show with their energy and pure talent.

Each sang beautifully and made each of their songs enjoyable, though the songs themselves could have been omitted.

If you decide to go watch the play, be ready to sit back and accept whatever *The Birds* throws at you.

Overall, this is a fun show to watch.

It can leave the audience scratching their heads, even with the towering abilities of its actors and scenery.

Aristophanes' age-old themes of leadership and utopia are still there, which can give the average student something to take home and think about.

The Birds is playing this weekend, Feb. 19-21, at the Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center Main Stage.

Pulse



Get pumped for a healthy heart now

If you didn't get your heart broken on Valentine's Day, good for you. But watch out! There are tons of things out there that will shatter your heart to pieces if you are not careful.



EDDITH SEVILLA

While there are some heart disease factors that we can't control, such as age and genes, there are others we can.

From stress to physical inactivity and too much alcohol – yes, you read right, consuming too much booze – taking care of that little red organ that loves to pitter patter is pretty much our job.

Considering we're just about halfway through the semester, we know certain events are coming up: mid-term exams. And if you're taking four or more classes, I pity us. Nothing can be more stressful than having your nose stuck in book after book, day after day.

But if you're not careful, stress can lead to emotional, psychological and even physical problems, including heart disease and chest pains according to *WebMD.com*. Being able to identify stressors in your life and releasing the tension they cause are the keys to managing stress, according to the web site.

Now since everyone is different, I can't tell you what will work for you. But for me, I find that a good jog, a quiet time alone or even a break from school and work to spend time with my friends always helps.

Besides making you feel sluggish and lazy, physical inactivity will do your heart in. Regular, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity helps prevent heart and blood vessel disease, but the more vigorous the activity, the greater your benefits, according to the American Heart Association.

Now if the thought of hitting the gym – which we have available at both the University Park and Biscayne Bay Campuses – doesn't sound appealing, then a walk around your neighborhood, skating, or an afternoon jog may work out for you. You may also try washing your car instead of taking it to the car wash or hitting a night club to dance the night away. Cleaning your place is also good for the environment and gets your heart pumping.

And while you clean your place don't forget to consider the amount of booze you have stored in your kitchen.

Not only will it raise your blood pressure, contribute to high triglycerides, cancer and other diseases and produce irregular heartbeats, drinking too much alcohol can cause heart failure and lead to stroke, according to the AHA. Now there's a scary thought. Next time you want to hit the bottle, consider your heart as it depends on you to make the right choices.

Now let's all get up and start moving. Don't just sit there in front of the computer all day. Remember your heart will only beat to the rhythm of how much you make it work.

Check your Pulse for health, wellness and fitness every Wednesday. E-mail Eddith at eddithe.sevilla@fiusm.com.

FIU celebrates the establishment of the *School of International and Public Affairs* in the College of Arts and Sciences

The **School of International and Public Affairs** brings together many of FIU's internationally oriented disciplines to provide cutting edge research, first-rate teaching, and innovative training necessary for the globalized world of the 21st century.

Join us for a series of events currently underway at University Park, Biscayne Bay Campus, The Wolfsonian, and throughout Greater Miami. For more details, go to international.fiu.edu.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February 20

Conference on International Ethics in Time of Insecurity
University Park Campus, Green Library, Room 220, 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

February 20

Screening of the films "Afro@Digital" and "Since the Company Came"
The Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, 7:00 pm
Free for members and students, \$10 all others

February 20

Dr. Rafael Rivas Posada, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN
"Human Rights and Latin America"
University Park Campus, College of Law, Room 1000, 11:00 am

FEATURED EVENT

Tuesday, February 24 – 9:00 am - 5:15 pm

"America and the Rising Powers: A Geopolitical Summit"
Featuring Francis Fukuyama, Robert Kagan, Parag Khanna, Fareed Zakaria
University Park Campus, Graham Center Ballrooms
For tickets and more details, go to summit.fiu.edu

February 24

Senator Ted Deutch, Florida State Senate
"Divesting from Iran: The Efforts of the State of Florida"
Biscayne Bay Campus, Wolfe University Center, Room 155, 3:00 pm

February 25

"A Course in Miracles" with Marianne Williamson
Temple Emanu-El, 1701 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, 7:30 pm
For tickets call 305-538-2503

February 27

Dr. David N. Gibbs, University of Arizona-Tucson
"Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 150, 1:30 pm

February 27

Dr. Tricia Keaton, University of Minnesota
"Social Realities of Race and Blackness in Contemporary French Society"
University Park Campus, Frost Art Museum, Room 105, 2:00 pm

February 27

Screening of the film "Buena Vista Social Club: La Segunda Mirada"
Cosford Cinema, University of Miami, 7:00 pm

February 27

Dr. Deborah Dash Moore, University of Michigan
"Through American Eyes: Jewish GIs' First Encounter with Holocaust Survivors"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 140, 11:00 am

March 3

Dr. Ahmet T. Kuru, San Diego State University
"Secularism and Islam in Turkey"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 243, 5:00 pm

March 5

Fr. Patrick Desbois, Yahad-In Unum
"The Holocaust by Bullets: The Mass Shooting of Jews in the Ukraine"
The Shul, 9540 Collins Avenue, Surfside, 8:00 pm

March 6

Teodoro Petkoff, Venezuelan Journalist and Political Figure
"Contemporary Venezuelan Politics"
University Park Campus, Wertheim Concert Hall, 4:00 pm; RSVP: 305-348-2894

March 6

Dr. Kia Lilly Caldwell, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
"Transnational Black Feminism in the 21st Century: Perspectives from Brazil"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 150, 2:00 pm

March 8

Haim Malka, Center for Strategic and International Studies
"Between War and Peace: Israel's Strategic Challenges and Opportunities"
Sunny Isles Beach Government Center, 18070 Collins Avenue, 2:00 pm

March 13

Global Europe Conference Series: "A Low Carbon, Alternative Fuels Future: Perspectives from Europe and the Americas"
University Park Campus, MARC International Pavilion, 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

March 13

Max Paul Friedman, American University
"Nazis and Jews in Latin America During the Second World War"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 140, 11:00 am

March 13

Screening of the films "I Am Become Death: They Made the Bomb" and "The Nuclear Comeback"
The Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, 7:00 pm
Free for members and students, \$10 all others.

March 13

Dr. Gregson Davis, Duke University
"Negritude as Performance: The Parade of Black Masks in Aimé Césaire's Journal of a Homecoming"
University Park Campus, Frost Art Museum, Room 105, 2:00 pm

March 14

Southern Japan Seminar, featuring Dr. Marvin Sterling, Indiana University
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Faculty Club, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

March 24

Dr. Waleed Hazbun, Johns Hopkins University
"Beaches, Ruins, and Resorts: The Politics of Tourism in the Arab World"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 243, 5:00 pm

March 25

Screening of the film "Kinshasa, DRC: Cemetery City" and commentary by Dr. Filip De Boeck, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 243, 2:30 pm

March 26

Dr. Filip De Boeck, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
"Children of Disorder: Intimacy, Violence, and the Production of Social Knowledge in Congolese Youth's Management of Death"
University Park Campus, Graham Center, Room 243, 6:30 pm

March 27

Screening of the film "Why We Fight"
The Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, 7:00 pm
Free for members and students, \$10 all others

April 9

Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, The George Washington University
"The Modern World and Necessity of Dialogue Among Abrahamic Religions"
University Park Campus, MARC International Pavilion, 6:00 pm

April 30- May 1

27th Annual Journalists and Editors Workshop on Latin America and the Caribbean: "The Politics of Natural Disasters"
Biscayne Bay Marriott Hotel, Miami, 9:00 am; RSVP: 305-348-2894

FIU

FLORIDA
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O'Brien looks to the past, to the west as new show looms

DAVID BAUDER
AP Wire

Moving day approaches.

Conan O'Brien is about to pack himself up and head west, when he replaces Jay Leno as host of NBC's "Tonight" show in June. First things first, though, as a nostalgic O'Brien prepares for the last week of his 16-year run at "Late Night." Feb. 20 is his last show before turning it over to Jimmy Fallon.

"For a while, I was in denial — 'Oh, we'll just stop doing this show and we'll move on to the next one,'" he says. "That's very me, very male. Men don't like to say goodbye. My wife told me about six months ago: 'I think you have to admit that you have mixed feelings about leaving this late-night show, it's very emotionally charged for you. That's OK.'"

From the very beginning, he says, it was the show he wanted to do. Even recent Conan converts would recognize some of the humor from that first show: He's depicted walking down a street where a talking horse calls out to him "Better be as good as Letterman." He sang "Edelweiss" hand-in-hand with Tony Randall as the camera cut to a crying Nazi in the audience.

"I'm proud of the show's originality," he says. "Letterman's 'Late Night' was obviously brilliant and groundbreaking and changed all of the rules and I'm very proud of the fact that our show, in its tone and its look and its approach had very little to do with the show that came before it or, I think, any other show that came before it."

Unpredictability and a childlike silliness were its defining characteristics.

NBC had committed to giving him the "Tonight" slot five years ago, although it was only recently that current host Jay Leno decided to stay with the network and do a nightly 10 p.m. show.

Most of O'Brien's writers will head to California with him. Years ago, switching to that earlier time slot might have meant dramatically changing the tone of the show to appeal to an older audience. But the late-night habits of viewers are different now — many watch the next day on digital video recorders — and the need for such changes has lessened.

"The shows are an extension of the host and, like it or not, this is my sense of humor," O'Brien says. "It would be a mistake to reinvent myself as a completely different person now."

O'Brien will be facing more formidable competition with Letterman in his new spot.

But O'Brien said one night on "Late Night" that he was looking forward to the new schedule.

"You can talk to me in a year and I'll say 'Well, there are some problems, there are some complications,'" he said. "But I don't know what they are. I don't know if there will be."

O'Brien is trying to maintain the element of surprise for his last week of shows, saying he wants to rely on old friends of "Late Night" instead of stunt casting.

"The one thing that's worked consistently for me is just to use your common sense, just try to be funny," O'Brien says. "For 16 years, I've just been trying to think of funny stuff. We miss sometimes, we hit sometimes but I think our average is pretty good."

Greeks celebrate one-year anniversary of council

After spending several years fighting to install the Multicultural Greek Council at FIU, the five-member organizations celebrated the group's one-year anniversary Jan. 23.

The organizations that are part of MGC are Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Inc, Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority Inc, Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity Inc, Sigma Lambda Gamma National Sorority Inc and Delta Phi Omega Sorority Inc.

"We really wanted to install MGC at FIU because we felt MGC could cater more to our needs. We do things a little different than other Greek organizations. For instance we don't go through rush and MGC is able to focus more on us. I feel like now we have a more united front," said MGC President Stephanie Wesseling a senior and member of Delta Phi Omega.

The organizations of MGC at the University are historically Latin, South Asian and multicultural, although at other campuses they have even more diversity. While these organizations take pride in their diversity they do not discriminate against any other ethnicity and welcome others that share their same core values.

Some of its activities this past year have been MGC week in September, where there were different events and activities throughout the week and a step, stroll and salute exhibition where all the organizations of MGC came out and showed what they could do. There was also a poetry open mic night, which drew in many people.

They also participated in Relay for Life and blood drives last year. MGC is making it a priority to participate in at least two community service events a semester, where at least 50

percent plus one of each chapter must attend. Last Fall they also participated in the Hasbro toy drive, an annual toy sale that benefited the Miami Children's Hospital.

Right now MGC is looking at potential candidates for its philanthropy. Primarily, they are looking at the Miami Rescue Mission, which reaches out to homeless men, women and children. This year they donated food for Miami Rescue Mission's Super Bowl party.

There had been talk about installing MGC at FIU for a long time and in Spring 2006 they began actively working to get MGC put together.

"JD Louk was our advisor last year and really helped us get started and Joanna Garcia is our current advisor and she has been extremely proud of how we've come along so far," Wesseling said.

Currently there are about six other organizations who are interested in becoming part of FIU's MGC, however Wesseling said that if they meet all their requirements they will be more than welcome to join. Right now, MGC is still new and Wesseling feels they need to improve a little bit more before they start installing more chapters.

Wesseling said one of MGC's main goals this year is "to try to unify the Greek community as a whole and participate in other Greek organizations' events."

In the short time MGC has been here they have already made a great deal of progress, so I think we can look forward to seeing what they can do this year.

Greek Life runs every other Wednesday.

E-mail Amanda at amanda.batchelor@fiusm.com



AMANDA BATCHELOR

GREEK LIFE

SPIRITUAL MUSIC



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

RHYTHM NATION: Damian Trujillo, a junior criminal justice major, plays maracas and the didgeridoo while Joey Basna, a sophomore religious studies major, keeps the rhythm going on the drums in an impromptu jam session by the fountain behind the Graham Center on Feb. 9.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 18

WHAT: Miami Heat vs. Minnesota Timberwolves
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: American Airlines Arena
CONTACT: 786-777-1000

WHAT: Rock Out
WHEN: 4 p.m.
WHERE: Kendall Branch Library
CONTACT: 305-279-0520

WHAT: The Bohemia Room: A Spoken Word Experience
WHEN: 9 p.m.
WHERE: Miami Improv
CONTACT: 305-441-8200

WHAT: Can You Rock A Little Softer? acoustic night
WHEN: 10 p.m.
WHERE: Churchills Pub
CONTACT: 305-757-1807

WHAT: Students of the National Association of Teachers
WHEN: 12 p.m.
WHERE: GC 343
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 19

WHAT: South Beach Wine & Food Festival
WHEN: 877-762-3933
WHERE: Delano Hotel
CONTACT: 305-672-2000

WHAT: Las Artes de Mexico: From the Collection of the Gilcrease Museum
WHEN: 10 a.m.
WHERE: Lowe Art Museum
CONTACT: 305-284-3603

WHAT: JAM @ MAM happy hour with an artful twist
WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: The Miami Art Museum
CONTACT: 305-375-3000

WHAT: Game Room Chess
WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: GC 305
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Hip Hop Club meeting
WHEN: 6 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

Compiled by: Mariana Ochoa

Newfound offensive success just what the team needed

The offense was the missing piece to the machine.

During the first five games, the offense had the Golden Panthers sputtering like an old lawn mower that just refused to turn on. Just one weekend and pressure situations made the softball team's bats come alive to cut down four out of five of its opponents this past weekend.

The high-powered offense from last season has not returned, but a lower octane version of it is developing. With Sun Belt Conference play just two weeks away, the Golden Panthers could not have found a better time to wipe off the early season rust. Just a bit more runs on the scoreboard added to the team's formula should grant them a strong chance at winning the conference.

Predicted to be the No. 4 team by the Sun Belt Conference Preseason Coach's Poll entering this season, the Golden Panthers might take some opponents by surprise. Kasey Barrett was expected to be the team's main source of pitching power. She got a little bit of help in the form of Jennifer Gniadek and Paige Cassady. Gniadek and Cassady are eating up all the innings Barrett's arm absorbed a season ago.

This season, the trio establishes the tone every game by not allowing much offensive output early on; in 10 games, no team has scored in the first two innings. This usually leads to low, hard-fought games, which just wears teams down headed into the late innings. After leading in the sixth inning, the Golden Panthers are a perfect 3-0.

Dominant pitching alleviates some of the burden placed on the offense.

Trade in those home run swings for bunt singles. This offense can be shut down, but is reliable enough to be tapped into if needed. Take, for example, the Golden Panthers' last game where they trailed 8-3 in the final inning. During the five-run inning, the team manufactured runs by singling, walking and making contact. There were no home runs and just one double in the entire inning. Getting on base is the most pressure the offense will apply to opponents.

COMMENTARY



SERGIO BONILLA

Power pitching and timely hitting collided to create the 6-4 team head coach Beth McClendon said she expected to make to the NCAA Tournament. The opening weekend left the Golden Panthers with a losing record. Coach McClendon said the team's freshmen needed to become acclimated for the team to have better success. It took two weekends for the Golden Panthers to find their identity.

After their next game against Fordham, the 13 remaining games on the schedule are versus Sun Belt Conference teams.

The plan so far is developing as conveniently as can be. With the pitching staff solidified, the freshmen have gained experience and the offense has found ways to score enough runs before playing the most important games of the season.

Finishing last season with a .500 record against conference teams is something this team will not be content with, especially with the Golden Panthers on a three-game winning streak and second-year coach McClendon's recruits gaining more playing time.

McClendon's team warmed up for two weeks and is now ready to bulldoze its way to a conference title run.



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

RING MY BELL: Pitcher Katie Bell pitched 3.1 innings and allowed two runs in the Golden Panthers' win vs. FGCU.

Gniadek gets third win; Bell gets winning single

SOFTBALL, page 12

bringing home Bell from third base to make the score 8-4.

McClain came up to the plate with the bases still loaded and hit a grounder to pitcher Alexis Casey who overthrew to the catcher, allowing two runs to be scored by the Golden Panthers. Welch then came up with a double to bring runners home from first and second to tie the score at eight all.

"I thought the last four innings were the first ones this season in which we played to our potential," said head coach Beth McClendon.

The Eagles would score one in the top of the eighth, but Katie Bell, who went 1-for-4 at the plate, knocked down a single to score Iriseldis Soberon from third base.

Gniadek shut down the Eagles' in the top of the ninth, allowing FIU to pull through with the win after Landau scored. Gniadek (3-2) picked up her third win and allowed just one earned run while the team record improved to 6-4.

"Every time we play Florida Gulf Coast, it seems to end up this way," said McClendon to *FIUsports.com*. "We have a ton of respect for them, but our kids fought hard. Nothing this offense does surprises me."

Fredi Gonzalez on Ramirez: 'The guy's a specimen'

STEVEN WINE
AP Wire

Hanley Ramirez worked harder this offseason and ate better. Five days a week, his routine included a 2½-hour gym workout, a one-hour swim in his pool at home and a nice dinner.

"I spend \$100 a night in the restaurant," the Florida Marlins' All-Star shortstop says with a grin. "I used to spend \$5 at Wendy's."

With a fat new contract, the 6-foot-3 Ramirez says he increased his weight 25 pounds to 225, but the calories didn't go to his waist. Instead he's thicker in the chest, shoulders and legs, which he expects to help his durability.

While Ramirez missed only 17 games the past two seasons, a left shoulder injury required surgery in October 2007 and bothered him again late last season.

"I went home and said, 'I'm tired of that,'" the Dominican says. "That was the first thing — get my shoulder stronger."

Ramirez had never worked out much in the winter but created his own program. He laughs when asked if he found it on the Internet.

"Yeah — HanleyRamirez.com," he says. "I know what I need. That's why I don't like personal trainers."

Even at a svelte 200 pounds, his listed weight in last year's postseason guide, Ramirez was the Marlins' biggest star. He has by far the most lucrative contract on baseball's thrickest team, a \$70 million, six-year deal beginning this season that will pay him \$5.5 million in 2009.

That's an increase from the \$439,000 he made last year — hence the \$100 dinners.

Ramirez appears to be a good investment. He's a .308 career hitter with 137 stolen bases and has increased his home run total in his first

three season from 17 to 29 to 33.

"I don't think he's overweight," manager Fredi Gonzalez says. "The guy's a specimen. The Dolphins could recruit him as a defensive back."

The new physique coincides with a likely change in Ramirez's role. Batting mostly lead-off, he scored 369 runs the past three seasons, most in the majors, and stole 137 bases.

But with the offseason departure of Mike Jacobs and Josh Willingham, who combined for 47 homers last year, Ramirez expects to be dropped to third in the order. Rookie center field Cameron Maybin is the leading candidate to hit first.

Ramirez has struggled as a run-producer in the past. His career on-base plus slugging percentage is .777 in 55 games batting third, compared with .931 batting leadoff. He says teams pitched him differently when he batted third, throwing him offspeed pitches in fastball situations.

Gonzalez figures Ramirez now has enough experience to adjust to any role.

"Wherever he hits, he shouldn't change his game or his approach," Gonzalez says.

Despite the added bulk, Ramirez says his focus is on his batting average, not his home-run total.

"It's not about power," he says. "I don't think about home runs. Never."

Ramirez wants to play all 162 games. At age 25, he says he also wants to assume more of a leadership role to help the Marlins reach the playoffs.

He set a good example in the offseason with his rigorous regimen.

"When you've got a couple of years in the big leagues," Ramirez says, "you learn to be a good teammate."

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SCOUTING: Priscilla Castillo (left), Liset Brito (middle) and Maria Vallasciani look on during a match this season. FIU is 3-3 thus far and play host vs. Troy on Feb. 20 at 12 p.m.

Pazo and Muci strive in doubles; team hopes to shake off injuries

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are tired at the end of the season, we are going to be feeling great.”

Off the court, Applebaum wants her team to know that her interim status is not an issue.

“They trust me,” she said. “They know that I will not leave them. I’m not a quitter. They need to have trust in the coach and I think that’s something that was not there last year.”

Another component of the team’s early success is the new doubles pair of Pazo and freshman Mariana Muci.

Pazo says the team’s overall youth and perceived

inexperience won’t affect the team’s record.

“The team’s talent and dedication will carry us throughout the season,” Pazo said.

Pazo was even more adamant regarding her thoughts on their ability to win this season.

However, maybe the biggest factor in the girls’ chances to make it back to the top of the conference will be from an obstacle beyond their control. When asked what the biggest challenge may be to reaching their goals, the first word both Pazo and Brito said was “injuries.”

Brito battled through a bit of a slow start to the season

while being bothered by a few nagging injuries, but now is 100 percent. She is coming on strong right when the team needed consistency the most. Pazo says staying healthy is crucial.

“If we avoid injuries we should be just fine,” Pazo said.

Having young and inexperienced players is a hurdle the team believes it can overcome. Pazo feels this team can bring back conference championships to a program two years removed from winning the Sun Belt.

“We are all good friends, we trust each other and have confidence in our abilities,” she said.

Interim coach lifts team with work ethic, energy

APPLEBAUM, page 12

going into advertising, but she realized that a 9-to-5 job was not meant for her.

“They know it does not bother me to work 18 hours a day for them,” Applebaum said.

After her short career in advertising, Applebaum coached at her high school, Gulliver Prep. In 2007, she led the boys and girls middle school tennis teams, which showed her a new side of tennis.

“It helped me learn the coaching side of it,” she said. I had to learn the basics.”

One year after she took the job at Gulliver, she got the assistant coaching position at FIU. Within her first few weeks as assistant coach, she set up a booster club to raise funds for the team.

In October, head coach Carlos Casely resigned for personal reasons, Applebaum became the interim head coach and she had to make the transition from assistant coach to head coach.

“As an assistant coach, you are there to be a shoulder to cry on, a hand to guide them, you are there with an open door to all their personal issues,” Applebaum said. “But as head coach, you want to be a friend and at the same time need to set up boundaries.”

The transition from assistant coach to head coach did affect the players though. They would test the limits to see how far they could push the envelope, but learned respect very quickly.

“They respect the fact that I have played in every single level and they know my judgment will help them,” she said.

Applebaum implemented a new set of rules that took the players by surprise. The girls have study hall, a curfew and a strict training schedule. Some of the girls took a while to adjust.

“It’s a big change,” said sophomore Liset Brito. “We are doing more fitness and working harder.”

Junior Priscilla Castillo enjoys Applebaum’s drive to improving.

“She pushes us to work harder and she’s on top of everything,” Castillo said.

When Applebaum took over the program, she had a vision of where she wanted to take the team. She wants the University to be noticed and she is working on it.

“I want to take this program to the next level,” she said. “We want to get people excited about the team.”

As interim head coach, Applebaum plans on becoming head coach soon.

“I worked very hard and I want to be the head coach, but I think it is out of my hands,” she said.

Applebaum has set the goals high for this year’s team. FIU ended last season with an overall 19-5 record and No. 30 national ranking, according to Intercollegiate Tennis Association.

“This group of girls has the potential to be top 25 in the country by the end of the season,” said Applebaum. “We can be one of the best programs in the nation.”

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TENNIS

YOUTH IS SERVED

Applebaum, 24, ready for challenge of coaching

LEILANI LAUREANO
Contributing Writer

Three years ago Melissa Applebaum competed in the NCAA tennis championship. This year she will be coaching girls a couple years her junior.

Last year Applebaum, who played for the University of Miami in 2006, was the assistant coach at FIU. Now, at 24, she is the interim head coach for FIU's tennis team.

Being so young, Applebaum believes her age is an advantage when working with the girls. She is one of the youngest coaches at the University, but Applebaum sees it as a positive.

"Since I was a player so recently, I can put myself in their shoes," Applebaum said.

Applebaum has played tennis for 20 years and she takes her experience as a player and utilizes it for coaching. She tries to balance her inner player to apply it to coaching.

"I think I try to use a little bit of both," Applebaum said. "I think that they trust the fact that I have played; they know what I tell them will work."

Applebaum is full of energy. Her parents put her in gymnastics and tennis to control her energy when she was younger. In 2006, she considered

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JAMIE SCHWABEROW/AP PHOTO

EXPERIENCED: Applebaum played tennis at UM and Gulliver prep recently, giving the rookie recent experience most head coaches don't have.



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

DUELING DUO: Pazo (right) and Muci have gotten off to a good start in doubles play for the Golden Panthers.

Youthful roster jumps off to strong start behind Brito

LUIS ESTRADA
Contributing Writer

Maria Dolores Pazo knows what it's like to win a conference championship. As a freshman, she helped the tennis team win a title. Now, as a junior on a team with no seniors, she understands exactly what it will take to be that successful again.

"We find it hard to accept defeat," Pazo said. "We are built to win a conference championship and make a run in the NCAA tournament."

Last year, women's tennis finished with a trip to the conference finals and an appearance in the regional play-offs. However, with a roster for this season filled with first and second-year players and a young interim head coach, struggles were almost to be expected. Someone forgot to tell that to the girls.

The team is off to a solid 3-3 start

without having played a home match yet and recently defeated the No. 42 ranked Long Beach State team.

Sophomore Liset Brito, who has won three singles matches in a row, said the team is unaffected by a lack of senior leadership and that all the girls have taken an active role in becoming better leaders on an individual basis.

Brito also said that regardless of interim head coach Melissa Applebaum's inexperience, it's a huge benefit having a young coach who played the game and is very familiar with intercollegiate tennis.

"Coach was able to get us organized and motivated and we are improving as a team every day," Brito said.

The first-year coach is not letting her players off lightly during practice.

"Every practice has a purpose," Applebaum said. "When the other teams

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SOFTBALL: FIU 10, FGCU 9

Team earns comeback victory

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Staff Writer

Down 8-3 in the bottom of the seventh, the Golden Panthers found a way to fight back.

A series of miscues by Florida Gulf Coast University let FIU claw its way back to tie the game. In the bottom of the ninth, a wild pitch paved the way for Jessica Landau to score the game-winning run.

The Golden Panthers defeated FGCU 10-9 at FIU on Feb. 15.

Junior pitcher Paige Cassidy made the start for FIU and allowed two runs in 3.1 innings against a team who scored 51 runs over their previous five games.

The Golden Panthers were able to get the offense rolling early on. With the bases loaded and two outs in the first inning, freshman Ashley McClain smacked an RBI single to center field, driving in Kim Rodriguez for the first score.

Welch came up next with a two-run single to make the score 3-0.

FGCU had just one hit up heading into the fourth inning, however, the momentum switched up when Courtney Platt nailed a three-run homer into center field, tying the score at three all. Kasey Barrett came in the game for Cassidy at this point and struck out the next two batters. However, the Eagles were able to score two runs off of Barrett

in the following inning to take the lead at 5-3.

Freshman Jennifer Gniadek came in during the seventh inning after Barrett gave up a single and then an RBI double by Platt. Gniadek gave up two runs, one charged to Barrett, to make the score 8-3.

Heading into the bottom of the inning, FIU senior Katie Bell was hit on a pitch by Cassidy Rash with one out. Kim Rodriguez then singled to left field, allowing Bell to advance to second. Jessica Landau was then walked and FGCU switched pitchers with the bases loaded. However, Lauren Spiers was also walked,

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CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

RAW ROOKIE: Freshman Jennie Welch makes a play in the outfield against FGCU. The Golden Panthers are 6-4 on the season.