



An account of Dance Marathon auditions

PAGE 5



SPC brings free multi-ethnic comedic relief to BBC

PAGE 3

SPOTLIGHT

SPORTS PAGE 7



Finally! Swimming and diving set to host home meet at BBC.

OPINION PAGE 4

Miami living should be exciting; weekends just bring loneliness. Housing students crave noise and life on the quad.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3



FOODGASM: Ethnic soup makes sweater weather bearable.

LIFE! PAGE 5

PULSE: Eddith Sevilla takes up running to jump start weight loss and a healthier lifestyle.

SPORTS PAGE 8

Walk-on leads Men's hoops in injured times and down the stretch.

OPINION PAGE 4



COLUMN: Going Greek provides a great way to get involved and meet people, but it is certainly not the only way.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Comedy Show, Today, Jan. 28, 6 p.m. Be the next Dane Cook (minus the ego) tonight at the Graham Center.

Can You Rock A Little Softer? Today, Jan 28, 10 p.m.: So you think you can sing? Be the sensitive guy with a guitar tonight at open mic night!

Game Room Dominoes Tournament, Jan. 29, 4:30 p.m. Enjoy every old man's favorite past time at Graham Center.

Thursday Nights at Fairchild: Elvis Night, Jan. 29, 7 p.m. If you spot Elvis in the bushes, don't think you're in Graceland! Enjoy an Elvis theme night at Fairchild Botanical Gardens.

The Machine, Jan. 29, 7pm.: Wish you could have the real Pink Floyd Experience? Get the next best thing with this tribute band at Revolution Live.

For the complete calendar, please see page 6 or visit FIUSM.com.

WEATHER



WEDNESDAY
Mostly sunny
LOW: 64 HIGH: 82



THURSDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 64 HIGH: 82



FRIDAY
Isolated t-storms
LOW: 49 HIGH: 76

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RAGING HOOPS



JOEY KOSANKE/THE BEACON

THREE POINTS: Carlos Revilla, a biology major, participates in the Panther Rage shoot-out at the GC Fountain on Monday, Jan. 26.

Seminar unites Florida's RAs

ELSIE PUIG
Staff Writer

"They were all coming in from different directions, wearing their different spirited gear with their school colors and they all ended up congregated in the quad," remembered Ron Thompson, interim director for Residential Life. "It was a very visual moment."

Thompson recalled the vibe of school spirit present at the annual Florida Residential Assistants Seminar which was hosted by the FIU resident assistants.

The conference started Jan. 23 at 7:00 p.m. and ended the following day at midnight.

PHOTO GALLERIES



Visit FIUSM.com for photos of the FRAS event that took place Jan. 23 and 24.

There were 270 resident assistants from 20 different schools throughout Florida attending the conference.

"The annual conference is held so that RAs can share information, teach each other and, at the same time, demonstrate school spirit," Thompson said.

The FIU RAs, who had

won the coveted Spirit Award in 2008, came home with plans to host the conference for 2009.

"We supported everything they wanted to do," Thompson said. "Everything went smoothly. They did an amazing job at showcasing our campus and the FIU student experience, so it was very rewarding to watch at the ending ceremony how all the delegations gave them a standing ovation for the great work they did."

The conference, which was themed Super FRAS All-Stars, a knock-off of ConSuper Mario Brothers, kicked off at

FRAS, page 2

FIU to host 'legendary' performer

DAVID BARRIOS
Senior Staff Writer

Hundreds of students lined up on Tuesday, Jan. 27 in front of the Graham Center Ticketmaster counter, all intent on purchasing tickets for "An Evening with John Legend." The five-time Grammy Award-winning musician is set to appear on Feb. 11 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena, with the evening including a half-hour lecture and a 45-minute acoustic performance.

Ticket prices are set at \$25 for floor seating in the arena and

\$20 for seating in the bleachers and can be purchased at both the Graham Center Ticketmaster and the Wolfe University Center Ticket Master at Biscayne Bay Campus. The event will take place Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. in the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

"Nivv Oudit, just after the Ivanka Trump lecture last semester, set out to find another big name and a relevant person to attend. We wanted to get people who were interesting," said Ben Badger, press secretary of Student Government Council-University Park.

According to Oudit, Student Government Association speaker bureau chair and main coordinator for the event, SGA was offered several names by many talent agencies.

Jodie Sweetin, Christian Siriano, Rachel Ray, Michael Moore, Tony Blair, Erin Brockovich and even the cast of *Mythbusters* were some of them, but Oudit said that many of them were either "way out of our budget or simply not conducive to the demands of the student body based on our research."

LEGEND, page 2

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS LECTURE SERIES

Lawyers provide debt counseling

BRIAN ALONSO
Contributing Writer

Credit card debt, student loans and even tenement rights were the main issues addressed at the "Know Your Rights" Lecture Series, where lawyers gave sound advice to concerned students.

On Jan. 24, on the second floor of the Graham Center, Jeffrey Mollinaro, law school senator for the Student Government Association, with the help of SGA's Student Advocate Cristina Loreto, invited a panel of four law professionals for the first of three events in the series.

Breakfast was provided by SGA and, as students began to trickle in, the panel opened with Marlon Hill, a partner with Delancy Hill P.A. law firm, speaking about the purpose of the lecture.

"Having the legal community here in collaboration with the student leadership is key to providing students with the information they need to be less stressed ... and focus on their academics," he said.

He proceeded to ask the audience, who consisted of about two dozen students, why they attended the forum.

Most were students earning their graduate degrees and said they came for general information.

"Most of these students are law school students," Loreto said. "This came as somewhat of a surprise as more undergraduate students were expected."

Ruth Johnson Martin, P.A., addressed issues related to credit card debt and the unethical practices of many debt collectors, such as having repo men show up at people's doors to scare them.

Duane Pinnock, from Delancy Hill, continued by addressing student loans and interest rates and how students have options when paying these loans off and should always avoid letting them accumulate.

The last speaker, Lisa Colon-Heron of the Caribbean Bar Association, spoke on landlord and tenant law and considerations that should be taken by students when renting and leasing.

During the question and answer section, the majority of concerns raised by students revolved around loans, debt and renting concerns.

"Student debt is a rising issue in our current environment," Pinnock said.

Though successful, SGA faced several challenges in coordinating the event.

"Basically one of our major challenges [was the fact that] we received a budget cut," Loreto said. "Some of the food came out of our pockets."

As for the guests, she said the lawyers volunteered.

Mollinaro shed some light on the long term goals of this event on campus.

"There are universities throughout the state that provide legal representation for their students," he said.

Currently, according to Mollinaro, FIU does not offer these services and the event would inform students on critical financial matters.

NEWS FLASH

FIU

Media professional to lecture students

The Aesthetics & Values Class from the Honors College will be presenting a lecture by Brandi Reddick entitled "Art in the Public Realm: Defining Miami-Dade's Civic Spaces" on Jan.30.

Reddick has been the Artist and Communications manager with Miami-Dade in public places for five years and has worked in the visual arts field for 13 years. She is also an adjunct professor of Art History at the University of Miami, according to a press release.

The event will be held at the Frost Museum in the Steven & Dorothea Green Multi-Purpose Room, Room 107, at 2 p.m. and it is free of charge and open to the public.

LOCAL

Grand jury to investigate Florida house speaker

A grand jury has decided to investigate Florida House Speaker Ray Sansom, for allegedly abusing his position and taking a six-figure job at his hometown college.

Sansom allegedly accepted an unadvertised job from Northwest Florida State College with a salary of \$110,000 a year the same month he took the job as speaker of the House.

Sansom and the state college have denied any wrongdoing in the matter, saying that there is no relation between the money he secured and the job.

NATIONAL

Massive job losses reported in one day

The final week of January drew a blow to the job market as more than 50,000 jobs were lost in one day on Jan. 26.

At least six companies, from manufacturing to service industries, announced cost-cutting initiatives that include the termination of thousands of jobs.

In 2008 alone, the highest job loss recorded since 1945 took center stage as the economy went into recession. An estimated 2.6 million jobs were lost as a direct result.

So far, 170,000 jobs have been cut this year with more on the way as the market crisis continues.

-Compiled by Paulo O'Swath

FIU Foundation hires new talent

FRANCISCO MARADIAGA
Contributing Writer

The FIU Foundation has announced eight new members on Jan. 21.

"These new members are leaders representing a wide range of talent in our community," said Sandra Gonzalez-Levy, vice president of University and Community Relations and executive director of the FIU Foundation, in a press release.

Six of the eight new members are University alumni. They include CEOs, presidents, vice presidents and

principals in their respective fields.

The FIU Foundation is a charitable organization by the state of Florida and is considered a tax exempt organization by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The non-profit corporation was established in 1969 in order to advance the University's objectives through the encouragement, solicitation and administrations of gifts.

According to the foundation's criteria for director nomination, a candidate should have a high interest in becoming involved with the University and help to achieve its fundraising goals.

In addition, all must pay an annual fee of \$2,500 and are responsible for contributing an additional minimum of \$7,500 which they can pay themselves or obtain from other parties.

The money could go to any department, branch or activity of the University.

Some of the ideal skill criteria for the directors include the ability to raise and manage money, knowledge of higher education and marketing skills.

The new members include: David F. Alfonso, founder, chairman and CEO of Empire Investment Holdings.

Richard Brilliant, vice

president of Audit Services and chief audit executive of Carnival Cruise Lines.

Nicholas G. Bustle, city president of Miami and manager for the commercial line of business at SunTrust Bank.

Carlos A. Duarte, president and CEO of Metric Engineering.

Ramon Flores, Florida area director of AT&T.

Eileen Moss, partner at Shook, Hardy & Bacon Law firm.

Marcel L. Navarro, principal at MMG Equity Partners.

Carolina Rendeiro, CEO of Business Centers International.

RAs flaunt their school spirit

FRAS, page 1

GL 100 with a roll call, which consisted of each participating delegation of RAs representing their school with a small skit.

Afterward, there was a swap-shop where the delegations traded their school's paraphernalia such as pins, buttons, hats and sweatshirts. Late Friday, the day ended with a session of video gaming.

On Saturday, there were educational programming and workshop sessions during the day. Most of the programming centered on how to deal with stress, how to solve different situations and how to relax.

When the FIU RAs decided to host this year's conference, they submitted a proposal to the Florida Housing Officers and waited to be chosen. When they got chosen, a 10-month saga of planning began, which included hotel reservations, program

development, booking a key-note speaker, T-shirt design and attention to detail.

"I think one of my favorite moments was hearing the key-note address from motivational speaker Nancy Hunter Denney," said Sarah Marquis, a senior criminal justice major, who was one of the Tri-Conference chairs along with Lisa-Marie Young and Elena Kats. "She talked about everything from staying motivated to how to deal with staff conflict."

Marquis, who was inspired to become an RA by Nicolette Aimam, her former RA during freshman year, knows the difference an RA can make on the students living in the residence halls.

"In the conference, the objective was basically to inspire new ideas and motivation," she said. "It really does make you realize why you took the job in the first place."

Students race to GC ticket counter

LEGEND, page 1

The cost of the event totaled \$50,000 and, according to Badger, at least 1,900 tickets must be sold for the expenses of the event to break even.

"If we sell out, then that'll cover all expenses for this program," Badger said. "This is not a for-profit venture. If there is a profit, it will be extremely low. So the money we're giving in is the money we're getting back."

Oudit said the budget cuts presented some limitations to SGA and although their lecture budgets would still allow them to bring speakers like Aasiv Mandvi from "The Daily Show" or Frank Warren from "Post-Secret," SGA wanted to "make a conscientious effort to bring somebody world-class for FIU."

"We are therefore charging for tickets in order to cover the cost of the event, not for profit," Oudit said.

Pre-orders on the tickets had begun several weeks before, with students leaving their information and paying for their seats, awaiting the distribution of the tickets.

Oudit said that during the first two days of early ticket

sign-ups there were over 600 signatures.

Badger added that the initial student reaction was better than he expected.

"Last week, in the student government office, we had at least 10 to 15 phone calls every half-hour asking to get John Legend tickets," he said.

The tickets, however, are only open to the University community. Badger explained that since Legend will be performing in the Miami area on Jan. 29 at the Jackie Gleason Theater, it is important that the event be limited to only FIU.

"We can't undercut a private business that depends on selling a certain amount of tickets to stay in business by using state funds to provide tickets for the same artist at \$25," he said. "That's why we're leaving it open only to FIU."

Students showed excitement over the upcoming event.

"It's definitely worth the money to see him, especially now, when a ticket for a performer could cost over \$100," said Chris Rodriguez, a sophomore.

"The buzz at the University has been great. Everyone knows about it and everyone is excited about it," Badger said.

THE BEACON

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POLICE NOTES

Jan. 16

Charges are being pressed by vending company Dilloreto and Sons after merchandise was stolen from a vending machine on University Park Towers. The unknown suspect damaged the doors in gaining access to the machine.

Jan. 17

A student started the engine of her vehicle upon leaving the Army ROTC parking lot when her car caught on fire. Lt. O'Brien reported to the scene and reported that the fire was accidental.

A male student resident was victim to burglary. About \$2,670 of merchandise and cash were stolen from his room in Lakeview South. The suspect behind this crime is unknown and the case was issued a case card.

Jan. 20

Officer Barrios was informed by a victim of attempted burglary that someone tried to remove her student decal from her vehicle rear window. The suspect behind the attempted burglary damaged her car at a \$237 value.

Jan. 22

Officer Matt Halfhide was doing a routine traffic stop on a vehicle located at S.W. 107 Ave. and S.W. 11 St. Upon his investigation behind the vehicle registration, Halfhide realized that the driver was using a suspended driver's license, driving under an unregistered tag and driving with a fake paper tag. The owner's car was towed and he was issued 3 criminal citations.

-Compiled by Cheryl Malone



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Diverse comedy show jokes about differences

SHERVIN BAIN
Staff Writer

Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to the “Stand Up for Diversity Comedy Tour” the Student Programming Council will be hosting Thursday, Jan. 29, showcasing the comedic styles of Sheng Wang, Michelle Buteau and Wil Sylvince.

The comedy show will be held in the Mary-Ann Wolfe Theatre in the Wolfe University Center. Doors open at 7 p.m. and those outside the University community are welcome to attend. A sign-in sheet will be provided for guests and students should bring their Panther IDs.

The purpose of the show is to kick off

the semester, according to Andre Dawson, special events chair for SPC, and a senior biology and psychology major.

“We have a whole period of change going on. We just wanted to give [students] a wide variety of comedy,” he said.

The comedy show, which is free, is part of the One World Celebration, hosted by SPC during the week of January 26-30.

“One World” week events will feature themed days corresponding to different countries around the world, such as a Mexican-themed day on Jan. 29 and a European day on Jan. 30.

“This comedy show is very diverse. We have an Asian comic, a female comic and a Haitian comic,” Dawson said.

According to <http://www.diversecitynbc.com>, the Web site for the comedy show, Sheng Wang’s comedy stems from his personal experiences and he is known for his absurd style and self-deprecating humor.

Michelle Buteau recently finished a 10-city tour called “5 Funny Females.” She has also toured in Europe and performed at comedy clubs in London and Dublin, Ireland.

Wil Sylvince has appeared on BET’s Comic View, The Apollo Comedy Hour and Russell Simmons’ Def Comedy Jam, where he received a standing ovation.

SPC has hosted several shows in the past, including last year’s variety show Sept. 25 and “LOL Comedy series,” featuring the

talents of Adam Hunter and Benji Brown, among others.

Melissa Desraneaux, a junior public relations major, believes that the comedy show will help students take their minds off studying.

“You’re going to laugh,” Desraneaux said. “And laughter cures all.”

SPC also plans to have a comedy show for the Spring semester.

“Come out and support and I guarantee you’ll have fun,” said Dawson. “We expect to have a huge turnout.”

Desraneaux said that they expect between 200-250 people to show.

For more information, contact SPC at (305) 919-5280.

FOODGASM

Impressing your friends – and yourself – with a hearty stew

Last week was our winter – and it was cold to us native Miamians.

All of a sudden, Uggs were trampling across our campus, scarves were trailing behind us in the icy wind and, no doubt, fuzzy blankets were layered on our beds to keep us warm.

We all know how to dress when the weather turns chilly, but how are we supposed to eat?

I personally enjoy cold weather foodgasm, they are my favorite kind.

When the weather turns sweater-friendly, my palate craves core-warming foods like soups, stews and hot chocolate. For me, there is nothing like a homemade Cuban stew called *carne con papas*, which translates to meat with potatoes.

It’s one of the warming, peasant foods from my culture.

The stew heats me from the inside out, foodgasmic spoonfuls of its bubbling tomato broth, with hearty chunks of stewing beef, simmering vegetables and the star of the show – the perfectly cooked potato – melting in my mouth.

Foods like this are warming because they are served piping hot and have a richness to them – a stick-to-your-ribs feeling – once they go down.

They usually make you think of your culture because a good hearty stew is made by your family at home, over many hours. It is hard to find a restaurant serving these dishes because of the time and care that is needed to produce them.

And, let’s face it, our average temperature in Miami is always raging at please-get-me-to-the-nearest-air-conditioner levels.

But when the wind hit me in the face last Wednesday and my already numerous layers of clothing weren’t keeping me warm, I hit the kitchen. I needed to recover from the frost in my hair and my numb toes.

I started my defrosting by setting my oven to broil and leaving it open just a tad.

Don’t worry, these recipes don’t require broiling, this is just the chef’s version of a campfire. It warms up the kitchen and starts the thawing process.

I decided to make *caldo gallego*, a white bean soup from Galicia on the northwestern part of Spain.

A soup of my heritage, *caldo gallego*

makes me think of my family in Spain and also lets me have a taste of what I’m missing abroad. I don’t make it often because it requires some time, but there is no better way to foodgasm and warm up at once.



BIANCA ROJAS

First, I make the base to my soup, which is a good starting point for any soup or stew.

I carefully dice a large white onion and mince four large cloves of garlic.

I then sauté these with a little bit of Spanish olive oil (Goya will do) in a large pot.

While the vegetables soften, I chop a small package of Spanish *chorizo*, a type of smoked and cured sausage that gets its pungent smell from red peppers and Spanish paprika, and two cups of smoked ham into bite-sized pieces and add them to the pot, stirring until the *chorizo* imparts its fiery red color on all the other ingredients.

The next step is to make a ham broth, which involves ham hocks and lots of time. If you don’t have the time, feel free to cheat – use store-bought ham or chicken stock to get the job done.

After adding the 6-8 cups of broth, and bringing it to a simmer, take some time to wash, peel and dice about two cups of yellow potatoes.

Also, open and rinse two 15 oz. cans of Northern white beans.

When your prep is ready, add the beans and potatoes to the pot, covering and simmering the soup for one hour. This hour lets all the cultural flavors mingle, cooks the meats and potatoes to a soft stew state and allows you some time to get hungry.

My mouth is watering just thinking of the delicious dish to come.

Right before serving the *caldo gallego* to your freezing friends, make sure to take one and a half cups of frozen collard greens, kale or spinach and add it to the pot, heating it until warm.

This gives the soup the last touch and ties it in with winter because it is a seasonal ingredient. You can certainly use fresh greens, but allow for more cooking time. Personally, I just want to eat.

This soup turns out to be ethnic, rich and magically warming.

It’s known as a restorative soup in Spain – and for good reason. This is Spain’s version of our home remedy chicken soup.

Its mix of strong Spanish flavors, hearty meats and vegetables and soft winter touches like white beans and greens gets us in touch with the season and gives us the warmth to let us escape our sweaters.

Serve this thick and earthy alternative soup with a piece of crusty bread and a glass of a good Spanish wine, like the crisp and tart Paco & Lola Albariño 2007 (\$16), which balances nicely because of its light

and elegant flavors.

This is all you need for a winter foodgasm.

Need help with a recipe or finding a place to eat? Bianca is here to help! Send any questions, comments or Foodgasm ideas to bianca.rojas@fiusm.com



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READ THIS NOW!

A WEEKLY COLUMN

'Greek anxiety' should be overcome

I was talking to a friend of mine who was attending college out of state and she mentioned that there are no fraternities or sororities at her university. Considering the prominence of Greek organizations here (at least at the University Park campus), it was a little bit difficult to imagine campus life without that Greek element.

I spent the weeks leading up to this semester deep in thought about whether I should rush and see what it was like on the other side.

Unlike the freshmen who decide to affiliate with a Greek organization immediately upon starting college, I was too confused about what the point of it was, what the letters meant and the whole general idea surrounding fraternities and sororities, not to mention being skeptical of the clique-style of the groups.

Recently, however, Greek students had comprised more of my social circle through friends, and I started to get more of a grasp of what it was all about and a respect for students who took that route in college.

I suddenly had people on both sides of the issue pushing me in both directions: some encouraging me at every turn to attend rush events because I would be an asset to a Greek organization, and others telling me not to become part of the groups that they perceived as elitist and divisive.

These types of conversations point to another prominent aspect of the University Park atmosphere that cannot be ignored: tension between Greeks and non-Greeks.

Considering all of the good qualities that both Greeks and non-Greeks bring to our University, the amount of tension between the two groups is rather unfortunate, and is not solely the fault of either party.

It is mostly created by members of both groups doing exactly what I'm about to do: stereotype. Students who are not Greek-affiliated tend to see the campus as run by Greeks. A complaint I hear quite often is that too many of the events and organizations on campus are controlled by and for Greek students.

However, this is not caused

by Greek domination, but by the fact that being in Greek organizations strongly encourages campus involvement. Any student can apply to join organizations that fall under Campus

Life and the Council for Student Organizations, and any student can attend the events that these groups put on around campus (with the obvious exception of private chapter events, such as meetings). There is no event that requires

you to show a "Greek card" for admission.

Likewise, many Greeks are quick to judge students who have not rushed as uninvolved and unacademic without considering the ways that they may have contributed to campus without being bound to certain Greek letters. The concept of family created by fraternities and sororities is a really good thing, but I certainly understand why some people would rather judge who they associate with on a case-by-case basis rather than by who is in the same organization as them.

I also know many people who are not interested in ever going Greek, who I will always be as close to as my future fraternity brothers and who also contribute greatly to this University.

At the end of my very deep contemplations of rush week (I was even having dreams about the Greek alphabet), I did decide to pledge to a fraternity on campus and I haven't had a single regret since. Being a pledge of this fraternity has required me to take my studies more seriously by participating in study sessions and having me meet with my professors more regularly, not to mention, it strongly encourages participation in organizations outside of the fraternity.

For anyone who has previously had 'Greek anxiety' about rushing, I do strongly encourage you to approach it with a more open mind. You make connections that you might not have otherwise and get involved in activities you might not have previously cared about or even known about.

But for those of you who have made the determination that Greek life is not for you, don't let anyone tell you that you should. Go out and get involved, any way, and prove that individuality is just as important.

COMMENTARY



ERIC FELDMAN

HOME SWEET HOME?

Dorm life lacking in liveliness

ANDREW SOLOMON
Contributing Writer

We pride ourselves in being a university with a diverse and active campus life, and rightfully so.

But as FIU grows and the demand for on-campus housing grows with it. Changes must occur, namely a new focus on campus life programming aimed at housing students.

Right now there are six residence halls and an apartment complex at University Park and another at Biscayne Bay Campus. These facilities combined house more than 3,000 students, many from out of state, others from out of the country. Those living on campus, who are seeking an opportunity to be educated at a truly international institution, rich with different cultures and opportunities to network, have found the right place. Those who are looking for something a little bit more, who want to call FIU home and want to feel like home is a fun place to be, may find themselves disappointed.

"For all the money it costs [to live on campus], it doesn't seem like I'm getting the full college experience," said Roger de Souza, a sophomore who has lived in Lakeview Village.

The housing quad is a beautiful place, with a swimming pool and volleyball court and even its own convenience store.

"What's missing is noise, life. It's too quiet around here and it can get depressing, even lonely," de Souza said.

Others share the sentiment.

"I go out on a Friday or Saturday night and it is absolutely dead out here," said Jade Byfield, an out-of-state student resident. "I came to school here because I wanted to get out of New York and come to Miami. But it's disappointing, after how well they sold this school to me, to see a few people sitting outside doing nothing on a beautiful weekend night down here."

FIU is first and foremost a college, a place of education. The reputation it has already earned as a



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

FINDING FUN: Housing students resort to a game of "wall ball" in the quad.

What's missing is noise, life. It's too quiet around here and it can get depressing, even lonely.

Roger de Souza, sophomore student resident

top public university is more important than any party school reputation. However, being known for college life is also important for recruitment.

Students usually need to go downtown, Coconut Grove or Miami Beach, to find fun because campus is usually quiet.

The answer is not to transform the University into a crazy party school where people are stumbling drunk around campus at all hours of the night, by any means.

FIU has already succeeded in making sure that there is always something going on around campus. You can't turn around without there being an event in The Pit and movies and comedy shows abound.

But there needs to be more consideration into the simple art of

fun, especially for those stuck in the housing complexes, far from home. Perhaps more basketball courts near the housing quad so students who want to shoot hoops don't have to hike all the way to the trailer complex, or programming more concerts and musical events from local artists, who would probably be willing to perform to gain exposure.

Take advantage of where the University is: Miami, the city the rest of America is jealous of all four seasons of the year. Make FIU the number one venue in the area. We have the resources, we have the student body and we have the potential.

The future of FIU depends on the level of satisfaction of the students that call the University home.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters can be sent to opinion@fiusm.com. Letters must be under 300 words and include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department. They may be edited for space/grammar.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Regarding the Jan. 22 story on the presidential search, while I greatly value and appreciate the service of Trustees Frost and Puig, I believe that their comment implying that the most important quality the new President should have is "an immense understanding of the local community" is incorrect.

If FIU is to become the insti-

tution the community deserves, the new president must be able to lead it as it develops its promise. While understanding the local community will be important, understanding what a research university is, how to develop a medical school and how to prioritize in a very tight financial situation will be much more important capacities.

I believe our trustees, both individually and collectively, need to focus on what we are and what we are to become, rather than where we are, if they are to properly fulfill their responsibilities.

Bruce Hauptli
Professor of Philosophy
Former University Trustee

MY LIFE! EXPERIENCE

SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE

Student faces fears with 'Yes dance'

"Don't fall, don't fall, don't fall," is all I could think of before finally performing in front of students in the Pit on Jan. 15.

"What in the world did I get myself into?" were my only thoughts leading up to Dance Marathon, So You Think You Can Dance auditions.

DM is a 25-hour philanthropy event where participants stand on their feet pledging their dedication to the Children's Miracle Network. All proceeds made during and before the event are given to the Miami Children's Hospital.

When I agreed to cover DM for *The Beacon*, I was very excited and eager to cover everything and anything.

Needless to say, my eagerness slowly went away when I realized that I had to audition for So You Think You Can Dance. If I flunked a dance class before, how the heck was I going to pull this one off?

I spent about a good week thinking of all the possible excuses I could come up with to tell my editor I couldn't do it. I was secretly hoping that she would eventually tell me it was OK and that she understood and would let me skip the auditions.

With my luck, those words never escaped her mouth. It was the first week of school and I was telling my friends about needing a dance routine, when one of them said, "Have you heard about the 'Yes' dance?" With a puzzled look on my face she introduced me to the "Yes" dance on YouTube.

"Kasey, that is so you," mentioned one of my friends as we watched these two guys' "Yes" dance. It had to be one of the silliest dances I had ever seen. It looked

easy and it was funny. It had finally been decided. I was going to "Yes" my way into So You Think You Can Dance.

Meanwhile, a friend of mine, who can actually dance, was preparing for the auditions as well. We were each other's motivation and it was a comfort to know that we would be cheering for each other.

COMMENTARY



KASSANDRA
POOL

Irish dancer Cristina Rodriguez has qualified for the World Championship for three years and has placed top 10 for five years at the Southern Regional Championship.

Rodriguez is an involved student who rarely shows her Irish dancing skills to her peers. For her, this was the perfect time to show fellow students a different side of her.

"After not performing for a couple of years, I had a longing to express my dancing in front of a crowd once again. So, I filled out an application and auditioned," she said.

It was finally the day to audition. I had spent the night before in my living room practicing how to Yes the best and funniest way possible. I had made sure I texted all my friends and sorority sisters to come out and support me. Rodriguez and I were ready.

I was the first one up with my FIU shorts and shirt and hot pink socks. I was ready and crossing fingers not to fall. Knowing that I had the support was great and lessened my nerves.

When Cristina came up to dance, I made sure I was the loudest, cheering for her to do well. I didn't make it to finals, but it was a great experience despite my hesitation at the beginning.

Cristina along with nine other students performed on Jan. 21 in the ballrooms for the final round of So You Think You Can Dance.

Pulse

Runner's high drives health goals

I'm not a runner. Running leaves me out of breath quickly, so I prefer to jog.

However, when I was in my early 20s, I used to run/jog 14 miles per week. These days I'd be lucky if I can do two.

Let me take that back. I have two legs: I can jog two miles per week or more if I want to. In fact, since last Friday, I've been doing just that.

Every day I have been jogging and walking two miles. But let me tell you, taking the initiative to put on my running shoes is not easy.

Now, if you weren't hibernating or out cold last weekend, chances are you know there were thousands of people from around the world running in our streets for the ING Marathon and Half Marathon. As I watched these people on TV and at the Health and Fitness Expo – many were signing up for Sunday's race on Saturday – I couldn't help but think about my personal desire to one day run a marathon and where I stand right now in terms of running.

I have come up with every excuse you can imagine to stay home and "rest" instead of going out for a jog. And by "rest" I mean sit in front of the tube and watch episode after episode of reality TV.

When I got home from work Sunday evening, I was determined to go jogging, but when I walked into my room, I just wanted to crawl into bed.

I told myself I was very tired from going out the night before and having to wake up early for work that morning. I told myself that sleep would be beneficial to my weight loss and that my tummy was still full from my mid-afternoon snack.

Then I remembered the magic number: 202. Charlie, my boyfriend, was down to 202 pounds from 215 and I was ... well, I didn't know where I was because I've been too afraid of what the scale will read.

Charlie is on his way to becoming a health freak. Every day he goes for a run/jog and is now conscious of the foods he eats, a habit I both love and hate.

After my fourth lap, I was feeling great – almost too great. What made me feel so good? Runner's high. Running releases a "flood of endorphins in the brain," according to a *New York Times* story published last year in March.

Researchers in Germany reported that endorphins are associated with mood changes, and the more endorphins a runner's body pumps out, the greater the effect, according to the article.

I had not felt this way in a long time. I practically felt like I could soar and at times I was actually running.

In a recent article in *The Miami Herald*, a sports psychologist was quoted as saying that "any aerobic exercise releases endorphins, which make you feel exhilarated."

I'm slowly starting to like jogging again. And because I have committed myself to losing 30 pounds by the time I'm due to wear my cap and gown, I now feel a little more secure about registering for a 5K run and, eventually, a marathon.

COLUMN



EDDITH SEVILLA

CABRALITICS

Financial nightmare inspires prison dream

Everyone is talking about the possibility of impending FIU budget cuts. Well, not really everyone. Several people are talking about them – at least two.

The point is, budget cuts are impending. With the state Legislature planning on reducing funding to education once again, the University administration is going to have to start dramatically cutting costs or raising revenues.

Some people are looking at this situation and worriedly ask, "Will my major be cut?" or "Will they fire my history professor or Guillermo, the really nice custodian I always see in GC?"

Sadly, the answer to these questions could be yes. But it doesn't have to be. If daring and bold action is taken, FIU may seize upon a golden opportunity to keep this school from developing into some second-rate educational institution like UM (just kidding): an opportunity like the closing of Guantanamo Bay prison.

While human rights advocates cheer

the fact that the place is set to be shuttered in less than a year's time, skeptics have expressed cautious dismay, wondering where these detainees will be housed. Less than 300 inmates need a home, and no one seems to want to take them.

U.S. Senator Sam Brownback recently decried suggestions that the federal prison in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas might be used to hold these potentially dangerous inmates.

With Leavenworth now seeming an unlikely destination, the U.S. government needs a place to house these people. Any facility that agrees to hold them would certainly receive plenty of federal aid and lots of valuable national attention.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we play our cards right, that facility could very well be FIU.

By opening a small, well planned correctional facility, FIU 3.0 would be able to grow and flourish despite the decrease

in state education funding.

Now, some would no doubt object to this suggestion. These are over 200 allegedly dangerous murderers and criminals, they'll point out. Yet, when one stares out across our beautiful campus, one can find plenty of space to keep that many prisoners. I'm fairly certain I've seen twice as many people crammed inside my Finite Math classroom. And while the dangers are many, the rewards could be enormous.

By converting a few simple buildings into a maximum security detention center, FIU would likely reap millions in federal money, all while providing an even richer and more valuable educational experience for its students.

Those interested in abnormal psychology could learn so much simply by questioning a few would-be suicide bombers, law students would learn more about the justice system at the new, state of the art Golden Panther Penitentiary than

COLUMN



CHRIS CABRAL

TECHNOLUST

Free photo-editing software lets you polish your pictures

With cameras coming standard on cell phones, anyone can let out their inner shutterbug and document their memories. But not every shot comes out great, here's where a photo-editing program needs to be called in to save the day.

No, I'm not talking about Adobe Photoshop. At \$699, it's out of reach for most college students' pockets. (Except for that one student driving the Lamborghini Murciélago on campus, they probably have the whole Adobe Creative Suite.)

I'm talking Picnik. Free and online at www.picnik.com, Picnik lets you edit your photos without even having to sign up for an account.

To start, go to its home page and upload a photo. From the first menu – the Edit tab – you can rotate, crop, resize and sharpen your shot, even spot-click away red eyes.

Your two new favorite tools in this first menu are exposure and colors. Exposure brings out lights and shadows in a flat photo, while colors lets you play with saturation and temperature sliders to warm or cool the shot's tones.

Once you're done adjusting the basics,

click over to the Create tab and take advantage of some of Picnik's photo effects. Slap a sepia tone filter and make your family get-together look like it came straight out of the '20s.

Juggle the 1960s and cross process effects to change the base tints to create unnatural colors and higher contrasts in your photos without having to learn how to process them in a lab.

Pick the Touch Up sub-menu and whiten teeth or magic away blemishes with a click. Finish your edits by choosing a frame for your photo: museum matte, rounded corners, drop-shadow or polaroid.

Advanced photo editors will want to upgrade to a premium account to use more advanced, Photoshop-esque features like color curves and levels to fine-tune their tones. At \$24.95 a year for a subscription, Picnik keeps you out of the poor house that Photoshop throws you in.

Photoshop surgeons beware though: You won't be able to hack and reshape your features here.

It's a good thing though – Picnik keeps you honest.



SUSANA RODRIGUEZ

On-campus prison could provide funding, jobs

CABRALITICS, page 5

they ever could in any classroom.

Students desperately needing jobs in this rough economy could work as prison guards or sentries and make far more money than any *barista* at Starbucks or waiter at T.G.I. Friday's. Even academic dishonesty would be greatly reduced, as potential cheaters would be reluctant to risk spending three weeks in solitary confinement.

I know, I know. It all sounds too good to be true. Yet there are those that still complain, calling the opening of a world class, maximum security prison on campus a bad idea. They, however, underestimate the power of Golden Panther spirit and the importance of prestige.

Such a prison facility would be the premier on-campus prison in the U.S. and the envy of all other institutions of higher education in this great land we call America. Sure, some might call it a sacrifice of safety with shady financial motives, but this is the time to make sacrifices for the sake of preserving our University.

So as our state and school prepare to make tough decisions, remember that no matter what drastic measures they may be forced to take, be it the firing of faculty, the elimination of majors, or the conversion of the Chemistry and Physics building into a penitentiary housing the world's deadliest criminals; remember, FIU will undoubtedly emerge from this crisis stronger than ever.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 28

WHAT: Music Saves Lives meeting
WHEN: 3pm
WHERE: GC 343
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Comedy Show
WHEN: 6pm
WHERE: GC Ballrooms
CONTACT: 305-348-3068

WHAT: Taste of the Garden
WHEN: 6:30pm
WHERE: Miami Beach Botanical Garden
CONTACT: 305-673-7256

WHAT: Black Student Union meeting
WHEN: 7pm
WHERE: GC 150
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Can You Rock A Little Softer? Acoustic Open Mike
WHEN: 10pm
WHERE: Churchill's
CONTACT: 305-757-1807

THURSDAY • JANUARY 29

WHAT: The Machine, A Pink Floyd Tribute Band
WHEN: 7pm
WHERE: Revolution Live
CONTACT: 954-727-0950

WHAT: Thursday Nights at Fairchild: Elvis Night
WHEN: 7pm
WHERE: Fairchild Botanical Garden
CONTACT: 305-667-1651

WHAT: Game Room Dominoes Tournament
WHEN: 4:30pm
WHERE: GC Pit
CONTACT: 305-348-2297

WHAT: Service for Peace
WHEN: 4:30pm
WHERE: GC 305
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Caribbean Student Association
WHEN: 5pm
WHERE: GC140
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

Compiled by Mariana Ochoa

diversions

My Cousin Tony by Alex Ferrer

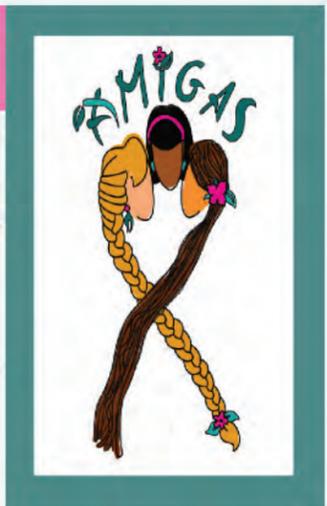


HONEST ABE alleges voter fraud. by michelle diaz



AMIGAS

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Welcome home swimming, diving

CHARLIE GRAU
Senior Staff Writer

It's been two years since the swimming and diving team had a pool they could call their own, but this ended this past weekend.

On Jan. 24, the women's team swam against Florida Gulf Coast University at the renovated Bay Vista Aquatics Center.

"It was very exciting to finally be there. It's really nice, they did a good job," said coach Noemi Lung-Zaharia.

The homecoming didn't present good results as the Golden Panthers lost in every event to the Eagles except the one-meter dive. The Eagles beat the Golden Panthers with a final score of 187-56.

FIU freshman Namiko

Shiabata, who qualified for the NCAA zone diving competition earlier in the season, placed first in the one-meter diving meet with a score of 223.73.

The Golden Panthers will have one final regular season meet to prepare for the Sun Belt Conference Championships when they swim against the University of Miami at the Bay Vista Aquatic Center on Jan. 31 at 11 a.m.

"We've got three weeks until the conference championships and that's our main goal right now: to prepare [for] conference," Lung-Zaharia said.

The team will honor its five seniors, Sara Giovannoni, Lundsay Juman, Chrisna Luus, Katelynn Stevens and Meredith Tisc, at the meet.

Taylor pays for hoops with school

MEN'S BBALL, page 8

somebody all the way up the court."

Being a walk-on, Taylor does not have an athletic scholarship that takes care of his tuition.

The sophomore has worked hard enough in the classroom to compensate for that.

"I have academic scholarships," said Taylor, who sports a 3.0 GPA. "It's not all on me."

Taylor is the beneficiary of the Florida Bright Futures scholarship, among others.

With his financials and schoolwork in check, Taylor thinks the Golden Panthers' future is bright, starting with this season's stretch run.

"I feel more comfortable, ready to contribute. We haven't been winning like we feel we can. We're getting people back. I think we'll be alright."

Taylor believes the recent return to health of Alex Galindo will have a big impact on the team and himself.

"Now I have Mike and Alex. Two deadly shooters on the corner," Taylor said. "I should have more assists and more opportunities to get in the lane and create more."

It is inevitable to Taylor, who won a state championship his senior year at Norland, that the Golden Panthers will be among the elite teams in the SBC soon.

"I expect to get a win. All I want is the win. I came from a winning program in high school," he said. "We're going to win."

That can be perceived as a brash prediction, especially for a walk-on. But when watching an FIU game this season, it is hard to tell that number 23 ever even had to try out for his team.



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

ASSERTIVE: Taylor has scored at a higher rate this season thanks to upstart confidence

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society is seeking motivated students to establish a campus chapter. Contact: Director@PhiSigmaTheta.org

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SPORTS REPLAY

Indoor track takes off, baseball next

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU track and field team began its indoor season Jan. 23 in New York City at the Great Dane Classic.

The women finished in 17th place with 12 points, and the men placed 22nd with seven points.

"There was some good and some bad today, but this meet allowed us to get a good look at where we are," head coach Eric Campbell said, according to *fiusports.com*. "It's now time to come back home and continue to focus and prepare to come back to New York in a couple of weeks."

Freshman Mercedes Ferguson led the way for the women's side with four points for the Golden Panthers. She finished fifth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 57.18 seconds.

Right behind Ferguson was senior Laurmie Loussiant, who scored three points jumping 1.6 meters in the high jump.

Senior Stephanie Amerman finished eighth in the 3000-meter; her efforts earned her one point with a time of 10:22.85 minutes. Junior Karina Edwards finished eighth in the 800-meter dash with a time of 2:19.88 minutes.

Led by senior Andre Reid, who scored four points, eight Golden Panthers scored points for their team. Reid landed in third place in the 55-meter hurdles, finishing in 7.51 seconds.

Less experienced but finishing in eighth place was freshman Sebastian Castillo. He scored one point for the Golden Panthers by running the 3000-meter in 8:44.30.

The FIU men's and women's track & field teams will compete in the New Balance Invitational in two weeks in New York City.

BASEBALL

For the first time, the annual FIU Diamond Dinner held to raise money for the baseball team will also include the softball team. It will be held Feb. 7.

The program will start with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Silent and live auctions will take place to help raise money for the two programs. Hall of Fame coach Ron Polk will be the guest speaker for the event.

"I am very excited to be a part of my second Diamond Dinner event," said baseball coach Turtle Thomas, according to *fiusports.com*. "Last year we had over 440 guests and this year we have set our goals even higher. We are very proud and honored to be sharing the dinner with coach McClendon and the FIU softball team. Our guest speaker, Ron Polk, is one of the greatest college speakers we could have asked for. With the addition of the softball team and Ron Polk, the Diamond Dinner has all the elements to be the first-class event that we know it will be."

Seats for the event are \$100, with tables available for \$1,000. Proceeds will benefit the University baseball and softball programs. In order to reserve a seat, attendees must fill out the registration form and fax it to the Director of Special Events, Sandra Perdomo, at (305) 348-1185.

MEN'S BASKETBALL NOTEBOOK

Fewer turnovers leading to success; stars to return soon

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

Despite what has been a very injury-plagued roster for the men's basketball team this season, over the last six games, the team has been reluctant to cough up the ball.

During the first 16 games of the season, the Golden Panthers averaged a little more than 17 turnovers per game. This led to a 5-11 record throughout that span. The last six games, they averaged just 12 turnovers per game, which resulted in a

3-3 record.

So how have the Golden Panthers protected the ball more efficiently?

Point guard Josue Soto is one of the team's newest members hoping to take on the majority of the ball handling responsibilities. His plan to limit turnovers is very direct.

"We just need to be strong with the ball," Soto said. "I have to be a leader and be vocal with my teammates."

Guard Nick Taylor is one of the team's least turnover prone players, considering his minutes played. Soto

will now be taking over the starting position, but Taylor and Soto's friendship helps them both get on the same page with the offense.

"Nick and I are friends. We know our roles, and we know how to get our teammates moving," Soto said.

Center Freddy Asprilla missed the last two games due to back spasms. The Golden Panthers dropped both games without their big man, even though he is the team's leader in turnovers.

Asprilla expects to return to action against New Orleans on Jan.

29.

"I'm 100 percent sure I will play," he said.

HICKS IS BACK

Once one big man hit the bench, 7-footer Russell Hicks returned to play on the court Jan. 24 against the University of Louisiana - Monroe. In just 17 minutes, Hicks scored 17 points and scored 11 points and bought down five rebounds.

Assistant coach Kevin Fricke says the staff is not sure if both big men will play together because

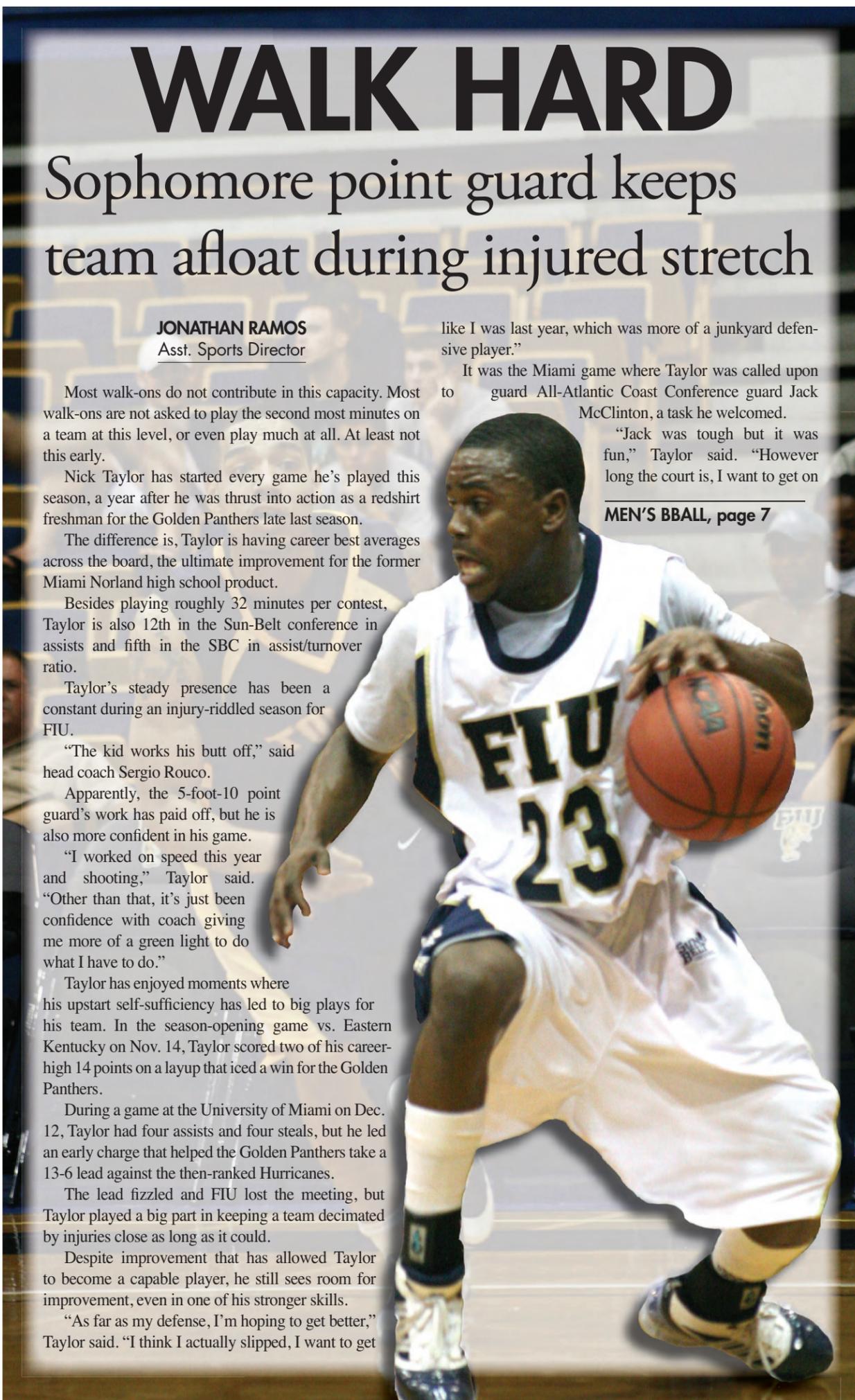
Asprilla and Hicks have not played together in practice recently.

"It all depends on what we see in practice," Fricke said. "We're not going to depend on a crystal ball."

RETURNING SOON?

Forward J.C. Otero was practicing in full force with the team on Jan. 26. During a play in the post, Otero fell and did not return to practice.

"He's been practicing with the team, but I don't have a timetable for his return," Fricke said. "We hope to get him back in a few weeks."



WALK HARD

Sophomore point guard keeps team afloat during injured stretch

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

Most walk-ons do not contribute in this capacity. Most walk-ons are not asked to play the second most minutes on a team at this level, or even play much at all. At least not this early.

Nick Taylor has started every game he's played this season, a year after he was thrust into action as a redshirt freshman for the Golden Panthers late last season.

The difference is, Taylor is having career best averages across the board, the ultimate improvement for the former Miami Norland high school product.

Besides playing roughly 32 minutes per contest, Taylor is also 12th in the Sun-Belt conference in assists and fifth in the SBC in assist/turnover ratio.

Taylor's steady presence has been a constant during an injury-riddled season for FIU.

"The kid works his butt off," said head coach Sergio Rouco.

Apparently, the 5-foot-10 point guard's work has paid off, but he is also more confident in his game.

"I worked on speed this year and shooting," Taylor said. "Other than that, it's just been confidence with coach giving me more of a green light to do what I have to do."

Taylor has enjoyed moments where his upstart self-sufficiency has led to big plays for his team. In the season-opening game vs. Eastern Kentucky on Nov. 14, Taylor scored two of his career-high 14 points on a layup that iced a win for the Golden Panthers.

During a game at the University of Miami on Dec. 12, Taylor had four assists and four steals, but he led an early charge that helped the Golden Panthers take a 13-6 lead against the then-ranked Hurricanes.

The lead fizzled and FIU lost the meeting, but Taylor played a big part in keeping a team decimated by injuries close as long as it could.

Despite improvement that has allowed Taylor to become a capable player, he still sees room for improvement, even in one of his stronger skills.

"As far as my defense, I'm hoping to get better," Taylor said. "I think I actually slipped, I want to get

like I was last year, which was more of a junkyard defensive player."

It was the Miami game where Taylor was called upon to guard All-Atlantic Coast Conference guard Jack McClinton, a task he welcomed.

"Jack was tough but it was fun," Taylor said. "However long the court is, I want to get on

MEN'S BBALL, page 7