

SGA Election Results

AND THE WINNERS ARE...



VICTORY: Katiana "Kathy" Saintable (right picture, center) celebrates with supporters after being announced the new SGC-BBC president. Marbely Hernandez hugs running mate Arthur "AJ" Meyer (top, center) as a crowd cheers on. This is the first time in FIU history that women are elected presidents of both councils.



UP—Presidential ticket uncontested again

C. JOEL MARINO
Editor in Chief

A chance to win free airline tickets wasn't enough to attract voters to the polls for this year's student government elections at University Park, where 1,222 students voted for an unopposed presidential candidate.

Marbely Hernandez and her running mate, Arthur "AJ" Meyer, were officially announced president and vice president, respectively, of next year's Student Government Council at UP during a ceremony held April 12 at the Graham Center Pit.

"I know this was a little different than other years because there was no one else running, but we did our best and I'm glad over everything we accomplished," Hernandez said.

This is the second year in a row in which the presidential ticket was uncontested.

"The race is much more vibrant when we have multiple candidates running. It gets people energized to have multiple choices, though I'm still happy with the candidates that ran this year," said Rosa Jones, vice president of Student Affairs.

Last year, 1,539 students voted current SGC-UP President Alfonso "Alfie" Leon and his running mate, Providence Okoye, into office.

The turnout figures marked a significant decrease from 2005 when 3,158 students showed up to the polls to decide between two different presidential candidates.

"Getting students involved is definitely a problem," Meyer said. "We've done all we can, but we've got to try harder."

This year, a chance to win a free vacation courtesy of American Airlines was given as an incentive to vote.

The winner—freshman Fernanda Garcia—was announced right before the winning candidates.

As happened last year, the biggest race was for the three

SGA ELECTION WINNERS

BBC

President

Katiana "Kathy" Saintable (265 votes/77.26%)

Vice President

Cassandra Andrade (327 votes/100%)

Graduate rep.

Rene Portillo (6 votes/100%)

Pines Center rep.

Andrew Doblinger (13 votes/100%)

Hospitality and Tourism Management rep.

Leslie Valentin (13 votes/100%)

UP

President/Vice President

Marbely Hernandez (1222 votes/100%)

Arthur "A.J." Meyer (1222 votes/100%)

Arts and Sciences rep.

Johnny Betancourt (44 votes/41.9%)

Business rep.

Rafael Gabeiras (58 votes/100%)

Education rep.

Vanessa Mejia (14 votes/100%)

Engineering and Computing rep.

Camilo Silva (70 votes/56%)

Graduate Student rep.

Recep Kursat Palamutoglu (43 votes/100%)

Honors College rep.

Esther Garcia (133 votes/100%)

Housing rep.

Jose Placeres (38 votes/100%)

Lower division representatives:

Leilanie Fagundo (456 votes/41.99%)

Ayman Al-Abdullah (360 votes/33.15%)

Representative-at-large:

Paige LaPointe (640 votes/29.01%)

Patricia Concepcion (514 votes/23.30%)

Jennifer Ruiz (512 votes/23.21%)

Social Work, Justice and Public Affairs rep.

Gretel Hebbert (36 votes/100%)

BBC—Saintable wins by large margin

JESSICA SOLIS
Staff Writer

Several familiar faces were elected April 12 to return to the Student Government Council along with a new batch of members that were voted on by the Biscayne Bay Campus student body.

Less than 400 students voted in this year's BBC presidential elections.

Katiana "Kathy" Saintable was elected as the new SGC-BBC President with more than 70 percent of the vote. Her opponent, Gabriel Labrador Jr., took 22 percent of the vote. Saintable and Labrador are active student leaders within SGC, both serving as representatives-at-large with the previous council.

Saintable's win was announced in Panther Square at the Wolfe University Center at noon, with several students in attendance eager to hear the results.

Craig Cunningham, director of Campus Life at BBC, and Cathy Akens, assistant vice president for Student Affairs, revealed the winners.

As president, Saintable is anticipating a larger leadership role as well as helping other members achieve their objectives.

"I'm definitely looking forward to being the prime motivator of the entire council, so that in turn we can go out and motivate the rest of the student body," she said. "I feel that my enthusiasm will be emitted and make everybody feel energetic and get the job done."

Saintable already has plans for the new council. Her first priority is increasing student involvement without sacrificing other activities.

"A lot of times this year we didn't get the response that we wanted from the students," Saintable said. "We did a lot

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • APRIL 16

SPC Presents the Town: 12p.m., Betty Chapman Plaza
SPC Jack's Mannequin Concert: 7 p.m., Pharmed Arena
GSA Awards Banquet: 7 p.m., GC 243
ISC International Movie Day: 12 p.m., WUC 100

TUESDAY • APRIL 17

SPC General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 140

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 18

SGA General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC Pit
Fantasy Theatre Factory: Never Everglades: 10 a.m., WUC 100

THURSDAY • APRIL 19

On Point Poetry Night: 7:30 p.m., WUC 155

FRIDAY • APRIL 20

SPC Film Children of Men: 7 p.m. & 10 p.m., GC 14

-Compiled by Reuben Pereira

SGC-UP Notes

April 11
 Call to order: 3:45 p.m., Adjournment: 4:28 p.m.

President's Report (Alfonso "Alfie" Leon):

- April 6, FSA had a meeting among student body presidents to discuss the future of FSA and how administration wants to see it change. Do we want one lobbyist or a lobbyist firm to represent us? Do we feel FSA serves all institutions equally? A lot of times, we feel FSA only represents "the big two: UF, USF." This is a decision we will tackle with the new student body-elect president, Marbely.
- April 20 will be the Blue and Gold game. FIU offense vs. defense. Tailgating starts at 5 p.m. and the games starts at 7 p.m.

Speaker of the House's Report (Rocio Perez):

- Those who are here today have been here consistently throughout the year. Those of you who are not here on a consistent basis: there will be consequences.

Academic Affairs (Melissa Sabatier):

- Cram Jam coming up April 23/24.

Elections Board (Judene Tulloch):

- Elections board could not be found for the past two weeks and my intern has been there for me.

Panther Rage (Ryun Alli):

- Brad Low will be the new President.

Old Business (aye-nay-abstain):

- March 14, 2007 minutes passes.

New Business (aye-nay-abstain):

- Appropriation A07-01 for \$1,000 for the FIU Summer Theatre Festival passed.

Absences:

- Charlene Collazo (Arts & Sciences), AJ Meyer (At-Large), Merbely Hernandez (At-Large), Mikana Maeda (Architecture), Maria Garcia (Law), Tomas Martinelli (Lower Division)

Announcements:

- Last council meeting of the year is next week.

- Compiled by Angelina Troff

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated April 12, 2007, the article "Tekes win fraternity intramural soccer championship" misspelled Jason Wyatt's name. That same story should have said the Tekes played Sammy last year, not FIJI.

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

Group publishes students' work

CAMILA MARTIN
 Contributing Writer

According to FIU English professor Robert Ratner, writing is more than just a fun activity – it's a way for people to learn.

"We love writing and want students to love writing because it makes you smarter. It is how we learn and communicate with one another," Ratner said.

Students WRITE is an on-campus organization that strives to bring this message to FIU students.

During the past few years, the organization has focused on specific projects to encourage FIU students to write and offer the opportunity to have their work published.

"The Students WRITE organiza-

tion is comprised of FIU students who understand how powerful writing is and want to transmit that message to the whole FIU community," Ratner, who is the organization's director said.

Each Spring semester, the organization offers a writing contest that lets students express what they believe in and who they are through the topics such as "This I Believe" and "I am FIU." The contest is open to undergraduate and graduate FIU students and the best essays are published by the Students WRITE press and on the Students WRITE website.

The organization also wants to promote writing through events on campus and by developing additional books and publications.

"In the organization you have the

opportunity to learn about what other FIU students have to say and develop your own writing ideas and styles," said sophomore Maria C. Cedeño, who has been the president of the organization for one year. "The students who write for the contest have the opportunity to get their work published while in school and we think that is a very good incentive to get people to participate in our writing contest."

Ratner feels the students involved in running WRITE give their all.

"The members of Students WRITE are hardworking, sincere, intelligent and passionate. They want to create an expanding community of writers on our campuses. While the University is

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Constitution changes approved

UP ELECTIONS, page 1

representative-at-large slots. Patricia Concepcion, Paige LaPointe and Jennifer Ruiz beat out David Dial and Jean Roseme for these positions. Over 2,200 votes were cast in this race.

"I did what I could and I don't regret running," Roseme said. "Hopefully I'll be able to stay around SGA and help out with whatever I can."

Senior Kemar Bennett knows Roseme and said he only voted to help his friend out.

"I didn't know any of the other candidates, and it just seems like you vote for whoever you know," he said.

Bennett mentioned that if Roseme hadn't run, he wouldn't have voted at all.

"I probably would've wanted to vote if there were more people on the ballot,"

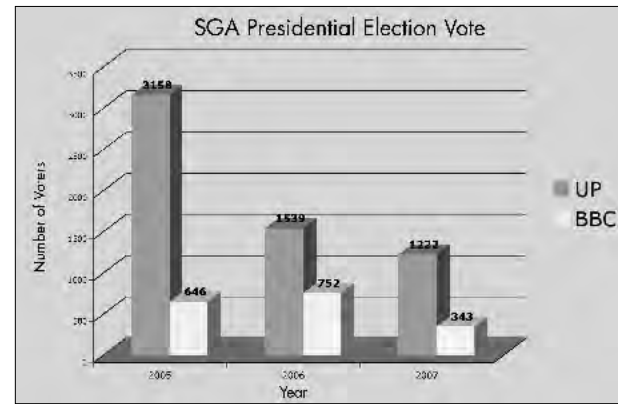
Bennett said. "I remember when [2005-2006 SGC-UP President Alex] Prado won. That was an election. Nothing like that happened this year."

The lack of presidential candidates was also one of the reasons why senior Geoffrey Merconchini abstained from voting.

"It just seems like everyone has an arrangement not to run when a particular person is up for president," he said. "But where's the sport in having one person running?"

Freshman Vickie Villa decided to skip her first student government elections because she felt the candidates didn't do enough to let students know about their campaigns.

"People kept coming up to me in GC, but they weren't telling me about the issues, just why the person running



CHRISTOPHER NECUZE/THE BEACON

was the best. It seemed more like a personality contest than an election," Villa said.

This is the type of apathy that SGC-UP should work to address, Hernandez said.

The new council president said that she has begun to distribute surveys around colleges and schools to get feedback from students to see what SGA can do to help them.

"There are things that need to be changed in FIU

and I want to know first-hand what they are," Hernandez said.

The surveys will be collected in June.

An initiative to revise the Student Government's constitution also passed by a landslide. More than 860 out of 1,034 student voted for a blanket change that would include:

- VP only votes in case of a tie rather than every vote
- If the BBC president becomes ineligible for office before the start of the term, the newly elected VP will become president rather than the presidential candidate who received the second most amount of votes
- Provisions of the constitution may now for a semester be waved in the case of "unforeseen circumstances" rather than none being allowed
- Speaker of the house and chief of cabinet receive up to \$3,200
- Amendments to the constitution now require final ratification by the vice president of student affairs
- Ratification of the entire constitution must be approved by the Board of Trustees rather than the University president

Students voted on these propositions through a blanket vote instead of article by article.

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Program specializes in finding money launderers

KHADIJA HARRIS
Contributing Writer

The lives of drug dealers and terrorists just got a little more difficult.

FIU's College of Business Administration and Florida International Banking Association are collaborating on a certificate program for banking students that will enable them to specialize in anti-money laundering techniques.

The Senior Compliance Officer Program includes a pair of workshops usually offered through FIBA alone, but will be offered for the first time online through FIU.

Money laundering is the act of putting money gained through criminal means back into a bank or some other sort of financial institution. Because drug dealers or other

such criminals deal heavily in large amounts of cash, they must find a way to turn their illegal gains into legal-seeming income, thereby 'cleaning' it.

John Zdanowicz, director of the Jerome Bain Real Estate Institute and author of several books on money laundering in international trade, offered an example of a common technique.

"Imagine if a drug dealer had \$1 million that he wanted to send to his partner in Guatemala. He could buy 200 Rolex watches worth \$5,000 each. Then he would ship them to his partner for [\$5] a watch. The partner in Guatemala is now sitting on \$1 million worth of Rolexes, which he can now sell back into the market."

Although illegal drugs have always been associated with this

practice, the growing concern of recent years is on money laundering as it relates to terrorist financing. The U.S. government is on the lookout for money moving between the United States and Middle Eastern countries.

"[Ninety] percent of all banking is done electronically. That means compliance officers need more control over transfers. They must keep the laws current to match growing technology," said Krishnan Dandapani, professor of finance at CBA.

While the courses and the instructor will be offered through FIBA, the location will be at CBA's Downtown campus.

FIU's online resources and technology provide FIBA with the reach it needs to project itself and provide the course to interested

parties not only in Florida, but all around the Western Hemisphere.

Although it isn't for any college credit, the certificate is important to both banking employees and future hopefuls. Graduate students who are employed by banks, those who are managers, and those seeking employment will find that the knowledge may give them a new edge on the competition.

"There is a large demand for compliance officers," said William Welch, chair of the department of finance.

Any bank that does business with the United States must comply with their anti-money laundering laws and rules, and be able to detect suspicious activity in accounts. FIBA will be offering online workshops and testing for those who wish to take it and aren't able

to be there in person. The course will also be offered to people in the Caribbean and Latin America, but is available to just about anyone.

Emmanuel Roussakis, chairman of finance and real estate and former endowed chair at FIBA, was instrumental in bringing this program to fruition.

"I would like to see other customized courses done this way. This is only the beginning," he said.

The course will begin May 9. It will be two days long, made up of two four-hour workshops starting at 9 a.m. The cost will be \$395 for FIBA members and \$695 for non-members. Students interested in the course can register online at www.fiba.net or can contact FIBA at 305-579-0086 or fiba@fiba.net.

Group encourages writers

WRITE, page 2

many things to many people, it will always be where ideas are exchanged," Ratner said.

This year's topics were designed to encourage a wide range of students to express their beliefs.

"We want to know what do you believe in and who you are," said freshman David Ortega, the club's treasurer.

The topic, This I believe, is modeled after a highly successful National Public Radio project conceived by Edward R. Murrow some 50 years ago.

The organization wants students to write about their beliefs and share their works with other students. One of this year's new topics, "I am a veteran," encourages FIU veteran stu-

dents to share their experiences and express what it feels like to be in the military.

The last topic, "I am an athlete," is meant to show what it feels like to participate in a sport at FIU.

"The FIU community consists of a wide variety of students with different nationalities, cultures and life experiences and we want to know about them," Ortega said.

Students can also submit works they have written for other courses at FIU, and if their essay is a winner, their professors will be recognized as well.

"By participating in the contest you have nothing to lose and much to gain. I think this contest is a great opportunity [for] students at FIU have to take advantage from," Ortega said.

RALLY CAP



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

TENSE: Walker Whitley (right center) turns his cap inside out to create a "rally cap" at the FIU-UM home baseball game April 11 to gain good luck. **See story, PAGE 12.**

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New leaders seek to increase student involvement

BBC ELECTIONS, page 1

we wanted from the students," Saintable said. "We did a lot of things with student government this year, and then near the end, with everything piling up on us as students also, it started to die down, so we must keep that energy steady."



SAINTABLE

familiar with Saintable's work and has confidence that she will succeed in her new role.

"I have certainly had the opportunity to see Katiana in action as a leader this year, and I know her enthusiasm and dedication will help her excel as president," Akens said.



ANDRADE

265, said his loss had little to do with the candidate's stance on issues and that recognition played a part in electing the winner.

"If it had been issues, it prob-



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

MOVING ON: Camilo Silva, current SGC-BBC president, celebrates being elected to his new position within SGC-UP as Engineering and Computing representative. The SGA election winners were announced April 12.

ably would have been a closer race," he said. "It really is more of a popularity contest than issue voting, which is a pity, but it's something to be expected."

Labrador said that he would still like to be involved with SGC and hopes to continue with a different position under Saintable's leadership.

"I know that she's graciously allowing me to stay on the council, so I will still have that," he said.

Other familiar faces elected for a new term include Rene Portillo - BBC graduate student representative - and Andrew Doblinger, FIU Broward Pines Center representative. Both ran unopposed.

New SGC-BBC Vice President Cassandra Andrade ran unopposed, but was still seen campaigning on campus on the days leading up to the elections.

A total of 327 votes went to Andrade, who said she still campaigned because she had a respon-

sibility to the student body.

"You still have to work hard because you don't represent yourself, you represent the students," Andrade said. "I look forward to continuing all the good things that SGC has done in previous years, and capitalizing on it, and improving that for the coming years."

Along with Andrade, other student members were newly elected to the council.

They include Leslie Valentin as the School of Hospitality and

Tourism Management representative, Johnny Betancourt as the Arts and Sciences representative and Esther Garcia as the Honors College representative.

The new council will begin work at the end of the Spring semester, but Saintable and Andrade will not start their new roles without some help.

Camilo Silva, outgoing SGC-BBC president, said he will offer assistance to Saintable during her first days as president.

"I will give her in-depth training and Brent Maximin [SGC-BBC outgoing vice president] will give in-depth training to Cassandra, so that they could continue our legacy," Silva said.

Silva was also elected as Engineering and Computing representative for SGC-UP in a close race.

Although she has outlined several plans for BBC, Saintable said she is aware of the help needed to implement those plans.

Saintable said she also appreciates the help of her fellow council members and the student body as well.

"I'm just going to be as wise as possible and know that because I'm president, the title holds a lot of burden," Saintable said. "It's not just teamwork as far as people on the council, but it's teamwork as far as all of us here at BBC."

Students who aren't in the council have to keep council members accountable, because we're students, too."

Freshmen find school spirit at camp

PEGGY EXUMÉ

Contributing Writer

FIU will be creating a tradition as Alfonso "Alfie" Leon, University Park's Student Government Council president predicted last year. This year's Panther Camp will take place Aug. 2007.

In Aug. 2006, the first Panther Camp took place with 25 incoming freshmen in attendance.

The aim of Panther Camp is to develop leadership skills and school spirit, according to Camilo Silva, president of SGC at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

Panther Camp is a three-day, overnight experience to be held at a campsite away from FIU.

"One of our goals is to ensure the students have a foundation to build upon," said Sally Gates, graduate assistant in the Office of Orientation. "Entering a school with 38,000 students can [make it] hard to adjust and leave a student feeling lost or excluded. Through Panther Camp, we help the incoming freshmen feel welcome and make the campus feel smaller."

The majority of the students that attended the first Panther Camp are now in leadership positions that include peer advisors, Student Government Association officers

and Greek students.

Currently, there are 50 incoming freshmen enrolled in Panther Camp 2007. These students are first introduced to the camp during Freshmen Orientation, which will begin June 2007.

The camp is open to all incoming freshmen, prospective students and transfer students who are starting at FIU next fall.

Although Panther Camp informs freshmen about life at FIU, it does not replace the first-year experience class, which is a one-credit course to help freshmen transition from high school to university life.

"The freshmen experience course has a lot to offer to incoming FIU students. Panther Camp is different in a way where not only do we offer a support structure but we also focus on networking and [helping] build a community," Gates said.

This year's retreat will be at a campsite located in Lake Worth, Fla., from Aug. 23 to Aug. 25. According to Gates, SGA sponsors most of the costs for the camp, which include transportation, meals, lodging cabins and activities. Students that are attending will pay \$50

Several FIU organizations joined together to continue the tra-

dition of the retreat. These groups included the Student Alumni Association, the Center for Leadership and Service, the departments of Campus Life, Housing and Residential Life and the Office of Orientation and Commuter Services.

"FIU administrators are going above and beyond and it shows how much they care for freshmen students to have an easy transition to FIU so that students can feel like they are in a community, not just going to class," Gates said.

Sophomore Rachel Olmedo, recruitment committee member, is very excited about this year's Panther Camp.

"This year is about starting a tradition," Olmedo said. "Although we just started planning the actual agenda for the camp, the Panther Camp facilitators [counselors] are all really creative and it's going to be a lot of fun."

Some of the activities planned extend from learning FIU facts and history to learning the University's cheer and alma mater.

The camp's tradition also focuses on drop out rates. Sean Kramer, Student Alumni Association advisor, discusses reasons for drop outs.

"At times Panther involvement determines whether you want to

SGC-BBC Notes

April 11, 2007

Call to Order: 4:30p.m.

Adjournment: 5:45p.m.

Late start due to fire alarm going off in Wolfe University Center

President's Report (Camilo Silva)

- Last official meeting of the semester will be next week at 4:30 p.m. It will be an SGA Celebration, it will also include a presentation displaying the year's work.

Comptroller's Report (Zachary Trautenberg)

- Budget Approval (ay-nay-abstain): Pay Cuts and Emoluments. Trautenberg: \$50,000 wasn't enough to pay everybody enough and break even. Unanimously passed.

Vice Presidents Report (Brent Maximin)

- Regarding elections, everyone should be supporting and promoting elections, not just those running for a position. Maximin: "I'm disappointed... the turnout decreased."
- Regarding Spring Fling, turnout was weak, despite an approved SGA appropriation that was to give SPC additional money for the event.

-Compiled by Jessica Solis

(Visit www.beaconnewspaper.com for further notes)

stay at FIU versus dropping out or leaving to another school," Kramer said.

Kramer also said Panther Camp exposes freshmen to opportunities and activities at FIU.

"Studies show that most involved

students don't leave," Kramer said. "By introducing freshmen students to different FIU clubs, activities and opportunities that are available, Panther Camp is encouraging freshmen students to be involved and enjoy their college career."

OPINION

C. Joel Marino Editor in Chief • Christopher Necuze Production Manager • Christopher Cabral Opinion Editor

SCANDAL MISHANDLED

Firing of eight U.S. attorneys sparks politically-motivated outrage at Republicans

CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Production Manager

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has problems. The nation's chief law enforcement official is at the epicenter of a growing controversy over the firing of eight U.S. attorneys in late 2006 and early 2007, and is being asked to resign by everyone who comes within two feet of him.

This affair went to the headlines about a month ago. Gonzales, the nation's first Hispanic attorney general, had been accused of dismissing eight U.S. attorneys because they were not legally pursuing enough Democrats, but rather Republicans.

What Gonzales has referred to as "an overblown personnel matter" has gained the status of a full-fledged scandal, with its own coined name and everything.

"Attorneygate," as bloggers put it, has come to have a life of its own — a life committed to serving the attorney general's head on a silver platter.

What the hell is the big deal? U.S. attorneys, as Gonzales explained in an editorial published in *USA Today*, "serve at the pleasure of the president." That means that if ole G.W. wakes up one morning and feels like getting rid of two, three or eight U.S.



COURTESY AP WIRE

DOOMED?: Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has come under fire for what some deem to be the politically motivated firings of eight U.S. attorneys.

attorneys, he can do so — simply because he's the boss. Harsh, right?

Sure it's harsh, but it is also the reality of anyone who has ever held a job. Despite how hard you work, your superior can still pull you into his office one jolly morning and send you packing for no reason other than because he said so. If keeping you around is not in the best interest of the organization, then you have to go.

In the days and weeks following the publishing of that editorial in *USA Today*, Gonzales has sadly not done much to help his cause. He should have stuck to his guns from the beginning.

Instead of clearly explaining himself, Gonzales, and the Bush administration for that matter, have changed stories of why by whom and when the firings were authorized, adding fuel to an already out of control firestorm. The govern-

ment may be able to prosecute high profile terrorists, but it can't seem to argue itself out of a wet paper bag. It is unfortunate.

People seem to conveniently forget that few things in Washington are ever firsts. While they attack Gonzales, Democrats fail to remember that President Clinton asked for the resignation of all U.S. attorneys appointed by the administration of Bush Sr. at the beginning of his term. Was this

move not politically motivated?

Politically motivated or not, this move makes logical sense. President Bush, like Clinton and countless others before him, reserves the authority to make decisions about his staff. If a president feels that a certain person is detrimental to the goals of his administration, then that person should be fired—end of debate.

It seems that for Gonzales, the only way out of this mess may be caving to the demands of his critics and bowing out. It may not be what he should do, but it is what he needs to do. To be engulfed in an endless series of hearings and meetings—not to mention having to tend to a relentless barrage of questions from the media—is a terrible waste of time and resources which could be spent doing productive things like actually trying cases.

Alberto Gonzales is the victim of a congress thirsty for blood and eager to embarrass an embattled administration in any and every way possible. By doing so, they are taking attention away from matters that deserve the type of coverage that this non-issue has been receiving. Due to the inability of this administration to defend itself, Democrats may have succeeded in adding yet another scar to the Bush name.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Prejudice evident in "accent" article

Although English is the prominent language in the United States, I felt that the opinion article written by Ben F. Badger Jr. was borderline offensive and interlaced with prejudice. Everyone encounters problems understanding people with heavy accents. It's a common issue in Miami, but it's pure discrimination to request this University to deny certain professors jobs because of an accent. It's clearly stated that an employer cannot prevent a person from obtaining employment based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation or language.

Miami is a city within the United States, but it's like no other place in the country. The reason professors apply to work in this school is because of its location; it's the crossroad of different cultures, languages and ethnicities. It is called Florida International University for a reason. If it our school were named Florida Confederate University, I wouldn't disagree with Mr. Badger.

Reading his article brought back memories of when I read *Mein Kampf* a few years back. It was well structured, and comments were nicely stated, but with a strong undercurrent of prejudice. Badger's comments like "the U.S. makes too many concessions for those who speak a different language than English," and the rant on bilingual education that followed, made it difficult to see anything but thinly veiled fascism.

A more civilized solution to the problem would be to provide speech courses to help improve their articulation and diction, as opposed to firing them or denying their employment. When immigrants first came to this country, the Americans of the time believed them to be stupid because of their inability to speak English "properly." If we are going to argue what constitutes "proper English," then all Americans are speaking it incorrectly. We should speak like the British.

Renier J. Murillo
Senior
Acting/Theatre

Negative female role models unfairly emphasized

I am wholeheartedly disappointed with Jose Martinez' assessment—and ignorance of—the availability of female role models in the United States. It is unfortunate that many have been unable to see beyond the tabloids by which misperceptions are erroneously based. The article is a prime example of the reason some individuals receive a disproportionate amount of attention in modern entertainment news: because we, the consumers, keep paying attention to them.

According to 2006 estimates, there are 5,122,255 more women in the United States than there are men, so it is not statistically unreasonable that they would suffer from substance abuse as much as men do. I find it insulting that [Martinez] used isolated statistics without any comparative reference to the male population.

Instead of attacking parents and society in general, we must stress the importance of role models in children's lives or applaud exemplary role models

within the community. We must not focus on negative themes without proposing any tangible solutions.

It is incomprehensible to equate the misguided choices and actions of four entertainment figures to the influence on the female youth of America without even mentioning the countless positive female figures in our society. To imply that those four individuals have more influence on the outcome of society than females in all other positions combined is intellectually lazy and misguided.

Nicole, drinking long before Paris, was suffering from body image issues way before Lindsay, and was making poor choices

before Britney. However, these are a few women who just so happen to stand out because of their bad decisions. Men have issues as well. Our society may have its fair share of problems and unfortunate trends, but it's too bad that writers choose to pay more attention to that aspect rather than to all the positive things that are happening to improve society, today and in the future.

Robert Portley
Junior
Political Science, Molecular and Cellular Biology, Psychology Major

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.

Author Kurt Vonnegut dies and so it goes



The Meaning of Life
a column looking for the answers
C. Joel Marino

The Fourteenth Book is entitled, “What Can a Thoughtful Man Hope for Mankind on Earth, Given the Experience of the Past Million Years?” It doesn’t take long to read The Fourteenth Book. It consists of one word and a period. This is it: “Nothing.” – Kurt Vonnegut, *Cat’s Cradle*

I’m amused by how Kurt Vonnegut liked to advertise his peculiar form of nihilism. The unkempt curmudgeon always made sure to remind his readers that even such sages as Albert Einstein and Mark Twain had given up on humanity by the time their end had come.

“Mark Twain finally stopped laughing at his own agony and that of those around him. He denounced life on this planet as a crock. He died,” Vonnegut rambled in *Fates Worse Than Death: An Autobiographical Collage*.

Perhaps for humorous effect, the writer’s famous pessimism would once in a while come out a little more succinctly.

“How embarrassing to be human,” he wrote in *Hocus Pocus*.

As of last week, Kurt Vonnegut no longer needs to be embarrassed to be human. He died. I’ve been reading all the articles about him since I heard the news (which, incidentally, happened a few hours after I asked a friend during conversation, “Kurt Vonnegut; is he dead yet?”).

I didn’t know the man. I’m sure his botched suicide in the ‘80s, failed first marriage and battle with depression had a lot to do with what shaped him as a writer, but I only found out about these things by reading his obituaries. I do know that I enjoyed his writings very much. Sure, he wasn’t my favorite writer or even one that I continually read. I didn’t even finish what’s considered his masterpiece, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, on my first try – it took two years.

But there was one thing about Vonnegut that kept him on the sidelines of my life: the man didn’t believe in vagaries.

Vonnegut’s writings kept me grounded during a phase when I thought the world needed to be changed and I wanted to be the one to change it.

“I’ll get the wrench and fix it,” I once dramatically told my father.

As Vonnegut sees it, changing the world is impossible, not just because this mission is a vague one, but because we are not capable of accomplishing such a mission.

“All persons, living and dead, are purely coincidental,” he wrote in *Timequake*.

We really don’t matter; we’re nothing more than dandruff on the world’s back: annoying and easily brushed away.

And yet, as much as Vonnegut seemed to enjoy playing the nihilist, it was hard for him to play the cynic.

“God damn it, you’ve got to be kind!” he exclaims in *God Bless You, Mr. Rose-*

SEASON PASS:

SUMMER CONCERTS PROMISE VARIETY, PRICED BOTTLED WATER

ALICIA BUSTAMANTE
Life! Editor

This summer, the contents of your shorts must include three things: keys to a convertible, sunglasses, and most importantly, a ticket to one of the many concerts that will rock the hottest months of the year.

With focuses on multi-day festivals and old-school idealistic headliners – including the recently reunited groups Rage Against the Machine, The Police and The Smashing Pumpkins – concert programmers seem to want to bring back the spirit of the ‘60s, even if \$8 bottles of water express otherwise.

BONNAROO
MANCHESTER, TENNESSEE
JUNE 14-17
\$214.50 FOR A 4-DAY PASS

The summer festival that embodies the era of tie-dye and psychotrophics has been around for five years and this year will boast ‘80s-new-wave-reggae-pop-rockers The Police (who are also performing at Dolphin Stadium July 10) and dark modern rockers Tool (also coming to South Florida June 6 at the Bank Atlantic Center).

The additions of comedians to the bill, including Lewis Black, will diversify the event’s lineup.

Crowds exceed 80,000 people due to the on-site camping facilities and notoriously long sets – so expect every smelly hippy in the quarter-mile to have time to gather around the main stage. However, the community feeling of this festival ensures all-night partying and encounters with the great outdoors that are hard to pass up.

For tickets and complete band list, see bonnaroo.com

COACHELLA
INDIO, CALIFORNIA
APRIL 27 -29
SINGLE-DAY PASS \$85 LIMITED, 3-DAY PASSES
CURRENTLY \$400 ON EBAY

This fest boasts the most consistent line-up, offering the most bang for your buck, music wise. Indie heroes and mainstream heavy-hitters will share the stage in the concert’s ninth year: for the Icelandic enthusiast, Bjork will close the first day; California boys The Red Hot Chili Peppers will close the second night in a punk-funk frenzy; and the politically charged Rage Against the Machine will reunite to close the show in the nick of time.

Honestly, the world couldn’t handle another Audioslave ballad, anyway.

For tickets and complete band list, see coachella.com

LOLLAPALOOZA
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
AUG. 3 – 5
TICKETS START AT \$220

This festival, originally a touring concert started by Perry Farrell of Jane’s Addiction, gets bonus points for its location

– a major touristy city.

Other than that, grunge icons Pearl Jam will be making an appearance seldom seen at large venues. Watching Iggy Pop wiggle his wiry, aging body across the stage will also be a plus.

OZZFEST
SOUND ADVICE AMPHITHEATRE
AUG. 30
TICKETS FREE OF CHARGE, TWO PER PERSON

Any fan of “The Osbournes” knows of the steady mental decline of the lovable Ozzy. Now it seems the worst has finally happened – Ozzy has stopped charging. For the first year in the concert’s tenure, tickets will be free of charge and available by a download through sponsor websites. Metal giants Lamb of God and Lordi will perform along with surprise performers and of course, the Ozzman himself.

Because of the free show, hard rockers will be able to purchase twice as much Jager before entering – so wear your best steel-toed boots and enjoy the last mosh of the summer

For tickets and complete band list, see ozzfest.com

WARPED TOUR
BICENTENNIAL PARK
JULY 21
\$31 PER TICKET

Any punk-pop suburbanite knows Vans’ Warped Tour’s influence to the Green Day generation. In its 13th year, the tour has kept its promise to keep prices relatively low while promoting extreme sports. This year, Bad Religion, Flogging Molly and Coheed and Cambria will blast the non-existent roof off of Bicentennial Park.

Don’t even bother to take a car, as parking will be nearly impossible. The metrorail is a commonly dismissed but convenient alternative.

For tickets and complete band list, see warpedtour.com

OTHER UPCOMING SHOWS

PITCHFORK MUSIC FESTIVAL
Sonic Youth, Cat Power, De La Soul
Chicago, Illinois
July 13-15

V FESTIVAL
The Police, The Smashing Pumpkins, The Beastie Boys
Baltimore, Maryland
Aug. 4-5



Spirit organization encourages University pride

KASSANDRA POOL
Contributing Writer

Screaming, cheering and stomping on the floor may be strange behavior for some clubs, but for Panther Rage, a group that aims to promote school spirit, this display of pride is common.

For members, such as Ana Lanza, Panther Rage secretary, involvement is motivated by the organization's goal of increasing school spirit among the University community.

"I really liked that they focused on school spirit because FIU is a really young University and hardly anyone knows [about it]," Lanza said.

Members devote their time to

attract students to come to home games with food and giveaways including shirts, hats and small sports balls, depending on the season.

When Panther Rage first formed in 1997, it had about five active members. The group made its first appearance during a soccer game while wearing homemade shirts and hats. It wasn't until 1998 when the Student Government Association funded them with \$6,508.

A decade later, Panther Rage is now composed of seven committees and 50 active members. Each committee is responsible for a different task to create awareness of campus athletics among FIU students.

This school year, SGA funded them with approximately \$63,000 to bring events to the students such as Moonlight Madness, the opening ceremony for the basketball season held during homecoming week in November and Southern Challenge and Southern Cook-off, two events held together this year on Feb. 24. Southern Challenge brought teams of four from different student organizations to compete in events including speed throw, bull riding, tug-o-war and sumo wrestling.

One concern for the group is increasing home game attendance, which is comparably low, according to Lanza.

"Here in Miami, they are more [spirited] for [the University of

“Being a fan here at FIU [means] you're capable of knowing the players. You're cheering for a friend...”

– Mike Halpert

Miami]. [But] when I went to [a Panther Rage] meeting, everyone was all hyped out about it. I was really happy to be here at FIU and what better way to show it then joining a spirit club?" Lanza said.

Mike Halpert, the club's vice president of administration, believes school pride is on its way up even though it's tough to

stand up against generations of UM fans.

"Cheering at games is fun. Being a fan here at FIU [means] you're capable of knowing the players. You're cheering for a friend, cheering for someone you know," Halpert said.

Panther Rage meetings are held every Monday at 4 p.m. in the Graham Center, room 140.

HEALING HANDS



CHRIS CUTRO /THE BEACON

CLICK THIS LINK: Members of Alpha Omicron Pi women's fraternity lay "spirit links" on the FIU Baseball field on Wed. April 11. The links were sold as part of "Strike Out Arthritis" a fundraiser for arthritis research.

Nihilistic views aid in facing the inevitable

MEANING OF LIFE, page 6

water.

Even earlier, in his first novel *The Sirens of Titan*, he is not afraid to say that the "purpose of human life, no matter who is controlling it, is to love whoever is around to be loved."

The world is indifferent; a series of causes and effects that usually lead to continual pain. But people, who are as soft and frail when they die as when they are born, cannot be this way. Vonnegut refused to believe this.

We must be kind to others as much as we can. Instead of trying to stop the universal moans of pain, why not just turn around and put a blanket on the person freezing next to you? That is Vonnegut's meaning of life.

At the end of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, its protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, is about to teach the world a lesson he learned while being held captive by an alien race. He is shot and killed before he can do this.

The reader doesn't need to worry, though, because the lesson has been repeated as a mantra throughout the book: "so it goes."

Death and pain exist, but so it goes.

This phrase, then, encapsulates all I learned from the mopy-haired nihilist: we can't change anything, but that shouldn't stop us from facing this fact and living our lives as best we can.

Celebrity trials mean tough times for Boy and Dogg

GREG RISLING
AP Wire

LOS ANGELES (AP) – Their penance can range from scrubbing toilets to helping cheer up cancer patients at a hospital.

Most times, when celebrities behave badly and are held accountable in a courtroom, they are ordered by a judge to perform community service. On Wednesday, Snoop Dogg became the latest star who will have to sit down with a probation officer to decide how he will repay his debt.

The 35-year-old rapper, born Cordozar Calvin Broadus Jr., pleaded no contest to felony gun and drug charges. He was sentenced to five years' probation and 800 hours of community service.

Superior Court Judge Terry Smerling said Snoop Dogg could spend 400 of those hours working with the youth football league he started several years ago. The

remainder of his time will be spent working with nonprofit organizations approved by the county's Probation Department, according to court documents.

He should consider himself lucky. Not all celebrities get choice gigs; some are even treated like average citizens.

Naomi Campbell swept floors, mopped hallways and scrubbed toilets for five days at a New York sanitation facility last month as part of her court-ordered work for assaulting her maid.

Boy George also worked for five days at the same sanitation plant in August after pleading guilty to falsely reporting a burglary at his Manhattan apartment. Responding police officers found cocaine instead.

Community-service assignments vary by jurisdiction and have been employed in U.S. courts for decades. In Manhattan, all offenders receive manual labor.

In Los Angeles, defendants with minor

offenses usually are given trash duty with the state Department of Transportation. Those with more serious offenses and who are processed by the Probation Department are usually referred to a volunteer center where they are told what kind of work they will do.

While Snoop Dogg's service will likely be limited to nonprofit organizations, his attorney said it's possible the rapper could pick up trash on the side of a freeway as part of his punishment.

"That would be a possibility, but hopefully not a probability," attorney Donald Etra said.

Other celebrities have been fortunate not to get their hands dirty. Winona Ryder completed 480 hours of community service at the City of Hope medical center in Duarte after she was convicted of shoplifting in 2002.

Stars, however, shouldn't take their community service lightly. If they don't

complete their obligation over the term of their probation, a judge can order more community service or sentence them to prison.

Ryan O'Neal's son, Griffin, received an 18-day jail sentence for not performing 400 hours of community service after he was found guilty of reckless boating in a 1986 accident that killed Gian-Carlo Coppola, son of Francis Ford Coppola.

If Snoop Dogg violates probation, he could be sentenced to three years in state prison.

His attorney said having the rapper work with nonprofits shouldn't be a stretch. Snoop Dogg has been involved with Make-A-Wish Foundation and often gives anti-gang speeches to children.

"Usually the probation officer will have him do something different than he's done before," Etra said. "Our hope is that he can continue with his anti-gang work."

Good luck with finals!
– The Beacon Staff

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REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

GAME Puzzle Quest

LUIS H. GARCIA
Staff Writer

Ever since Tetris launched with Nintendo's Game Boy, puzzle games are commonplace for portable systems because of their availability and accessibility. "Puzzle Quest" takes the puzzle game formula one step further by implementing role-playing elements into game play for an interesting experience.

Playing the puzzle aspect of the game is simple enough. Like the classic "Bejeweled," you match up different color gems and items to get three in a row or more on the 8x8 grid to clear them and create combos. Now add a turn-based system with an opponent and different spells, and the game is another beast entirely. Each item you match and clear on the board represents experience points, money and "mana" types that you use to cast your spells to hurt, heal or obstruct your opponent. And the role-playing game elements don't stop there.

The single player game starts out with basic character creation. You name your character, pick a portrait and choose from one of four classes, which determine your spells and playing type. From there, you move on a map exploring towns and dungeons, taking up quests to move the story. You can buy and equip items that have various effects when you fight monsters to raise your stats. You can even add structures to your own citadel that allow for options such as learning spells from captured monsters, training mounts and even laying siege to

other towns to expand your territory.

As accessible as the game is, it is also very challenging. Enemies will quickly see your mistakes and take advantage to score large combos on the board and maximize spell use to inflict massive damage. "Puzzle Quest" also allows for multiplayer game play, where players can take the avatars they have created in the single player game and compete with other players.

The game's use of the DS touch screen works very well with the game. Besides quitting and saving the game, the touch screen allows players to perform virtually all of the game play operations without the push of a button. In-game tutorials and descriptions for spells and such help ease the experience of players learning what becomes a pretty complex game, while the simple puzzle mechanics make the game very easy to pick up.

With the puzzle nature of the game, the aesthetics do not hold so much importance; nothing extravagant, but they get the job done. The sound effects are simple chimes and varying effects. The simple look of the game gets to the point in conveying the real meat of the game, which is the strategy and planning of your abilities and use of the board to defeat your enemies.

This grand experiment in fusing a simple puzzle game with complex role-playing game mechanics serves as a breath of fresh air. Puzzle Quest breaks new ground and offers a novel and addicting take on the puzzle genre. Also look for the game on PSP.

Tara's summer. What's yours?

KIM...IM me. I'm at the beach going over psych notes. Have you heard from Joe? I can post my assignment from his house if I don't go home first. -TARA

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Leadership-Juniors: Yolanne Almanzar, Rocio Perez, and Camilo Silva

Leadership-Seniors: Tamara Marryshow, Brent Maximin, Providence Okoye, and Zach Trautenberg

Leadership-Graduates: Candice Jones and Tara Warshaw

Diversity: Daniel Anzueto

Outstanding Service-Individual: Matthew Parisi

Outstanding Service-Organization: B-HIVE Project

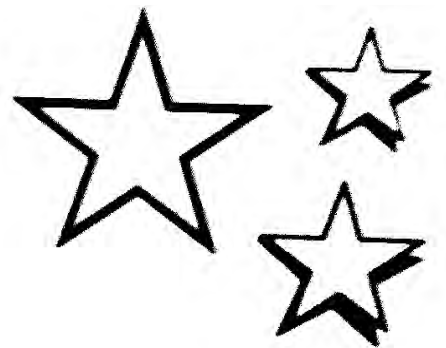
Spirit-Individual: Alex Ravelo

Spirit-Organization: Hotel, Food & Travel Association

Modesto A. Maidique Visionary Award: Harold Silva

Shining Star-Organization: BBC Student Government Council

Kaplan Awards: Desmond Daniels and Rocio Perez



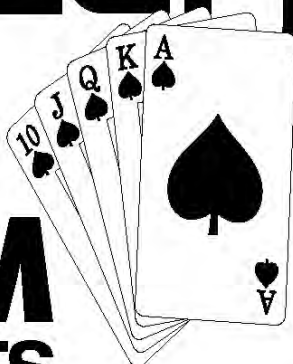
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Questionable pitching moves lead to another blown save



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

CLOSE CALL: Left fielder James McOwen is brushed by an inside fastball thrown by Manny Miguelez.

BASEBALL, page 12

Golden Panthers the lead 7-6.

McOwen is currently on the NCAA leaderboard with a .461 batting average.

Bautista is also swinging a hot bat with nine RBI in the last six games, but he says the four losses during that stretch are a matter of bad timing.

"We definitely had this game under control," Bautista said. "That is the kind of

timing we have been having all year. We need to make the right plays at the right time."

The Golden Panthers held the lead through the eighth inning courtesy of freshman pitcher Evan Ellison and senior pitcher Walker Whitley.

Ellison pitched three innings, allowing only one hit and striking out five 'Canes.

Whitley pitched a clean

eighth inning and would likely have been tabbed to close out the game had it not been for a seven inning start this less that a week before.

The Golden Panthers will look to pick up the pieces against a Sun Belt Conference schedule that features a weekend series against University of Arkansas-Little Rock on April 20-23 and a home series against the University of New Orleans Privateers on April 27-29.

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EDUCATION PLANNING
& FINANCING

The time has come to pay student athletes

MARTINEZ, page 12

to be drawn, but that will come with time.

So long as payments are kept exclusive to percentages of revenue directly related to the program and not because of outside grants or gifts from alumni or booster clubs, nothing will be jeopardized.

The times of these student-athletes' free services - with the colleges reaping the benefits - needs to come to a close.

Purists will say that it destroys what college athletics are about or that the integrity of amateurism and the belief that the players compete simply for love of the game will be

forgotten.

Truth be told, those times came to an end when the billion dollar deals were put in ink and the universities found themselves a whole lot richer. The schools have been reaping the benefits of sports for a long time now; isn't it time the players be rewarded properly, too?



GERRY BROOME/AP

MEDIA FRENZY: Ohio State center Greg Oden (above), is among many talented student athletes that is exploited in college athletics.

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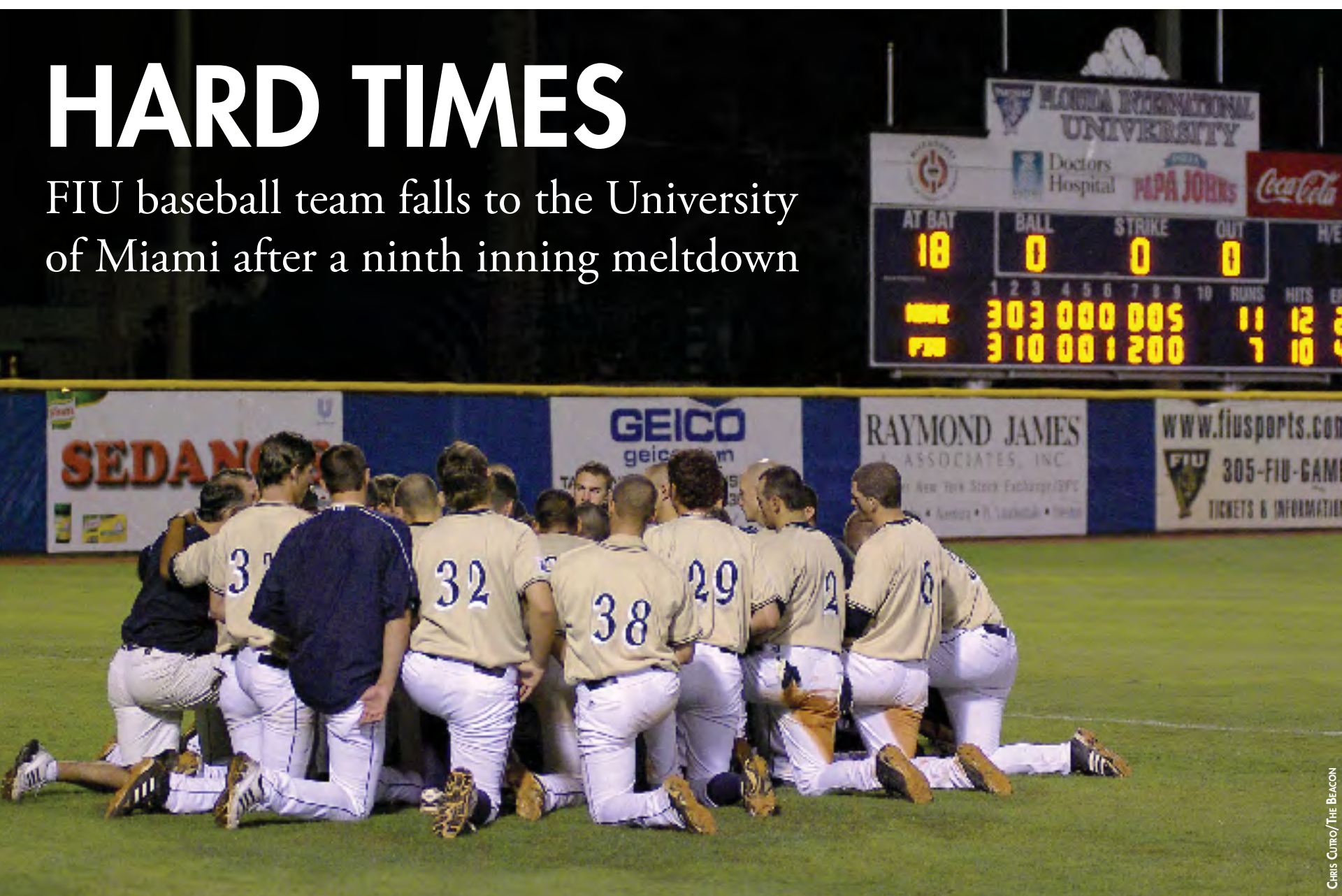
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HARD TIMES

FIU baseball team falls to the University of Miami after a ninth inning meltdown



CHRIS CUNEO/THE BEACON

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Contributing Writer

The baseball team (17-19) was three outs away from a dramatic, come-from-behind victory against its cross-town rival, the University of Miami Hurricanes (21-14) April 11 at University Park Stadium.

With a 7-6 lead heading into the ninth inning, coach Danny Price went to the bullpen and called upon freshman pitcher Jorge Ramos to close the door.

The door swung back and hit the Golden Panthers square in the face.

Ramos gave up a leadoff double to Hur-

ricanes' center fielder Blake Tekotte.

The runner Tekotte advanced to third on a groundout.

After a brief mound conference, the implosion ensued.

UM first baseman Yonder Alonso drove a Ramos fastball to right field for an RBI single, scoring Tekotte to tie the game 7-7.

The clean-up hitter Mark Sobolewski doubled to right.

After an intentional walk to Gus Menendez, the bases were loaded for Dennis Raben.

Raben hit a weak dribbler to junior first baseman John Petika who decided to try for

the double play instead of getting the go-ahead run at home.

Petika got the out at second but junior shortstop Corey Lozano could not turn the double play.

The 'Canes added three more runs off a Golden Panther error and a double by 'Canes catcher Richard O'Brien to build an insurmountable 11-7 lead.

Ramos, who last pitched March 16, was brought into a high-pressure situation, facing the top of the 'Canes order with a one-run lead in front of a season-high 1,507 fans.

"He's bigger than me and he wanted the ball," Price said. "If I had to do it again, I'd

do it again."

The heroes of the night were supposed to be junior left fielder James McOwen and senior catcher Luis Bautista.

In the bottom of the seventh down 6-5, McOwen sent a David Gutierrez offering over the left field wall for his second home run of the season to tie the game.

The next batter, Bautista, stepped to the plate and crushed an inside fastball to deep left-center field for his fifth home run of the season.

The back-to-back solo shots gave the

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Student athletes deserve payment other than scholarships



Commentary

Chris Martinez
Contributing Writer

This past year, the conferences competing in the BCS received over \$17 million for their participation.

Meanwhile, the NCAA receives half a billion dollars every year for the rights to broadcast the tournament basketball games.

Millions more are generated every year from jersey sales and merchandising.

University of Florida head basketball coach Billy Donovan was allegedly being offered \$3.5 million per year by the University of Kentucky to simply coach their basketball players.

Where, then, are the athletes in all of this?

It is easy to shake that proverbial finger of Puritanism and say that scholarships are all that student athletes need; a couple thousand dollars toward their education is more than enough compensation for their services.

This may have held some weight decades ago, when revenues were not skyscraping like they are now, but it's time that the percentages even out to support student athletes fairly.

For top programs such as Florida, Ohio State or the University of Southern California, athletes dedicate a majority of their time to their sport, with school taking the back seat.

Ohio State center Greg Oden took History of Rock and Roll last semester. Former USC quarterback Matt Leinhert took Ballroom Dancing as his only class during his senior year before he bolted for the riches of the NFL. Players cut class all the time and

these days most professors do not even give it a second thought.

It is naive to think that these scholarship offers mean anything concerning education to these star players. Instead, it's an effective way of using the players to generate massive profits for the schools and simply reloading once the stars are gone.

While many will say that student athletes are just like any other college student and should not be treated differently, it is simply not the case.

The average college student does not have their face plastered on tickets or the television. Nor does the average college student bring in the type of revenue these student-athletes do.

While this may seem elitist and unfair to the non-athletic students going to a university to get an education, it reflects the real world. After all, isn't college the final preparation for

“ It is easy to shake that proverbial finger of Puritanism and say that scholarships are all that student athletes need; a couple thousand dollars toward their education is more than enough compensation for their services. ”

that anyway?

So as long as colleges base their payments exclusively on their revenues, there is no reason that a solution to this long, overdue mess can't be made.

There will certainly be a greater lack of parity between schools, but isn't the gap that exists already large enough as it is?

Try as we might, FIU will not be beating Florida State Univer-

sity in football any time soon, simply because of prioritizing. FSU has had their football team established for many years and doesn't have to worry about the financial burdens of opening a new College of Law or a medical school.

A finer line between conferences and divisions would have

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