



SPOTLIGHT

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Weekends with Paradise: Our columnist brings you fun Super Bowl Sunday and Valentine's Day date ideas.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3

With the new Test-Wisness Workshops at BBC, pulling an all-nighter could be a thing of the past.

OPINION PAGE 4



Questions still keep flowing about the future of the Republican Party. How can the party survive the 2010 midterm elections and regain power in Washington?

OPINION PAGE 4

China owns us and it's our own fault. How has the recent state of the economy put the U.S. in jeopardy?

LIFE! PAGE 5

Gables Gallery Walk lets people enjoy free art the first Friday of each month.

SPORTS PAGE 8



Coach Mario Cristobal continues to try and establish a pipeline at Northwestern High School.

SPORTS PAGE 8

The Golden Panthers add several key players on offense, including a blue-chip wide receiver, a quarterback for the future and strength on the lines.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Paranormal Activity, Feb. 5, 5 and 8 p.m. SPC-MMC presents this low-budget yet frightful film for free in GC 140.

Women and Men's Basketball, Feb. 6, 12 and 2 p.m., respectively. Come cheer on your Golden Panthers as they take on North Texas at the U.S. Century Bank Arena. Free with Panther ID.

Super Bowl Watch Parties on Campus, Feb. 7, 4:30 p.m. Watch the game with friends at the Building A lounge in UPA.

— More events can be found in our Monday and Friday issues of Life!.

WEATHER

FRIDAY
Mostly Cloudy
LOW: 69 HIGH: 79

SATURDAY
Few Showers
LOW: 55 HIGH: 75

SUNDAY
Partly Cloudy
LOW: 55 HIGH: 68

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Where to see the big game

ANTHONY CENTENO
Contributing Writer

On Feb. 7, Miami will be hosting the biggest American sports event of the year – the Super Bowl.

This year, the Indianapolis Colts and the New Orleans Saints will be squaring off in the 44th annual Super Bowl, which will be held at Sun Life Stadium.

FIU students are already making their plans for Super Bowl Sunday.

“For this year’s Super Bowl, I plan on hanging out with friends, having a barbecue, and enjoying the Saints run over the Colts,” said sophomore journalism major Christina Watkins.

Barbecues and get-togethers are classic Super Bowl traditions.

If students living on campus would like to watch the game, Housing will be holding events on game day. University Park Apartments will be hosting a Super Bowl watch party with food and drinks provided. The festivities will begin at 4:30 p.m. in the lounge of Building A.

University Park Towers will also be hosting a watch party from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the lounge. Students can enjoy food and drinks while watching the game on a big screen TV. These events are not exclusive to residents only, all students are welcome to join.

However, if students are interested in going out to enjoy the game, then they’re already in the right place. Sports bars and restaurants all over Miami will become hot spots to watch the main event.

“Even if you aren’t a big football fan, you can still go out and enjoy the atmosphere,” said senior hospitality major Luis Vasquez.

If sun, fun and football sounds like a great combination, then one may want to check out Ocean’s Ten on South Beach. This sports bar is fully equipped with great food, full bar and big screen plasma TVs throughout,

SUPER BOWL, page 5

Bookstore launches new rental program

MELISSA CACERES
Staff Writer

With prices on new and used textbooks remaining high, students now have another option when it comes to obtaining materials for classes.

Beginning this Spring semester, the FIU Bookstore will offer a book rental program through Barnes & Noble that will save students around 50 percent off the cost of new, printed textbooks.

The fee for renting a book is 42.5 percent of the retail price of the new textbook; so if a textbook is \$100, then the rental version would be available for \$42.50.

“The program is really to give students more options when it comes to buying textbooks,” said Jeff Krablin, the assistant vice president of Business Services at FIU.

“We recognize that they can be very expensive and this is one of the options that we hope will lead to things being more affordable.”

Krablin added that the program is still in its pilot stages and that it would be a learning experience to determine if the system “runs smoothly.”

Among the 636 Barnes & Noble on-campus bookstores, FIU was one of the 25 chosen nationwide to carry out the

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Safety questions addressed

PA system, emergency procedures among topics

JASMYN ELLIOTT
BBC Managing Editor

Emergency telephones, fire safety and the lack of an alternate evacuation route were just some of the issues raised during the forum of Safety and Emergency Planning held on Feb. 2 at the Wolfe University Center.

The forum allowed students, faculty and staff to voice their concerns on various safety-related issues affecting the University, with the Emergency Management Group present as a panel.

“There is no more impor-

tant thing we can do than create a safe environment,” said Vice Provost Steven Moll during his opening remarks. “If we don’t, students don’t learn and we fail in our mission [to educate].”

The EMG is responsible for restoring order during times of distress such as a natural disaster. The group comprises the following: EMG Assistant Director Dorothy Miller; Director of Counseling and Psychological Services Cheryl Nowell; Vice President of Academic Affairs Elizabeth Bejar; Chief Bill King of FIU Police; and Director of the

Victim Advocacy Center Sharon Aaron. Nowell, Bejar, King and Aaron are also members of the University Consultation Team, responsible for dealing with disruptive or at-risk students.

Several of the concerns voiced by those in attendance dealt with communication, or the lack thereof. Staff, for example, complained about the confusion on whom to call in case of an injury or a disruptive student: 911 or FIU Police?

According to King, every Fall, faculty receive a red folder during orientation. The folder contains a handout dictating what do to in certain scenarios, which includes a contact number that corresponds with the severity of the situation.

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Class offers in-depth study on HIV/AIDS

MARIELLA ROQUE
Contributing Writer

Biology of AIDS, a class offered at FIU since 1997, allows students to learn about AIDS from biological and socio-psychological perspectives.

Ophelia Weeks, Ph.D. and associate professor, thought of the idea while taking a sabbatical in 1996 at the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Ga.

Weeks said she felt many people were uneducated in the subject of HIV/AIDS. She returned to FIU motivated to make a change.

“[Students] look at AIDS as somebody else’s disease, [saying] ‘it has nothing to do with me,’” Weeks said. “But they come out of the course much

AIDS, page 2

NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Police vote 'no' to volunteer Super Bowl surveillance

Contract negotiations between the city of Miami and the police union intensified with the union's members voting not to volunteer for off-duty security details and overtime this weekend.

According to *The Miami Herald*, union officials say the union's stance is not intended to undermine Super Bowl safety, but that they want to highlight over-reaching contract demands, unfair negotiating tactics and an over-reliance on overtime and off-duty shifts.

NATIONAL

Helicopter crash in Germany claims victims

A U.S. military Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Germany on Wednesday, killing three crew members.

CNN spoke with U.S. Army public affairs specialist, Bruce Anderson, who put the crash site near Darmstadt, south of Frankfurt, near a helicopter landing site in Mannheim.

Names of the victims were being withheld pending notification of relatives.

According to Anderson, the cause of the crash is still under investigation.

INTERNATIONAL

Former president leads Haitian aid efforts

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed former President Bill Clinton with overseeing aid efforts, as well as the reconstruction of earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

According to a spokesman for the Haitian prime minister who spoke to CNN, more than 200,000 people have died from the 7.0 magnitude earthquake.

"I cannot find any other better suited leader than yourself, Mr. President," Ki-moon told Clinton at the United Nations on Wednesday morning.

According to CNN, Clinton will help coordinate the work of U.N. agencies and the other international partners in Haiti, including government donors, private investors and non-governmental organizations.

– Compiled by Gabriel Arraras

Program makes books affordable

RENTAL, page 1

pilot program and the only university within the state of Florida. So far, the program has raised around \$23,000, since it began and the number is constantly increasing.

"We've had a tremendous response from students and faculty to our rental program and, as a result, have continued to expand it to other colleges and universities across the country," said Max Roberts, the president of Barnes & Noble College Booksellers, in a recent press release.

This semester, the bookstore is offering 50 titles spread out among basic to advanced level subjects. According to Krablin, the 50 books available end up corresponding to around 200 course sections since a number of the titles are used by more than one teacher. Over time the number of books will increase as the program grows more successful and professors keep the bookstore informed of their future material.

"In order to expand the titles, the professors need to tell us ahead of time which books they will be using so that we can try to have them available here to rent," said Meaghan Connolly, the general manager of the FIU Bookstore. "All the feedback that I got from

I think renting books is great for those students who have a hard time paying for new ones.

Alejandro Gallego, *sophomore*
Computer Science

the students has been excitement even though they do wish that there were more titles."

Unlike online renting companies like Chegg, that require very few markings on their books, the Barnes & Noble program actually allows students to highlight the pages and make notes on the margins normally at their discretion.

"I think renting books is great for those students who have a hard time paying for new ones," said Alejandro Gallego, a sophomore majoring in computer science.

Students are able to rent their books in store using the special kiosks set up for them. With each of the 50 books, the tag that lists the price has a separate notice that the textbook is rentable.

The students will then be able to go to a separate register where they will fill out the necessary paperwork to rent

their books, which will ask for a credit card to register into the bookstore system. Even though the student can use other means of tender, like cash, a Panther card or book advance, the credit card is needed in order to have a means of charging for consequences like late fees.

They also allow renting to be done online and have the books delivered to the student.

"It really has caught on. Lots of schools are calling and lots of national press are picking up on the fact that book rentals are now being offered from the big college bookstores," Krablin said. "It's all part of the over-arching plan as it correlates textbook affordability, which is to increase the options available."

For more information go to the FIU Bookstore in the Graham Center or visit fiu.bkstore.com.

Project 'shocks' misinformed students

AIDS, page 1

more aware."

The course is offered in the Spring and Fall semesters at the Modesto Maidique Campus and holds a maximum of 40 students.

"The class is usually full within the first few days [of registration]," Weeks said.

On the first day of class, students are assigned a project worth 5 percent of

their grade and are paired into groups of five, randomized by the professor.

The HIV-related project can target a specific demographic and varies from AIDS awareness pamphlets to fundraising concerts.

"Students tend to be very creative when they're placed into randomized groups," Weeks said.

One group, nicknamed the "Grey Team", decided to design a magazine targeting the FIU community, specifically housing students.

"We felt it was a good way to start informing people," said senior Rachel Robles, pre-med major and one of the group's members.

A hundred copies of the magazine were passed out to students in the Everglades apartments, University Park Towers and the Engineering building as well as various spots all around MMC.

The magazine displayed a series of condom advertisements geared toward college students, an interview with an AIDS victim, various HIV facts and a survey conducted on 86 anonymous students in the residence halls with questions about the disease.

Robles explained that the results "shocked" her and opened her eyes to the lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS. The results showed that frequently, students selected the incorrect answer.

Among class experiments, mandatory class lectures and discussions, the students were assigned to purchase a type of condom, ranging from intrauterine devices to various other kinds. To receive a grade, the students had to present the contraceptive in class.

"It was supposed to

make you feel embarrassed to make your mother go buy one for you or for the lady at the counter to look at you a certain way for buying this specific condom," said sophomore Karisa Falden, another member of the Grey Team.

"It made you realize why some people have unprotected sex," she added.

Falden said she was so impacted by the experience that she applied for summer research involving the immune system.

"We feel blessed that we were able to take the class, it's a good opportunity," Robles said.

"I really want to stress that HIV is real. You interact with HIV positive people every day of your life and that's a fact," said Falden. "[HIV is] not very far away, it might be sitting right next you."

THE BEACON

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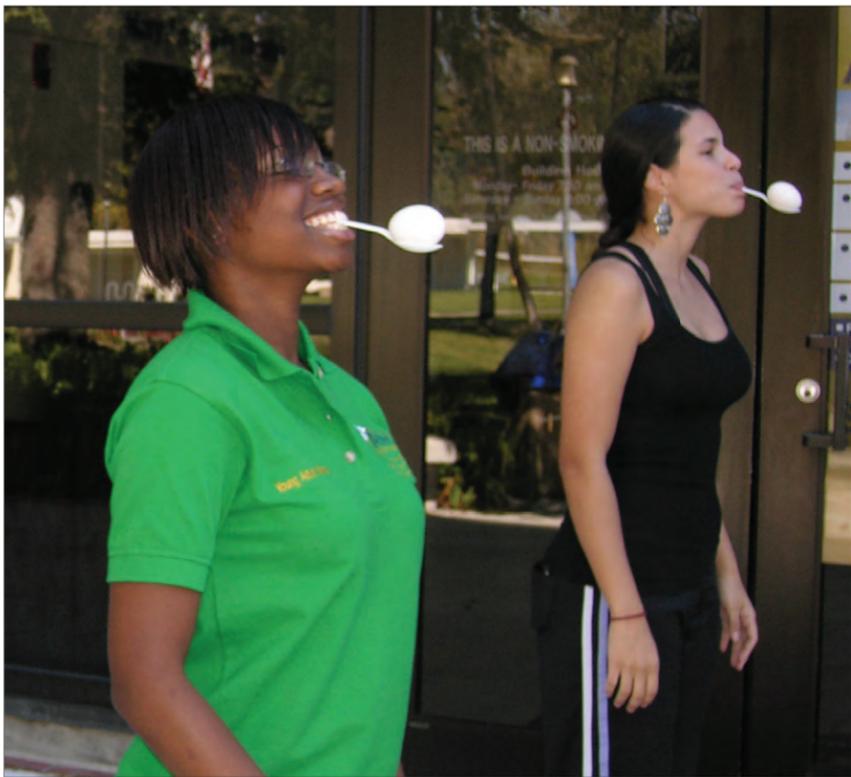
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Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.

KEEP YOUR HEAD UP



TOMAS LOPEZ-MEIS/THE BEACON

Bernishka Hanna, a junior and accounting major, and Ana Perez, a junior journalism and social work major, get ready to begin the egg race on the second day of the One World Celebration hosted by the SPC on Jan 27th.

Test-wiseness workshop improves students' exam-taking strategies

MAUREEN NINO
Asst. News Director

Cramming all night for a test may work for some students, but usually the best results come from preparation, a technique students can now learn in Biscayne Bay Campus' new Test-Wiseness workshops.

Federico Lastra, tutor and reading specialist at BBC, is the innovator behind the new workshop offered at the Center for Academic Success, in Academic Building I, Room 160.

According to Lastra, he just acted on what the students told him they needed.

"I talked to [Lastra] last semester about how a lot of students are nervous and don't know how to take a test. He told me about his idea and thought it was great," said Darya Yeroshova, a senior and psychology major.

The workshop will offer students strategic test tips that according to Lastra may be particularly beneficial for students right out of high school.

"A lot of students can't read the information. A lot of them don't know how to read testing questions or how to look at a multiple choice exam," Lastra said. "Students can study as hard as they want but if they don't know how to read a test question they may not succeed."

Freshman and psychology major Coryn Nimdelett agrees and believes these workshops will benefit her.

"I just got out of high school a few months ago and college is very different and I think [these workshops] will help me. The things I learned in high school are not really helping now and hopefully this will help me make a good transition into a higher level of thinking," she said.

In the workshops, Lastra discusses strategies and skills students may use during different types of exams such as multiple choice, essay format and true/false questions.

"For multiple choice tests I teach them how to read the question and go through the answer, automatically eliminating the ones that do not apply. I teach them to search for cue words and how to organize their thoughts in relation to the question," Lastra said.

Lastra also suggested his first rule for test taking: "Count how many questions you have and the time on the clock. Calculate that and you know how much time you have for the question."

According to Lastra, this is the first time the University offers these courses and they will be offered twice a week during the second and third week of the month between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m.

"In February there will be two more workshops added on memorization tips and techniques, and time management. These workshops will teach students how to balance and schedule everything out," he said.

The workshops do not focus on one specific course

but instead provides general information to prepare students for an exam by teaching them specific test-taking, studying and note-taking tips.

Yeroshova believes that although she has been taking tests "forever," the workshop was still helpful.

"It is very informative and he actually points out tricks to help during a test. There are a lot of small tips that are very valuable," she said. "These courses help calm me down and it feels right. I don't get nervous and if I do blank out I compose myself and start from the beginning."

The workshops have no additional cost and according to Lastra, the Center for Academic Success is using its regular budget.

Roberta Coaches, Center for Academic Success office assistant, believes the program will be very helpful.

According to Coaches, the Invitational Scholars Club has helped promote the workshops.

Although Lastra is currently the only instructor participating, several other tutors have shown enthusiasm.

"Other tutors have expressed an interest in possibly doing the workshops in the evening, making it available to more students," she said. "He is very energetic and he really enjoys what he is doing. He took the initiative to start the program and he is just the perfect person to teach this," Coaches said.

WEEKENDS WITH PARADISE

Sappy sports fans have two busy weekends ahead

I am a huge fan of relaxing on Sundays, but when I looked at my calendar this month I did not think it would be possible.

The Super Bowl is coming up this weekend and Valentine's Day is the weekend after, both of which are busy days.

For girls who are sports fans like me, this is a win-win situation. But I know not every girl (or guy for that matter) feels the same way.

No worries, it is really simple to mix the two days so everyone is happy.

If you are in a relationship and you are the one who cannot stand sports but your significant other is a sports junkie, go out for brunch at The Cheese Course, 1679 Market St, Weston, on game day.

They have an amazing selection of cheeses from around the world, wines, sandwiches and salads. I am in love with the Albacore white tuna melt, which comes with Gruyère cheese, shredded carrots, extra virgin olive oil, mayonnaise and greens on a foot-long

baguette for \$8.45. They also hand out free samples in the left hand corner of the store. You did not hear this from me, but stand by there while waiting for your order to come out. Free cheese, crackers and pesto – yes please!

Now, I promised something for the guys too. Why sit through a brunch when you could be doing something football-related?

Well, because NFL stars tend to go to this place a lot.

I have seen Dan Marino, Jason Taylor and Zach Thomas from the Dolphins there, or in the same plaza, quite often. Although he never played for the NFL, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson has been sighted there a time or two.

Who knows whom you will see on game day.

One last thing: if you bring your guy out to this place on Super Bowl Sunday you are legally bound to sit through the whole game with no complaints.

So let's talk about Valentine's Day, my least favorite day of the year (sorry; I'm

a single lady, bitterness slipped in).

Since this is the first Sunday without football of the year, I say you spend it with your special someone on the field.

Head over to the Alonzo and Tracy Mourning Sr. High School, 2601 NE 151 St., North Miami, and pick up a couple's game.

Who cares if you cannot play? It will still be fun trying something new. Besides, it is a nice break from that played-out Valentine's Day tradition of dinner and a movie.

Really, nothing says "I love you" like risking a Marsha Brady moment with your significant other.

Top it off with something laid-back, like a picnic on the bleachers, or you can just get ready for a night out afterward.

Enjoy the game, have a great Valentine's Day, and GO SAINTS!

Read Weekends with Paradise every other Friday for more tips on places to go in the North Miami area. If you have any suggestions, e-mail paradise.afshar@fiusm.com. The columnist pays for all food and

COLUMNIST



PARADISE
AFSHAR

Alternate routes discussed

FORUM, page 1

However, he also noted that "911 calls transfers to Public Safety," but the extension 7-2626 links directly to their offices.

Another concern raised during the forum regarded the unsynchronized fire alarms in the connected buildings Academic I and WUC.

"If the fire alarms in WUC are going off, how do we tell the people in AC I not to come in?" said Vicky Owles, associate director of Campus Life.

After referring to the issue as "a thorn in my side," Miller stressed the importance of cooperation by way of exiting persons to redirect those who may be unaware of the evacuation.

"It takes all of you to help us out," Miller said.

Miller also stated that a PA system for AC I and Academic II offices is in the works, citing that it would be easier for people to hear that there is a fire-related evacuation rather than see people leaving the building.

In the same vein as evacuation, the ongoing issue of a lack of an alternate hurricane evacuation route was brought up. Citing the particularly rainy weather on Feb. 1, King said, "If the roadway is closed up, we are locked up. It is a true disaster waiting to happen."

According to King, as late as last Fall, FIU Police has been in talks with the City of North Miami to rebuild and reopen the former NE 135th Street bridge as an alternate route in the event of the flooding of NE 151 St. They are also campaigning to get a federal grant to aid in rebuilding the route.

According to Moll, the process is taking so long because city commissioners are afraid of "losing constituents" who have thus far vehemently opposed the project, arguing that the rebuilding of the bridge would cause a higher traffic volume from the University.

Even so, King remains determined to find a solution.

"It is an issue on the front burner," he said.

Republicans need to unite with new ideas

JULIO MENACHE
Staff Writer

A year into President Obama's first term, it seems that the stars may be aligning for Republicans.

According to a Rasmussen Reports' public opinion poll, President Obama's approval rating has sunk to under 50 percent, with only 32 percent of Americans feeling that the country is headed in the right direction.

Following the stimulus bill, unemployment went up instead of down, and with many Democrats facing tough Republican opposition during the 2010 Congressional elections, the president may be headed into some stormy weather.

And yet, while the GOP may be able to win a handful of seats, I don't expect them to take back the House and Senate like they did in 1994.

While the number of registered Democrats has fallen to its lowest level in seven years according to Rasmussen, Republicans have not been able to capitalize on this, suffering from even worse numbers.

Since the presidency of George W. Bush, the party has become a mere caricature, devoid of strong leadership and a strong message that will resonate in the minds of the American people.

The GOP itself is in need of both short and long-term reform, if it ever wishes to regain the trust of the American people. And here's how they can do it:

COME UP WITH MORE SOLUTIONS THAN CRITICISM

Politico recently reported that the GOP

privately hopes to make a resurgence through an "80-20 strategy," which in simple terms, translates to 80 percent bashing Democratic policies, while using the remaining 20 percent to put forth an alternative plan.

In reality, the GOP has been using the same tactic since President Obama was elected, earning the dubious distinction of the "Party of 'No.'"

Instead of coming up with a resounding counter message – you know, one that has reason and facts – the GOP resorts to name calling and fear tactics, which can lead to some pretty interesting slogans in "Tea Parties" and town halls, including my personal favorite, "Keep government out of my Medicare."

Scaring those in your party to submission trivializes our democracy, one that was built upon the principle of having an educated electorate.

The party needs to reverse its strategy. It should spend most of its time presenting its ideas instead of attacking.

If Americans are truly tired of Democratic rule, they'll come to it on their own terms. They don't need to be reminded by Republican officials, they just need to know that the GOP has an alternative.

LOOK FOR A LEADER TO UNITE THE PARTY (HINT: IT'S NOT SARAH PALIN)

Just as the party will be haunted by memories of Bush's presidency, the party must look past the wench from Wasilla.

While some conservatives may argue, "Oh, but she really gets on liberals' nerves, she must be getting to them," that logic entirely misses the point.

DARN TOOTIN'



If anything, liberals are doing more laughing than loathing against "poor" Sarah.

What the party needs to do is find a leader that can articulate about the principles of the party: less government, lower taxes, high prosperity, and frame it to the mood of the American people.

With unemployment at an all-time high, and many Americans feeling disillusioned by the slow pace of the economic stimulus bill in creating jobs, the party will be able to make some ground with a convincing message.

The GOP should look toward old faces such as Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich, along with new faces such as South Dakota Senator John Thune for future leadership, not radio personalities or soccer moms.

DON'T PURGE THE PARTY

After Democrats took over the White House and Congress, I watched in horror as the GOP began to eat itself alive.

Soon, the Tea Party movement created an opposition not only to Obama, but to the moderate Republicans that held less conservative views on certain issues.

The strategy was put in full force when Tea Party activists ousted Republican candidate Dana Scozzafava in a special election for a New York congressional seat, leaving the Democratic candidate Bill Owens to claim the seat.

This baffled me as a political observer. Sure, Scozzafava was liberal on some social issues, but might I remind my conservative cohorts that she was supported by the likes of Newt Gingrich and the NRA.

The GOP needs to become a party that stays true to its principles, yet unafraid to include other independent voices. Republicans need to be the party of principle and pragmatism, not the party of parody and bitter partisanship. And most importantly, not the party of "No."

China challenges United States' domination

Chinese take advantage of the mounting American debt crisis

ALICIA MONTALVO
Contributing Writer

"You've been pwned!"

If you're anything like me, you've used this phrase to announce that you've beaten a friend in a competitive game of bowling, Yahtzee, Madden and so on.

We plebeians only have the ability to say this in jest; Hu Jintao, China's current leader, does not.

China, quite literally, owns us. It's all quite simple, really.

When George W. Bush needed to fund the initial attack on Iraq and the stimulus checks, he took out a loan. When Barack Obama needed money for his stimulus package, he also took out a loan.

While many individuals and countries may have purchased bonds during this period, China bought the most. It is the single largest holder of U.S. Treasury bonds, totaling just under \$1 trillion.

In addition to owning us, China is bouncing back faster and harder from the current recession.

U.S. employment figures are dismal, just over 10 percent last month, but China's export numbers are increasing. Their people are buying the most cars on the planet. The real estate market is not only thriving, but booming. Demand for housing is through the roof.

According to *Newsweek*, the price of high-class housing has risen by more than 54 percent in the last six months.

China has stepped out from the U.S.'s

proverbial shadow and is emerging as the new world leader.

We are witnessing the fall of a titan. The U.S., with Obama in office, is simply unable to maintain its position as the supreme leader of the free world.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not a Republican. However, Bush carried a big stick. Obama? Not so much.

He is so preoccupied with domestic affairs such as health care reform, taxes and his socialist agenda that he has allowed countries like China and India (another emerging leader) to take the reins.

If money is power, then it's no wonder the U.S. is trailing. Our president is spending money with his "Recovery" act like it's going out of style.

Since Bush left office, Obama has increased the gross debt in the U.S. as a percentage of gross domestic product from about 70 percent in 2008 to over 90 percent in December 2009, according to *Newsweek*.

Some economists project that in 2010

Obama will be metaphorically financing a brand new Lexus when he should be borrowing his cousin's 1977 Ford Pinto.

It almost feels like the U.S. is the irresponsible sibling who spends his time hanging out at the mall, eating in the food court and shopping for new clothes.

While he's goofing off, brothers China and India are hard-working entrepreneurs hitting the daily grind and wisely investing in a well-diversified portfolio.

Bad decisions by the U.S. have left the door open for smarter, bolder countries to take over.

Generally speaking, I am an aggressive person who doesn't like losing. This may be the root of my disappointment in both the president and the country.

Obama needs to recognize this rear-naked choke, i.e. debt, China has us in will eventually force us to tap out.

The U.S. needs to not only repay debt, but stop incurring more if it is to regain control on the world – we cannot be pwned!

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SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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WINNER/LOSER

 Avatar. Although it fell short from Titanic's 14 Oscar nods back in 1997, Avatar proves to be a big name for the 82nd annual Academy Awards with nine nominations. Among the nine nominations were Best Picture, Director, Visual Effects and Cinematography.

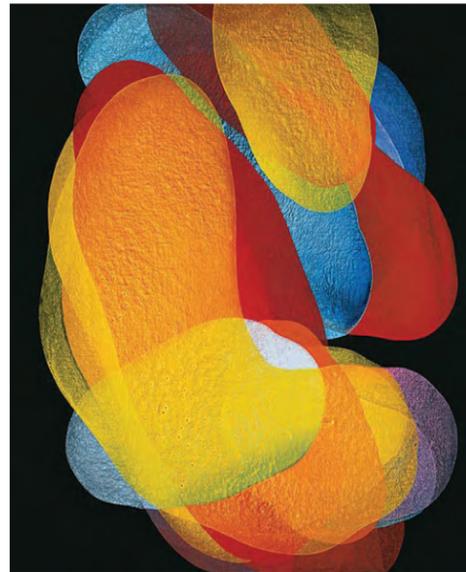
 Megan Fox. Fox is nominated twice for the 2010 Razzie awards. Her two nods include worst actress for both *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* and *Jennifer's Body*. Two movies that are coincidentally not vying for Best Picture Oscars.

QUOTATIONATION

"Why, if gays are allowed into the military, soon the armed forces will allow all sorts of other things."

Saxby Chambliss
Republican Senator, Georgia

WALK OF ART



From left to right: *Sueños de un guajiro* by Humberto Benitez, *Escape from the traps* by Klara Chavarria and *Over and over 8* by Michelle Concepcion.

Gables art galleries open doors for Friday's free art walks

ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

If you're in the mood for a little night music and some art, check out Gables Gallery Walk.

Gables Gallery Walk happens on the first Friday of every month. The walk, which stretches from Douglas Road all the way to US1, gives participants a chance to check out the work of local artists for free.

Don't look for major crowds like at other art festivals because this walk is more of a solo venture for most of the way until you hit downtown Coral Gables, where you'll bump into the date night crowd at Miracle Mile's restaurants.

You can start the night off at Centro Cultural Español on 800 Douglas Rd., Suite 170, about two blocks east of Ponce de Leon Boulevard. Here, you can check

out the new exhibit *Confluencias: Intersticios Entre la Literatura, el Cine y el Cartel*, an art display exclusive of artists from Latin America.

Next stop is Art Space/ Virginia Miller Galleries on 169 Madeira Ave. *Five Abstract Visions*, the new exhibition at the gallery which opens Feb. 5, will display the works of Michelle Concepcion, Florian Depenthal, Andy Moses, Linda Touby and Aaron Karp. The gallery says the exhibit "offers a fascinating view of how accomplished mid-career artists approach abstraction in very different ways."

Literature geeks and art fans collide at the H. Benitez Fine Art Gallery at 305 Alcazar Ave., Suite 4. Starting at 6 p.m., the gallery will open its doors to fans of Janet Diaz Bonilla, who will be signing copies of her latest novel, *Rainbow House*. The novel is about Camilla Miranda, a young woman who holds a dark secret.

The book signing is in conjunction with a preview of the gallery's new collection. Humberto Benitez works with only a limited number of monochromatic originals. The artist is known for clearing his studio and surroundings from all colors, then bonding with the strength of a single tone. What he came up with is a series of black and white pieces that make a contrast to the colorful display of Bonilla's *Rainbow House* release party.

You'll probably be famished from the walking but hope is in sight.

Once you hit downtown Coral Gables, there will be a plethora of restaurants. Step into Books and Books on 265 Aragon Ave. for a look at some art and live music and, while you're there, grab a bite to eat at the café where they offer everything from chilled gazpacho to red velvet cupcakes. There's also a cash wine and beer bar available.

The Americas Collections sits right on Ponce de Leon Boulevard and Andalusia Avenue, just a block away from Miracle Mile. The gallery has dedicated its efforts to the proliferation of contemporary Latin American art with the inclusion of some European and American artists in its repertoire as well. The gallery built its success on the principle that "the dynamic of a good contemporary gallery should be to provide the most well-rounded assortment of renowned masters and emerging talents. [This] has made The Americas Collection an exciting and eclectic organization," according to their Web site.

There's a pocket of smaller art galleries next to Ponce Circle Park, which is nice for your feet or for your gas tank for those not planning to do the trek on foot. The Klara Chavarria Contemporary

GALLERY, page 6

Miami gears up for Super Bowl

SUPER BOWL, page 1

all contributing to a lively atmosphere.

On game day, specials like five beers for \$20 on Miller Lite, the official beer sponsor of the Super Bowl, will be in full effect.

With the lure of Miami's already infamous beach life, Ocean's Ten is sure to be a hot spot when Super Bowl fever grips the city.

Lincoln Road Mall will be holding the "Ultimate Tailgate Party." Those who attend will see former NFL players, while enjoying a barbecue and other foods.

South Beach may be one of the most popular spots in Miami to watch the game, but if you'd rather avoid the beach-bound traffic, Buffalo Wild Wings may offer another solution.

"I love going there, especially for a football game," said Priscilla Gomez, an avid customer of

Buffalo Wild Wings. "The crowd goes wild with every touchdown, it's crazy."

This sports grill offers a bountiful menu, including buffalo wings, cold drinks and other foods off the grill.

Sports fans of all kinds can enjoy this bar located in the front section of Dolphin Mall.

Also at Dolphin, T.G.I. Friday's is upping the ante with several drink specials, including \$2 drafts and bottles.

Those seeking food to go with their drinks can enjoy their special of an appetizer, an entree and a dessert for \$12.99.

Halftime will feature its own events, including a Spin-the-Wheel contest where customers can win coupons and certificates for various appetizers and dishes.

Flanigan's near Doral will also be showing the game across its many TVs. Budweiser beers will be going for \$2.79.

Those who stick around until 9 p.m. can enjoy their usual Happy Hour with 50 percent off alcoholic beverages.

The recently-opened Bird Road Sports Grill will be holding its own Bowl event.

Specials on beer and their award-winning chicken wings will be offered as all the grid-iron action is displayed across multiple flat-screen TVs.

Located relatively close to the Modesto Maidique Campus, students can enjoy the Super Bowl excitement without breaking the bank.

Be prepared this weekend as the game day excitement spreads from the field to across the city. Whether you're a Colts fan or a Saints fan, this Sunday, Miami is the place to be.

Additional reporting by James Radziewicz.

THE BEACON REVIEWS: EDGE OF DARKNESS

Mel Gibson reprises iconic revenge role

DAVID BARRIOS
Opinion Editor

Like it or not, Mel Gibson is a Hollywood icon.

He's survived a post-apocalyptic wasteland, gained the ability to hear women's thoughts and, in between, helped found two nations: the United States and Scotland.

The fact that he is a raving anti-Semite is a moot point.

He just looks like an icon. It's been eight years since he's been in a starring role and, sure, there are a few gray hairs on his head and, sure, his wrinkles have grown deeper and more cavernous, but it's still Mel, just like Clint Eastwood is still Clint and Lee Marvin was always Lee Marvin.

Of course, the one tying factor between these three actors is

simple: They know how to play "revenge."

And make no mistake, that's what Gibson is looking for in his latest film, *Edge of Darkness*. Directed by Martin Campbell (*Casino Royale*, *Goldeneye*), the film follows Boston homicide detective Thomas Craven, another offshoot of the typically wronged man, whose daughter is gunned down at his doorstep after returning home from vacation.

The motive for the murder seems clear; probably an old score being settled by an enemy of Craven or an unknown debt that went unpaid. Stay on the force long enough and of course you'll rack up some enemies. But Thomas Craven is a straight cop who doesn't drink and doesn't

DARKNESS, page 6

Quick Picks

MOVIES



When in Rome
 28/100
 20/100
 "A picture that registers between Abysmally Awful and Mildly Mediocre ... Call it medi-awful."
 Richard Corliss
 Time

North Face
 63/100
 86/100

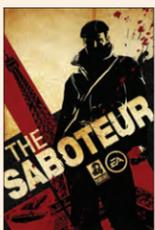
"Transfixing in the way that well-told life-and-death adventure tales inevitably are. It is the film's more mundane elements – an awkward, under-nourished love story and half-baked politics – that are problematic."
 Stephen Holden - The New York Times



GAMES

The Saboteur
 Multi
 73/100
 7.5/10

"On paper, The Saboteur is a winner. But boil it down to the gameplay and you're left with a good chunk of clumsy third-person shooting with bits of awkward driving."
 David Clayman - ign.com



Rogue Warrior
 Multi
 28/100
 1.5/10
 "This dreadfully boring, expletive-filled, extremely short shooter is an absolute rip-off."
 Kevin VanOrd - GameSpot

MUSIC

Rebirth - by Lil Wayne
 35/100
 3.9/10

"A nimble, almost balletic rapper on countless mix-tapes, singles, and Billboard-topping collaborations, the 27-year-old comes across both muddled and belligerent on the much-delayed, extensively leaked Rebirth."
 Leah Greenblatt - Entertainment Weekly

Couple Tracks: Singles 2002-2009
 by F***** Up
 83/100
 6.8/10

"Think of this impressive, 25-song double-CD compilation as Singles Going Screaming – a testament to a Canadian punk institution."
 Jason Gross
 SPIN

LEGEND

- Rottentomatoes.com
- ign.com
- Pitchfork Magazine
- Metacritic.com

Sudoku answers from 1/27/10

9	3	5	8	1	6	7	4	2
2	4	6	3	5	7	1	8	9
8	7	1	9	2	4	5	3	6
7	1	2	6	9	8	4	5	3
4	5	8	1	3	2	6	9	7
3	6	9	7	4	5	2	1	8
6	9	7	5	8	1	3	2	4
5	2	3	4	7	9	8	6	1
1	8	4	2	6	3	9	7	5

Puzzle by websudoku.com

FISTFULS OF TECH

App Store's biggest flaw: no return policy

The Apple App Store has completely altered the way I spend 99 cents.

Apple's mobile application directory has had its share of success. Recently, Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO, announced that the App Store has sold its 3 billionth app, an impressive feat for any mobile app catalog.

The App Store's applications range from free to upwards of \$70. The store's price structure, though convenient and beneficial to developers, has completely skewed my internal calculator.

Before the App Store, I would walk into a convenience store and not even bat an eye when I dropped \$3 for a bag of South of the Border Funions and a Mountain Dew.

Three bucks is rather insignificant. Sure, it'll get you something, but not a whole lot. However, in the

App Store economy, spending \$3 is like buying a house with a helicopter pad. If an app costs money, it better be good. I will spend hours researching a 99 cent app, looking at screen shots and reading user reviews. Even then, my finger will hesitantly hover over the "buy now" button, weighing out how much I will be able to use the app.

But as I sit here and write this, I have to ask myself: Do I take the same time researching the Mountain Dew, something I am actually putting in my body? Nope.

A single bottle of Mountain Dew has 320 calories, 84 grams of sugar and 110 milligrams of sodium.

So it seems that I will sooner pay \$1.25 for something that will most likely contribute to a future case of adult onset diabetes than 99 cents for an app for my iPhone

that will arrange my groceries by their spot on the food pyramid. As I slowly come to that sad reality, I think I know the reason why.

The App Store's purchasing practices are in many ways very black and white.

Unlike the Android Market, where there is a 24-hour trial period, there is no return policy in the App Store.

If you spend \$10 or so on an app you soon discover requires a very expensive desktop client, or that app turns out to be awful, you are stuck.

Apple's store policies are brilliant yet flawed in that sense. The business of the App Store, a profit split that sees the developers keeping 70 percent of the cash their apps make, yields a growing marketplace for amazing stuff.

App developers can submit their apps and become millionaires overnight, exemplified by the popular

iPhone game "Doodlejump."

But at the same time, the fact that the store is so limited to the consumer really holds it back.

I would be quite the spendthrift in the App Store if I knew that I could get my money back if I was unsatisfied. Hell, if I can do it on Amazon, I should be able to do it on the App Store.

Maybe I am just bitter because I have a couple of high priced apps collecting digital dust on my hard drive.

In the end, I think users need the same reassurance that they have in the grocery store or the mall, that if they are unsatisfied with a purchase, they can get their money back.

That would make the App Store not only the best place to buy apps but one of the best shopping experiences on the Internet.

Fistfuls of Tech is a weekly tech column. Look for it every Friday.

COLUMNIST



JORGE VALENS

Tired plot line still entertains

DARKNESS, page 5

take graft. Something's up and he knows it.

Cue another conspiracy as Craven looks into a corporation his daughter was investigating called "Northmoor." Craven becomes entangled in forces much larger than himself as he seeks satisfaction.

If you say that you've heard this plot before, I wouldn't contend that. Not just because this is a remake of a 1985 British television series, but because the revenge thriller usually hinges on several key points: an innocent man horribly wronged, haunted by the misdeeds and slowly moving toward a breaking point in search of the truth.

What distinguishes one

from the other is the acting talent behind it. You wouldn't buy this movie if it were, say, Brad Pitt, in the lead role. That's because it takes a certain type of actor to sell torment, and Gibson does it better than anyone around today.

He plays anger so well and the demons that he may very well have in real life translate well on screen. Gibson's savagery, honesty and drive sell this movie.

Not to say that Martin Campbell is an incapable director. Campbell is one of the great action-thriller genre directors because he is economical in his direction but also intelligent. No shaky-camera setups a la *The Bourne Supremacy*. He knows how to

set up a scene and tell a story.

It doesn't hurt when you have one of the great character actors of this generation in the cast: Ray Winstone. Winstone plays a CIA agent who is sent to cover up information on the murder, and your eyes are always on him. You're not sure what he'll do or where his loyalties lie, but watching him on screen with a seeming lack of scruples brings back memories of similar Claude Rains in *Casablanca*.

So the story may have been told before. What matters here is characters, not story.

It's not a great film, but it provides much entertainment, and damn it, it's better than watching *Avatar* for the seventh time.

New talent dots art walk

GALLERY, page 5

Art Gallery and Studio Space is dedicated to Chavarria and showcases her philosophical and whimsical style, which incorporates figurative and abstract elements.

Right next door is the Jorge M. Sori Fine Art gallery. The gallery displays the works of Latin American artists Tomas Sanchez, Renato Meziat and Ivan Loboquerrero.

Durban Segnini Gallery, next to Village of Merrick Park, specializes in contemporary painting and sculpture, emphasizing artists who have worked with abstract expressionism, abstraction, constructivism and kinetic art. The gallery strives "to promote and diffuse new artistic values as well as the historical vanguards that have influenced those."

Gallery opening times vary, so be sure to call before heading out. A list of participating galleries can be found at www.coralgables.com under the Arts and Culture tab.

THIS WEEKEND

FRIDAY, FEB. 5

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY



SPC-MMC presents Friday night movies.

WHEN: 5 and 8 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: GC 140

FREE TO BE FUNKY FRESH & FLY



SPC-BBC presents Pan-African Celebration.

WHEN: 9 p.m. - 1 a.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free for students, \$3 general admission (free with book donation)
 WHERE: BBC Ballrooms

MISS FIU PAGEANT

Scholarship pageant.
 WHEN: 7 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: GC Ballrooms

STAR PARTY



"An Evening at the Edge of the Universe." Lecture by Dr. Webb. Refreshments provided, observing after.
 WHEN: 8 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: CP 145

LOVE CAMPAIGN

Hosted by the FIU Wesley Foundation.
 WHEN: 12 - 2 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: GC Pit

SATURDAY, FEB. 6

MUSIC & FIREWORKS



Super Bowl Saturday Night: OAR, Barenaked Ladies perform.

WHEN: Gates open 4 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: Ft. Lauderdale Beach Park
www.nfl.com/superbowl

MEN'S BASKETBALL

FIU vs. North Texas.
 WHEN: 2 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: U.S. Century Bank Arena

W. BASKETBALL

FIU vs. North Texas.
 WHEN: 12 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: U.S. Century Bank Arena

DANE COOK



WHEN: 8 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: \$38 - \$102
 WHERE: BankAtlantic Center, 2555 NW 136th Ave, Sunrise, FL 33323

CHAMBER WINDS CONCERT



With works by Mozart and Maslanka.
 WHEN: 8 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: \$5 students, \$10 faculty, \$15 general
 WHERE: Wertheim Performing Arts Center
carta.fiu.edu

SUNDAY, FEB. 7

SUPER BOWL WATCH PARTIES ON CAMPUS

WHEN: 4:30 p.m.
 WHERE: University Park Apartments, Building A, Lounge

WHEN: 6 - 10 p.m.
 WHERE: University Park Towers, Student Lounge

FAMILY FUNDAYS ON SUNDAYS



Activities for the whole family.
 WHEN: 12 - 4 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: \$20 general, free for members
 WHERE: Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
 10901 Old Cutler Road

SUPER BOWL XLIV



Indianapolis Colts vs. New Orleans Saints.

WHEN: 6 p.m.

SUPER SALSA BOWL TAILGATE PARTY



Hosted by Pollo Tropical. Watch them break the Guinness World Record for largest bowl of salsa.
 WHEN: 12 - 4 p.m.
 HOW MUCH: Free
 WHERE: Pollo Tropical
 19500 NW 27th Avenue

Contact calendar@fiusm.com to have your event featured.

2010 FIU SIGNING CLASS

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL
Justin Halley	S	Boca Raton
Mitchell Wozniak	WR	Pasco
Sam Miller	CB	LaSalle
Randy Williams	S	Miami Springs
Khambrel McGee	CB	Northwestern
Richard Leonard	CB	Killian
Jordan White	DT	Williston
Glen Coleman	WR	West Jefferson (NO, LA)
David Delsoin	OT	Sheridan Hills Christian
Gregory Hickman	LB	Tampa Bay Tech
Isame Faciane	DE	Salmen (Siddell, LA)
Kedrick Rhodes	RB	Trinity Catholic
Jericho Lee	DT	Godby
Ceedrick Davis	OT	Forrest
Bryan Robinson	DE	East Gadson
Willis Wright	WR	Miami Springs
Jake Medlock	QB	Fletcher
Caleb Vincent	LB	Hollywood Hills
Jeremy Jermin	DE	Nassau JC (Brooklyn, NY)
TRANSFERS		
Josh Brisk	P	Duquense
Jeremiah Harden	RB	Syracuse

Results, not recruits: the true measure of coaching success

TOWERS, page 8

whom have the desired size to make immediate impacts.

The most important part of this class might just be the five guys being brought in for the defensive backfield. A trio of All Miami-Dade first teamers in Randy Williams, Richard Leonard and Khambrel McGee, make up what Cristobal called one of the top defensive back classes in the country.

TRUE STORY

Recruiting day is a time for heightened expectations. For every Willis Wright that looks like a can't-miss prospect, every team

likes to think their coaching staff was able to pick out 20 plus play makers that nobody else can compare with.

For all of the talk about the improved recruiting classes that Cristobal has brought in, there is still a need to see actual on the field improvement next season.

The only reason Hilton's story is so nice for FIU fans is because he stepped onto the field and became a star.

If Wright and the rest of this class aren't able to make the transition to the college game then all of the excitement over this class won't mean anything.

Foundations are built with strong recruiting classes, but games aren't won on potential.

Northwestern pipeline growing

JONATHAN RAMOS
Sports Director

FIU cornerback Anthony Gaitor has many fond memories of the times when he roamed the defensive backfield at Northwestern High, but he doesn't remember playing much with a young Khambrel McGee.

If McGee has his way, Gaitor will definitely remember him now. With FIU starving for defensive backs heading into 2010, McGee, a cornerback, will get another chance to share the field with Gaitor as a Golden Panther next season, as he signed a letter of intent to play for FIU next year.

McGee will also get the chance to team with former Northwestern Bull teammates, Wayne Times and Kenny Dillard.

"It feels good playing with my former teammates," Gaitor said. "I'm glad they came to FIU."

FIU head coach Mario Cristobal has emphasized recruiting at the local powerhouse, which won a pair of state titles last decade. Times had 19 catches as a freshman last season and Gaitor has evolved into an all-conference performer. Dillard is expected to contribute next season as well.

"Northwestern High School has bred champions for a long time," Cristobal said. "I think everyone in that administration takes great pride developing these young men. We have seen that in the guys that we have had over. Anthony Gaitor is a champion in everything he does.



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Anthony Gaitor is one of four Northwestern High School alums on FIU's roster, including new recruit Khambrel McGee.

Same thing with Wayne Times and Kenny Dillard."

McGee will look to provide depth in the secondary this season, and will compete with incoming cornerbacks Richard Leonard and Sam Miller for playing time, as well as veterans like Gaitor.

Cristobal believes the trio of incoming cornerbacks are among the best in the nation, and he was especially impressed by McGee's demeanor toward the recruiting process.

"He's been wanting to be a

Panther for a long time. He made it public and he stuck with it," Cristobal said. "It's important to note that, because you get on the Internet nowadays and you'll see kids switching back and forth 10 times and pulling off hats back and forth.

"It is what it is, but when you see a young man that knows what he wants and eliminates all the play time about it and sticks with it, you got to give credit to that young man. In a pressure situation, he's probably going to be all right."

Golden Panthers add size, skill on offense

JOEL DELGADO
Asst. Sports Director

You would be hard-pressed to find a fax machine in Miami busier than the one at FIU Stadium on National Signing Day, as coach Mario Cristobal eagerly awaited letters of intent from athletes from across the state and country to make their way into his hands.

And as the fax machine began to churn out those letters, it became clear that FIU added pieces to the offensive puzzle that may help put Cristobal another step closer to reaching his aspirations for the program.

"We're excited," said Cristobal. "We're on course to make another step toward improvement, to get ourselves back on track to where we want to be: a championship football team."

The first step was taken when Fletcher High quarterback Jake Medlock's fax arrived at FIU.

"You want to talk about a quarterback that's a leader, he is that and more," said Cristobal. "He's gonna make a difference here."

Medlock, a three-star recruit on Rivals who also received interest from schools such as Miami and Arkansas, suffered an arm injury which cut his senior season short. The 6-foot-2 signal caller has since been cleared by team doctors, however, and is expected to contribute after expected starter Wesley Carroll graduates.

"He's gotta continue to work on building his strength back in that arm," said new offensive coordinator Scott Satterfield. "He's got good size and has a good arm on him. Once he gets here we'll figure out what his true strengths are and we'll utilize those into the offense."

The big story for FIU was whether or not

Miami Springs wide receiver Willis Wright would choose FIU over West Virginia and Nebraska.

His name was added to the signing list after Wright formally made his decision to become a Golden Panther, becoming the first FIU signee to come from the ESPNU Top 150 prospects list. The signing also made FIU the only non-BCS team to sign a player from that group.

"Obviously a very smart young man," said a grinning Cristobal. "We're glad to hear that he put on the right hat at the library at Miami Springs. Not only is he a great football player, but he's an awesome young man."

The lack of production on the offensive line was a major problem for FIU last season, contributing to struggles in the passing and running games, and Cristobal looked to help address that need.

"The focus was trying to get bigger, stronger and more athletic up front," said Cristobal. "We got two real big bodies so far and we are looking to add more later on."

The additions of tackles David Delsoin, an All-Broward County selection, and Ceedrick Davis may add much needed help to the line, but the team may look for further help on the line during the spring with a handful of extra scholarships still left at their disposal.

"We're looking to possibly save a couple of scholarship offers for a little bit later in the spring from a junior college perspective to find more mature bodies," Cristobal added.

When the faxes stopped coming in and the dust settled, it became clear that only half the battle was won for the Golden Panthers. The rest is left in the hands of Wright, Medlock and the remainder of the class, hoping to make it happen where it matters the most: on the field.

Transfers add depth to '10 signing class

COMMITMENTS, page 8

Among them, Jericho Lee and Jordan White are incoming defensive tackles while Isame Faciane, Bryan Robinson and Jeremy Jermin will likely play defensive end.

"We went big. Jordan White is an explosive game changer and a big body that we have lacked inside for a long time," Cristobal said. "Outside is where I think we really hit a home run with Jeremy Jermin, an explosive edge rusher with natural pass rushing skills. We were looking to get big bodies anywhere we can find them."

With senior defensive lineman Jonas Murrell and Justin West out of eligibility and a few losses on the offensive line, FIU needed to not only fill those spots but also upgrade them significantly.

Cristobal hopes that size will help make the difference.

"We're looking at body types that give us a better chance to be successful on Saturdays," he said. "We had a tough time up front last season and that's the glaring need."

'COME BACK LATER'

FIU also picked up key transfers, including punter Josh Brisk, who is expected to fill the cleats

of Carlos Munera. Perhaps the most satisfying transfer for FIU came from running back Jeremiah Harden, who Cristobal coveted two years ago.

Harden was the Golden Panthers main target in the 2008 class, but he elected to play at Syracuse out of high school. After one season with the Orange, the former St. Thomas Aquinas star came back home to play at FIU.

"One thing that I think some local players are finding out is that either you pick FIU earlier, or come back later," joked Cristobal.

The Golden Panthers will bring in 11 defensive players and nine offensive players overall, in addition to Brisk on special teams, in Cristobal's fourth recruiting class.

After NCAA sanctions limited the team's ability to give out a full allotment of scholarships in recent years, FIU will bring in a full class.

Besides the surprise acquisition of Wright, Cristobal was pleased with the class, regardless of whose name came through the fax machine.

"It's like being a little kid at the Christmas tree," Cristobal said. "Is it the fire truck or a Tonka toy? You're just grabbing faxes as they come out."

NATIONAL SIGNING DAY 2010

ONE MORE STEP

Wright highlights class; Cristobal emphasizes size

JONATHAN RAMOS
Sports Director

As FIU coach Mario Cristobal waited to receive confirmation from committed recruits Wednesday morning, he was also hoping to add prospects to the Golden Panthers recruiting class who had yet to make a decision.

When the header on one of the pages coming out of the fax machine was from Miami Springs High, he knew good news was on the way.

That news came in the form of Willis Wright, a wide receiver that chose FIU over West Virginia in the last minute of the recruiting process.

Wright is one of 21 prospects who signed letters of intent with FIU on Feb. 3.

“It was like déjà vu,” Cristobal said. “I was really happy because when the header on the fax says Miami Springs, usually good things happen. What else can you say about Willis Wright? The entire country was coveting his services.”

Wright, a three-star prospect according

to *rivals.com*, had a similar signing day scenario to that of T.Y. Hilton in 2008.

Like Hilton, Wright starred at Miami Springs and chose FIU over West Virginia, among other schools.

Despite those parallels, Wright has a different playing style than his former high school teammate.

“People want to say he’s the next T.Y., but he’s different,” Cristobal said. “He is an outside receiver that plays football with tremendous explosion. There is a reason Nebraska, Florida and Miami tried to come down and get him.”

Along with Wright, FIU filled glaring needs along the defensive line, offensive line and defensive backfield en route to accumulating arguably the best class in the Sun Belt Conference.

BIG BODIES

The Golden Panthers added five defensive linemen, hoping to shore up what was one of the worst defensive units in the country last season.

COMMITMENTS, page 7

QUICK FACTS ABOUT 2010 CLASS

Offensive Players: 8

- Two OL
- One QB, two RB
- Three WR

Defensive Players: 11

- Five DL
- One LB
- Two S, three CB



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

FIU head coach Mario Cristobal introduced his 2010 recruiting class to the media in the morning and later in a public event at FIU Stadium.

Wright has accolades, but production is what matters



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MIAMI HERALD



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Willis Wright [left] joins fellow Miami Springs alum T.Y. Hilton [right] as two of the Golden Panthers’ most talented receiving options.

It was déjà vu for Mario Cristobal.

Two years ago, the library at Miami Springs Senior High was the site of wide receiver T.Y. Hilton’s signing day decision to come to FIU, a decision that has paid dividends for both Hilton and FIU as he has emerged as one of the top play makers in the Sun Belt Conference.

And on Wednesday, wide receiver Willis Wright was in the same library, and he had the same decision T.Y. did: Stay home for FIU, or go to West Virginia and its greener BCS pasture.

Happily for Cristobal, Wright, the first ever ESPN 150 player in FIU history, followed the same path as Hilton.

The story of Hilton’s decision to turn down BCS schools in order to be a Golden Panther

has entered into FIU lore (at least, as much as something can enter FIU lore), and maybe one day Wright’s story will prove to be similarly discussed.

But for Cristobal, now that Wright has signed on the dotted line, the only story he is concerned about is the one that takes place when Wright steps on campus.

BREAKING IT DOWN

FIU’s 2010 recruiting class is, at least at first glance, the strongest in school history, as has been the story every season since Cristobal took over.

Wright is the crown jewel, the guy to get the fans excited and to make headlines, but with FIU’s depth at wide out, he might follow a similar path as last year’s heralded recruit, Larvez “Pooh Bear” Mars, who spent much of the season buried

on the depth chart behind more experienced players.

If the 6-foot-2, 205 pound wide out doesn’t make an immediate impact, there are certainly others in the class who look like they can make a more immediate impact.

With FIU’s struggles on the offensive and defensive line, there was a lot of room for newcomers from last year’s class, like freshmen Andrew Mattox, Rupert Bryan, Dave Istanich, Tourek Williams as well as JUCO transfers like Thatcher Starling and Cedric Mack.

And despite the emergence of those young players, there may still be plenty of room for David Desloin and Ceedrick Davis on the offensive line and Jeremy Jermin, Bryan Robinson, Jerricho Lee, Isame Faciane, and Jordan White on the defensive line, all of

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COMMENTARY



CHRIS TOWERS