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Writers on the Bay returns with a friendly visit from award-winning author Diana Abu-Jaber.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3

This week, Jose Marti's legacy will be honored during an annual celebration, and a few lucky students will reap the rewards.

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Cabralitics: Standards for corporate funding of political candidates has slacked. Ask not what Frito-Lay can do for you, but what you can do for Frito-Lay.

OPINION PAGE 4

Fox News employs former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin and tosses journalistic integrity to the wind.

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A program that allows students to receive a master's in environmental through the Peace Corps.

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Basketball feature: Forwards Elisa Carey and Marquita Adley have improved FIU's front court.

SPORTS PAGE 8

Baseball notebook: Infielder Garrett Wittels expects to take the pitching mound in 2010.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lunch and a Movie, Jan. 27, 1-4 p.m. "Le Chiavi di Casa." Hosted by the Italian Club. Will be held in GC 140 for free.

Need Money? There's an app for that!, Jan. 27, 12:30-4 p.m. Financial aid presentation for free in GC 150.

Green Water Technology Demonstration, Jan. 28, 7-8:30 p.m. Learn about drinking the right water for your health. Event will be held at Water Truth, 309 W. 23rd St. RSVP at watersofhealth.com.

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

WEATHER



WEDNESDAY
Sunny
LOW: 64 HIGH: 73



THURSDAY
Partly Cloudy
LOW: 66 HIGH: 75



FRIDAY
Partly Cloudy
LOW: 69 HIGH: 78

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VISUALIZING SOUNDS



PHOTOS BY ESRA ERDOGAN/THE BEACON

Students from the FIU Laptop and Electronic Arts Ensemble (FLEA) performed at the New Music Miami Concert on Jan. 16 outside the Frost Art Museum. The concert featured experimental music and videos projected on the museum's exterior by students and faculty. The FLEA Ensemble performs music that reinterprets classics of the avant-garde by combining hi-fi and lo-fi technologies.

SGC-MMC

Elections commissioner chosen

FRANCISCO MARADIAGA
Staff Writer

The current lectures coordinator for the student government executive cabinet at Modesto Maidique Campus was confirmed by the senate as the new elections commissioner at a Jan. 25 meeting.

Christina Flores added to her list of titles including lectures coordinator and the informal director of communications for the MMC executive branch.

The broadcast journalism major vowed to the senate that she would strive to improve voter turnout and to make the process run "more smoothly."

One way Flores hopes to accomplish this is through the deregulation of "petty rules." One

example she gave was reducing regulations dealing with the times of campaigning.

Flores did not understand why a candidate could get a table at 6 a.m., but could not start campaigning until 8 a.m. Another centered around a rule that only allowed one campaign flier per board.

"I think eliminating those rules or reducing the amount of restrictions will help run a smoother campaign process," Flores said.

Flores also hopes to improve elections at MMC by studying other universities and taking a page out of their play books.

One such inspiration comes in the form of an absentee ballot that Flores believes will help raise the dismal numbers of the last election.

A copy of an absentee ballot application from University of Florida was circulated during the senate meeting.

The ballot lists the reasons for requesting a ballot as having a physical disability, serving as an election official, or due to conflicts with classes.

Student Media was unable to reach Flores for comment on what requirements would be needed to obtain an absentee ballot. However, during her confirmation hearing, she cited being out of town and not having access to a computer as valid reasons to obtain such a ballot.

Flores also plans to have voting centers in housing. Her goal would be to take advantage of the

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Gender identity discussed at forum

ALEXANDER MILLER
Staff Writer

The Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine hosted its first World Conference on Sexual Differentiation Disorders, providing new research and hopes to clear up guidelines for Olympic athletes dealing with ambiguity in gender cases.

The conference will offer Continuing Medical Education credit for physicians through the dual sponsorship of the College of Medicine and the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, according to the University press release.

The three-day conference took place from Jan. 15-17, examining gender issues based on research findings from a wide range of the world's best scientists.

The conference was meant to bring together the world's experts who are working both in the genetic and hormonal basis of conditions in which the genital development is not normal.

"It's an exciting scientific agenda. You are interested in the best in the world, so you want to [trust] the most knowledgeable," said Dr. Joe Leigh Simpson, M.D., professor of human and molecular genetics and professor of obstetrics and gynecology for the College of Medicine.

With the research provided, the conference also aimed to clear up gender issues in response to the debate of South African runner Caster Semenya's gender-test controversy. It was said during the conference that in places such as South Africa, Semenya's home, there were an increased number of reported cases of disorders of sexual development among black Africans.

"There seems to be a genetic susceptibility to acquiring disorders of sexual development existing throughout the decades. It may be lessened if there were more mixing of races," said Eric Vilain, one of the presenters at the conference, and professor of human genetics, pediatrics and urology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Many articles, such as the Sept. 7, 2009 *Sports Illustrated* article concerning Semenya's gender, have discussed the topic of what constitutes a man or a woman.

"This represents a birth defect involving these organ systems much like

Animals and environment subject of new club

NICOLAS SARAVIA
Contributing Writer

The Zoological Society at FIU has been recently formed with the aim of creating awareness for zoological topics that relate to humans as inhabitants of this planet.

This newly recognized club seeks to establish an academic community that is interested in attending lectures, seminars and conventions relating to biology, ecology and mammology, among other studies.

"I want to educate the student body about the different rules of the zoological world," said ZSFIU President Andrew Zamora, a biology major.

The group is working with advisor Professor Philip Stoddard of the biology

department.

"I'm very pleased the students have started this society and I am pleased to be their sponsor," Stoddard said.

ZSFIU plans on holding community service, including environmental cleanups and the opportunity to work with the World Wildlife Fund and other organizations.

They will also be hosting discussions and lectures on new discoveries and journals throughout the academic year.

The Zoological Society also looks forward to scheduling field trips throughout South Florida, including a trip to Jungle Island.

This society provides students a chance to connect with University faculty and other persons dedicated to the study of zoology and biology in general.

With 15 official members and more than 50 students on their mailing list, ZSFIU is looking for students to fill the positions of vice president, secretary, chairman of community service and chair of education.

In addition, the group provides 10 field specific positions, such as the ornithology chair.

ZSFIU also offers students the opportunity to join an organization fully dedicated to learning about the species that are encountered in diverse environments.

"I have been wanting to learn more about animals and, through the club, I could learn about zoology," said member Natalie Lopez, a freshman English major.

ZSFIU is an independent club that differs from other societies such as the

Zoological Society of Florida in the sense that they do not limit their work to zoos, it is an academic organization.

The Zoological Society at FIU is hoping to expand in the future.

"We are aiming to someday become national, and create an honor society for students interested in the field of zoology," Zamora said.

ZSFIU can be found online through Council of Student Organization's OrgSync site and Facebook.

The group meets every two weeks to plan events that will give students, faculty and staff a chance to get closer to the world of zoology and learn about other species' behavior, physiology and evolution.

NEWS FLASH

NATIONAL

Apple shuffles way to billion dollar profits

In a conference call to investors, Apple reported \$3.38 billion profit for its first quarter of the new fiscal year.

According to *Engadget.com*, the computer maker announced that sales for the iPhone have doubled and its computer hardware sales are up 33 percent. Sales for Apple's popular iPod media player are down 8 percent.

Apple stock is on the rise amid the rumored release of a tablet-like device during its Jan. 27 press event, where the company is expected to announce a new version of the iPhone operating system as well as a device for Verizon Wireless.

The event will be hosted by Apple CEO Steve Jobs.

Upgraded space suits on way for NASA

NASA is currently testing a space suit designed to sustain life for up to 150 hours in space.

According to *Gizmodo.com*, the Constellation suit looks to consolidate the two suits astronauts use into one single form. The suit has interchangeable parts that can be attached to different torso units which could accommodate different tasks, such as extra-vehicular activity and planet exploration.

A key feature of the suit is extra range of motion. The suit is expected to be implemented in 2015.

– Compiled by Jorge Valens

Fifth faculty member 'removed' for abusing procurement account

GABRIEL ARRARÁS
Asst. News Director

A fifth faculty member has been removed from the University due to improper use of their procurement card account.

In a Jan. 22 e-mail addressed to all faculty and staff, University President Mark Rosenberg called this instance "particularly regrettable" because the employee was a senior faculty member and former high-level academic administrator.

Rosenberg also emphasized that policies and procedures are in place to "ensure the public's continuing trust

in the University, as well as the safeguarding of financial resources."

"We must ensure that all units are operating in ways that are consistent with University policies, procedures and state law," he stated.

President Rosenberg did not mention the name of the faculty member removed, nor the amount of money spent on the procurement card.

Procurement cards are issued to members of faculty and staff who make purchases for their respective department's needs, such as University business expenses

or travel. The University monitors purchase histories on these cards.

University Chief Financial Officer Kenneth Jessell believes that they have the appropriate systems in place to protect the integrity of their credit card system.

However in a previous interview with FIU Student Media he stated, "No matter what system we have, there will always be an opportunity for abuse."

The Beacon has previously reported on four separate cases of faculty members being removed from the University due to improper use of the procurement card

this past Fall semester.

The previous instances, which occurred in September and November of 2009, came to light when employee investigations were made after procurement card account audits were conducted by members of the University's Office of Internal Audit.

"I hope this latest action speaks clearly to the fact that nothing less than the highest ethical standards are expected of all FIU employees," Rosenberg stated in the e-mail.

– Additional report contributions by David Barrios.

Commissioner's work schedule a concern, creates debate at meeting

SGA, page 1

flow of traffic through the lobby.

Also to combat the technical problems of past elections the new elections commissioner said there would be test runs for the voting system.

Senate Speaker Helena Ramirez questioned Flores on how her other responsibilities would interact with her new position. In addition to growing

number of titles and responsibilities with SGA, she is also an intern for the Office of the University President Mark Rosenberg.

Her resume also states she is a current event staffer for *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*.

Flores also reminded the speaker that her duties as lecture coordinator ends in mid-February when the final lecture of the year, Robert F. Kennedy,

Jr., will be held.

She was confirmed with a unanimous vote. Senator of Arts and Sciences Altanese Phenelus described Flores as "hard working" and "neutral" during debate.

Flores has previously told Student Media that her current load is manageable, and that she is not the only person in SGA with a full plate.

Gender testing for athletes explored

GENDER, page 1

others might involve the heart or spinal chord," Simpson said.

The first conference was hosted by Dr. Maria New, M.D., associate dean for Clinical Research at FIU's College of Medicine. She retains her position as professor of pediatrics and professor of genetics and genomic sciences at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

The conference topics covered a wide range of aspects involving Disorders of Sexual Development (DSDs), such as treatment of Ovotesticular DSD, The

Genetics of Ovotesticular DSD, and panel discussions on sexual identity and future directions of sexual determination. All of the discussions and presentations involved sharing research findings bearing statistics on cases of the DSDs.

The conference is also providing information in hopes of assisting the International Olympic Committee and the International Association of Athletics Federations in drawing up guidelines for testing athletes whose gender is in question. According to a London Associated Press article, the IAAF is reviewing test results to answer the question of Semenya's gender

and whether she is eligible to compete as a woman. The London Associated Press also states that the IAAF refused to confirm or deny Australian media reports that the tests indicate Semenya has both male and female sex organs.

"The purpose of the conference was to help educate us on how we should diagnose and treat these disorders," Dr. New said, in Semenya's defense. "When you're dealing with a person who comes from a rural area where there is little medical advancement, it is incumbent upon the governing body to handle the situation prior to the competition, and handle it correctly."

THE BEACON

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SGC-BBC

Heat ticket sales raise funds for scholarship

LATOYA BURGESS
Staff Writer

The Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus will bring the heat to the University in an effort to gain additional funding for the First Generation Scholarship.

On Feb. 24 from 12-2 p.m. BBC and Modesto Maidique Campus will sell Miami Heat game tickets during their pep rallies, for \$15; \$5 from each ticket sale will go towards the First Generation Scholarship.

The First Generation Scholarship is designed to help out students who are the first in their family to go to college.

Robert Conrad, executive director of the FIU Foundation, came up with the idea of using Heat game tickets to fund the scholarship. He was unable to be reached for comment.

Sholom Neistein, SGC-BBC president,

says aside from student's being able to purchase game tickets, there will also be other attractions to entertain the BBC crowd.

"I am pushing for a meet-and-greet for a few selected students to meet players and a basketball hoop where students will compete," Neistein said.

According to SGC-BBC clerk, Larissa Adames, Activities and Service fees don't cover the scholarship because "those fees only go toward Activities and Services."

Neistein feels this is unfair.

"It's a little hypocritical on the government's part because the government takes our tax money and gives it to welfare; why don't we take the money and give it to individual students who are suffering?" Neistein said.

Students who purchase tickets can enjoy the big game on March 24 at the American Airlines Arena.

'Writers on the Bay' series begins

MIKIALA C. TENNIE
Staff Writer

Award-winning author Diana Abu-Jaber will read some of her work on Jan. 28 at 8 p.m. in the FIU Biscayne Bay Campus Bookstore as a participant in FIU's Writers on the Bay series.

Abu-Jaber has written four books: *Arabian Jazz*, *Crescent*, *The Language of Baklava* and *Origin*. *Crescent* won the 2004 PEN Center USA Award, recognizing her excellence in literary fiction, and the Before Columbus Foundation's American Book Award, recognition of her work by other writers.

Abu-Jaber's books range from cultural tales about Arab-Americans and their lives between the two worlds to suspenseful mysteries about serial killers.

An associate professor at Portland State University, Abu-Jaber teaches courses within the English Department. She is also a writer-in-residence.

The Writers on the Bay series held three book readings last semester and is known for bringing distinguished authors to BBC to enhance the student experience.

Authors who participated in the series have visited creative writing classes and met with students at book readings.

All of the readings are free of charge and open to everyone, including non-FIU students.

The reading series is supported by Barnes and Noble Booksellers.

If you have any questions, please call the BBC English Department at 305-919-5857.



ABU-JABER

Marti's legacy to be honored during annual celebration

MELODY REGALADO
Staff Writer

More than 100 years after his death, one man still stands as a notable writer and symbol of Cuban independence, and FIU is set to honor him on his birthday.

Jose Marti will be commemorated at the Jose Marti Celebration on Thursday, Jan. 28 in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

"Through life I have read and reread many of Marti's works and they have served as inspiration and comfort," said Uva de Aragon, associate director of the Cuban Research Institute at FIU and a published poet and fiction writer.

Marti was born Jan. 28, 1853 in Havana, Cuba and died at the age of 42. His struggle to liberate Cuba began at a young age, when he was exiled to Spain at the age

of 17 for opposing Spanish rule through his writings.

He was a prolific writer in both journalism and poetry, particularly writing about the injustices in Cuba. He studied law and continued in his efforts and writings for a free Cuba in every country he lived in, including Mexico, Guatemala and the United States.

Today, because of his unceasing passion, he is revered as a hero and the father of Cuban independence.

FIU has honored Marti's life and accomplishments at BBC since 2001.

This free event is open to the public and begins with a continental breakfast at 8 a.m.

After breakfast, a panel consisting of FIU professors will discuss different aspects of Marti's life, which will be broadcast live on WQBA 1140 AM. This begins

at 9 a.m. and is hosted by Cuban journalist Bernadette Pardo.

Panelists include Aragon; Teresa Ponte, chair of the Journalism and Broadcasting Department and associate professor at the School of Journalism and Mass Communications; and Fernando Figueredo, chair of the Public Relations and Advertising Department and professor of strategic and multicultural communications.

Aragon will be giving a biography of Marti's life and describing his significance.

Aragon said Marti has been a great influence in her life starting with *La Edad de Oro*, a children's magazine turned book which she read as a child.

"In those pages I learned many of the principles that have guided my life: a sense of social justice and compassion for those less fortunate than myself, ethical

values such as honesty and integrity, and how, at the end, we are all the same in death," she said.

Ponte will be discussing Marti's role as a journalist, since he served as a newspaper director and published columns in several newspapers.

Figueredo will also speak about how several developments evolved that gave way for Marti to become one of the leaders of the Cuban independence movement in the early 1990s.

"Those developments involved my great-grandfather, who himself was another of the leaders of that movement," he said.

His great-grandfather, Fernando Figueredo Socarrás, moved to Key West from Cuba, and in January 1892 was visited by Marti and other revolutionaries and founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party.

After the broadcast of the

panel's discussion, this year's recipients of the Jose Marti Scholarship will also be announced.

This \$700 award honors full-time (12-credit) undergraduate FIU students at BBC with a minimum GPA of 3.5. They must also be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

To apply, students submitted a one-page essay on how Marti's works or history inspired their educational goals, along with the application form and unofficial transcript.

Aragon encourages students to read some of his works and come out to the breakfast.

"Reading him is like coming home," she said. "I welcome any opportunity to honor him and to try to transmit my admiration for this great man."

For more information or to RSVP, call 305-919-5700.

SINK OR SWIM



PHOTOS BY SERGIO MONTEALAGRE/THE BEACON

TOP: Anthony Zayas, seeking a second bachelor's in Asian studies (left), demonstrates air tank mouth piece recovery to Russ Waddey, a senior in psychology (right), to receive scuba instructor certification, as evaluated by Chad Barbay, National Association of Underwater Instructors (back) at the BBC Aquatic Center.

BOTTOM: Chad Barbay, National Association of Underwater Instructors, (front left) describes objectives that must be demonstrated to Zayas (back left), Alex Careno, diving boat safety assistant (center), and Russ Waddey, a senior in psychology (right), in order to having diving instructor certification.

CABRALITICS

US nation soon to be run by big businesses like Frito-Lay

The following column is brought to you by FRITO-LAY:

The taste of freedom has never been so delicious and lightly salted. Thanks to the recent 5-4 ruling in Citizens United v. FEC, corporations can now spend an unlimited amount of money on political campaigns. Previously, the only way for corporations to influence elections was by setting up 527s or political action committees made up of their employees, and collecting contributions subject to individual limits.

Those PACS and 527s could then run ads advocating for a specific issue or attacking or saying positive things about a specific candidate. Now, thanks to this ruling, corporations can spend an unlimited amount of money on ads or issue campaigns using money from their general treasury. They can potentially spend hundreds of millions more than before on trying to affect the political process.

Since the decision allows big business to have even more power over our elected officials, some have decried this decision as a threat to our democracy.

Of course, I couldn't disagree more. Sure, elected officials will now have to fear an even greater onslaught from big businesses if they choose to defy them but, what's wrong with that? I mean, under what circumstances would it be wrong to mix the interests of big business with the interests of the public? I certainly can't think of any. That's why I've sold the sponsorship rights to this column to

Frito-Lay, a company whose products, as we all know, are universally enjoyed for their uniquely robust flavor. Political discourse and corporate interests go together quite nicely, much like a bag of LAY'S® Chile Limon Flavored Potato Chips and an ice-cold Pepsi!

The Supreme Court decision is expected to generally benefit Republicans who tend to favor fewer restrictions on big business. That has left many members of the GOP salivating, much like a bag of FRITOS® Chili-Cheese Flavored Corn Chips. Unfortunately, the decision, like the chips of Frito-Lay's competitors, has left a bad taste in President Obama's mouth.

"It gives the special interest lobbyists new leverage to spend millions on advertising to persuade elected officials to vote their way – or to punish those who don't. That means that any public servant who has the courage to stand up to the special interests and stand up for the American people can find himself or herself under assault come election time," he said. What's wrong with that?

As the Supreme Court's majority opinion pointed out, under U.S. law, corporations are technically considered "people", and all corporations really want is the right to spend their own money on the candidates of their choice. And now, thanks to this landmark decision, they'll be able to directly spend hundreds of millions of dollars to defeat legislation or oppose officials that don't do their bidding. This will for sure cause members of

both political parties to bend to their will or be broken – just like the average Joe.

Of course, the logic of this decision has its share of skeptics, unlike the unquestionably great taste of DORITOS® Diablo Flavored Tortilla Chips (now with 50 percent more Diablo).

Ruth Marcus of the *Washington Post* is highly critical of the decision.

"The 'conceit' of corporate personhood, as Stevens called it, does not mandate absolute equivalence. That corporations enjoy free-speech protections does not mean they enjoy every protection afforded an actual person.

Is a corporation entitled to vote? To run for office?" she asked.

Ms. Marcus may have a point. However, thanks to this decision, they probably won't need to.

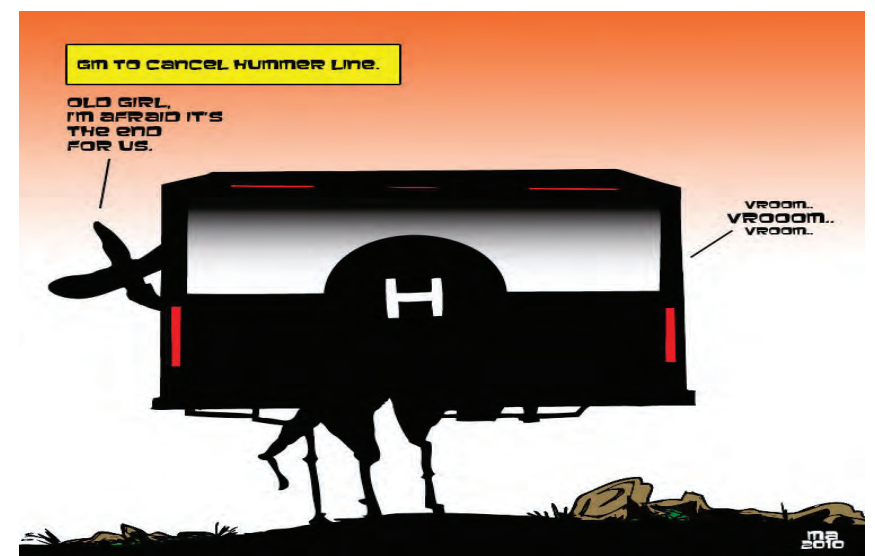
So, as you sit back and watch political events unfold, make sure to heartily consume some Frito-Lay products and remember that in the not too distant future, unless legislation is passed, even more of our nation's elected officials will be brought to you by special interests and big business. What could be better than that? Besides CHEETOS® FLAMIN' HOT® Cheese Flavored Snacks?

COLUMNIST



CHRIS CABRAL

ABOUT TIME



Fox News: new and improved with more Sarah Palin

KATY HUDDLESTON
Staff Writer

Recent news of Sarah Palin joining the team at Fox "News" (and yes, I will be keeping the "news" part in apostrophes) comes to much of America as a logical matchup with very little shock value.

Fox, a conservative outlet vouching for itself as a reliable, well-informed and legitimate source of news, joined forces with Sarah Palin, the previous GOP vice presidential candidate parading herself as a reliable, well-informed and legitimate source of news.

But it doesn't or shouldn't take too long before one immediately feels something isn't kosher here.

It has become the propaganda ministry for the Republican Party.

We live in an age when having a big mouth is a far more powerful quality than having a

big brain. The line between politics and media stardom has been growing ever thinner and the two are beginning to blend. The scariest part is that no one seems to notice.

Politicians, who necessarily hold a biased position, are signing into multi-year contracts with major news stations, but at the same time we are also seeing the reverse effect.

People like CNN's Lou Dobbs and radio personality Rush Limbaugh have both made their openness to a political position of some sort public knowledge. However, despite the seemingly parallel scenarios, I find myself much more apprehensive about the former.

Sarah Palin's Fox debut took place last week on "The O'Reilly Factor" in which an interview/news commentary hybrid took place for half an hour or so.

Instead of discussing important issues in their advertised "Fair and Balanced" way, Bill

"The line between politics and media stardom has been growing ever thinner and the two are beginning to blend. The scariest part is that no one seems to notice."

O'Reilly spent most of the time discussing the fact that Palin now "has a forum to set the record straight" – her personal record, that is.

"There will be a lot of that going on," she replied.

Is that really the direction society needs its news sources going?

Beyond the regrettably biased nature of news as it already exists on both ends of the political spectrum, the increased abundance of commentary and opinion oper-

ating under the guise of "news" is alarming – not to mention a very dangerous thing for our democracy.

As articulated by Mark McKinnon, a former John McCain aide, the role of news commentator is "an easy job with very little accountability", but it is also a very powerful one.

Pundits and news correspondents alike exist outside the realm of government, and thus are granted far more accuracy/leeway than a politician might

have.

Reaching vast audiences who either ignorantly or knowingly accept opinion as fact, they play an instrumental role in (mis)informing the nation.

The grudges I hold aren't personal or particular in regard to Sarah Palin or Fox "News", but rather directed toward the trend of combining news with commentary, and the ill effects it's wreaking on society.

What happened to the days of experts and Ph.D.'s, facts and measurable data? What grants Palin her legitimacy in informing the public on national issues, her B.A. in communications? What authority does Fox have to call itself news when it so clearly delivers facts with more than just a slight tint of red?

Where and from whom we get our information are two vital aspects in the formation of one's own views, and in the ability to distinguish personal opinions and beliefs from someone else's.

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SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Got a problem with parking? Want to give kudos to faculty? Or do you just have something to say about FIU? Send your thoughts in to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 240 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

WINNER/LOSER



Steve Jobs. Again. Apple is set to unveil its newest reason on Jan. 27 to shell out obscene amounts of money to be hip: the Apple Tablet. Rumors about the product have circulated for over a year. Actually, no one really knows what it does.



Former child star Gary Coleman was arrested on Jan. 24 in Utah for failing to appear in court. Coleman starred in the 1980's sitcom, "Diff'rent Strokes." Coleman was arrested after a domestic disturbance. "Wha'chu talking 'bout Willis?"

QUOTATIONATION

"The board looked at the potential candidates and decided this place needs stability. We don't need any more uncertainty."

Ed Whiteacre, Interim GM CEO announcing his position would be made permanent

SWEET RETREAT

Chocolate lovers indulge at annual fest



ALL PHOTOS BY ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

LEONCIO ALVAREZ
Staff Writer

There was no place for vanilla this weekend at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. The fourth annual International Chocolate Festival took place from Friday to Sunday, taking in all who are crazy for cacao.

For the first time in four years, the festival was held throughout three days and invited two new tastes: coffee and tea. Economically, these crops are important worldwide, the latter becoming the most popular beverage in the world following water.

Fairchild members were allowed complimentary admission, non-members paid \$20 to enter the chocolate mecca. The beginning trail hosted rare, beautiful flowers and plants and led to the Garden House Lawn, where most of the food vendors were set up, ready to sell anything from seagrass hats to really thick milkshakes (literally, that's what the sign read), to chocolate mole sauces.

These sauces were offered by Hey Mon Caribbean and given with crackers and breads from the Crackerman, a specialty store located in Bay Harbor Islands.

One sauce, dubbed "the hottest in the world," included four different peppers and should have been given with a gallon of water and a hose-down right after.

All kinds of spices and teas were displayed by World Flavors next to The Coffee

Cup's fresh brews, which originated from parts of Central America.

Crunchy, chocolate-covered coffee beans and shots of coffee were handed out by Marc Davis, CEO of D&Q Imports, the import of The Coffee Cup.

The Fairchild Chocolate Shop was also located here and attendants could buy extras like chocolate cookbooks, candles and chocolate-scented T-shirts.

Next to the shop, patrons could learn about and buy numerous chocolate, tea and coffee plants. Volunteers were on hand to explain how a cacao plant does not necessarily need a rainforest environment to flourish; they can grow just fine in South Florida under the proper care.

Volunteer Marcella Cruz spoke about the processing part of the chocolate-making.

"By adding milk and sugar to the cacao paste and [processing in a coffee grinder], you get more fat in your chocolate, making milk and white chocolate," Cruz said.

That cacao paste is what all the fuss is about, according to Chef Allen Susser of Chef Allen's in Aventura. Allen is an innovator in New World cuisine. During his cooking demonstration on Sunday, Chef Allen explained – after sharing his recipe for a simple chocolate cheesecake with an Oreo crust – that the cacao paste acquired from the

CHOCOLATE, page 6



PANEL PANEL

Experimental series back by popular demand

The title "Brave and the Bold" is thrown around a lot in the comic book industry. The original was conceived as a book where Batman was teamed up with random heroes in every issue.

COLUMNIST



SEAN GONZALEZ

The plan was to bring less popular heroes into the lime-light and hopefully get readers interested in them. Though this worked for a time, *The Brave and the Bold* was eventually canceled in 1983.

Recently, due to the vocal outcry of fans that could only be heard on the Internet forums that exist today, the once extremely experimental title has been revived.

At first glance, each issue seems like a blatant fluff piece. Putting together two random characters and drawing enough action on the front cover does a good job of selling issues.

But, after reading the last couple of issues from the latest arc, the opposite is discovered.

Instead of filling every page with pointless battles, the writer focuses on small, yet tightly detailed, character struggles.

In issue 28, The Flash is accidentally sent back in time and must team up with the Blackhawks to defeat the Nazis. He then experiences real war and has to decide whether he is willing to break his oath against killing for the good of the allies.

These small one-shots take advantage of the characters they have and waste no time getting to the basics of the story. This is a major advantage against longer series because everything in the longer arcs must be built up.

Despite this advantage, only talented writers can truly take up *The Brave and the Bold* and work the right emotion into 22 pages.

The latest issue involves the incredibly obscure character, Brother Power, aka The Geek. Teaming the unknown character, who was created in the 70s, with Batman, who is firmly rooted in the mainstream, opened up an interesting view of society and what it's like to consider oneself a hero.

The artists come and go between issues, but they always manage to find the right one for each story. The mood is captured well especially when the era in time changes.

Futuristic space is bright and flashy, snow-covered, war-torn Europe is drab and grey, and flashbacks to the righteous 70s are tinged orange and fuzzy.

The latest writer, J. Michael Straczynski, has yet to disappoint within any of his one-shots and, hopefully, the series stays on the creative track that it's on.

Picking up from anywhere is easy and *The Brave and the Bold* manages to blend new ideas with a classic framing.

Panel Panel is a weekly comics column written in tandem by Sean Gonzalez and Pablo Penton. Look for it every Wednesday.

- 1: Bonbons and miniature chocolates were available inside the Garden House.
- 2: Cacao seeds.
- 3: Chef Allen Susser demonstrated how to make your own chocolate.
- 4: Chocolate soaps made by Rob Valdez from Earthistry
- 5: A chocolate cake and cupcake contest took place throughout the weekend

Peace Corps helps broaden students' global outlook

ANASTASIA MOHAMMED
Contributing Writer

With the recent events in Haiti, many FIU students are wondering what they can do to help. The Peace Corps, which held an information session Jan. 25 in GC 314, is one option.

The organization seeks to improve the quality of life for people of other countries. Through education and the sharing of skills and technology, volunteers put into practice the adage of "giving a man a fish and teaching a man to fish," providing the knowledge to help these people improve their lives.

John Brakeall, a graduate student at FIU, is pursuing his master's in environmental studies through an integrated program between the University and the Corps.

"It provides a highly rewarding opportunity for individuals to take their skills and experience overseas to help developing countries that need it most," Brakeall said when asked about the positive impact of the Peace Corps.

Brakeall also serves as the FIU Peace Corps campus recruiter. He provides information for opportunities to join the Corps, as well as advice on how to improve one's chances of passing its rigorous standards for choosing qualified candidates.

The organization seeks to send the best possible candidates on their various global missions. The application process usually lasts around nine months. This allows time for careful consideration for the Corps as well as for the applicant. The Corps requires a strong commitment from those who are interested, and may not be suitable for everybody.

The minimum requirements for applying are that an applicant be at least 18 years old, in good health and a U.S. citizen. Applicants must also be willing to spend 27 months in training and service

abroad.

Ninety-five percent of applicants have an undergraduate degree and many volunteers should be expected to possess some type of skill, work experience or education level related to their program of interest.

The Peace Corps programs include agriculture, business and information and communications technology, education, environment, health and youth and community development. Applicants can state a preference on their application, but a program is ultimately chosen based on interest and experience with it.

Volunteers with the Peace Corps receive a monthly living allowance, full medical and dental care, 48 paid vacation days, professional skills and training, as well as intercultural experience.

Peace Corps alumni may also receive future benefits, such as school loan deferment or cancellation, graduate school opportunities through scholarships, credit for service and internships, job opportunities and a readjustment allowance of up to \$6000 when the program is completed.

Felicidad Garcia, a former FIU student, spoke about her experience as a volunteer in Cambodia. While serving there, she taught English and promoted HIV awareness.

Her first three months in the country were spent training; learning the language, developing her cross-cultural understanding as well

as health and safety skills.

While in Cambodia, she lived with a local family in the community. She paid them a stipend and helped with cooking and cleaning.

Garcia returned from her experience with vivid memories of the culture she had been introduced to, such as the many Cambodian weddings she attended, which were Buddhist celebrations that lasted up to three days.

"Peace Corps gave me a long-lasting, profound ... perspective about my role as a human being. Once I figured out what was really important to me in life, it was easier to focus on a career path without anxiety about what the 'perfect' job might be," Garcia said. "I seek out the root causes of things and initiate action more often since my Peace Corps service."

Brakeall agrees.

"The Peace Corps provides an opportunity to make a real difference in other people's lives while being given the opportunity to learn a new language, culture and grow as a person [through a life-changing experience]."

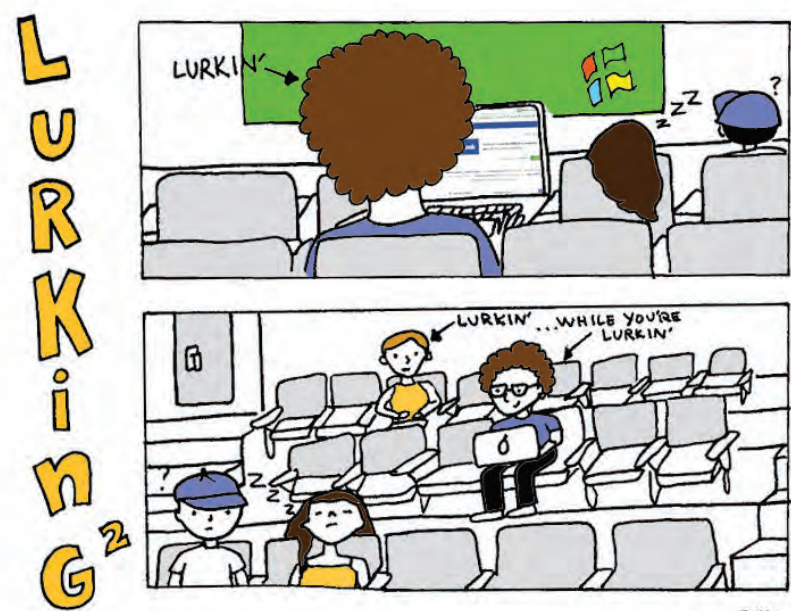
For those interested in service and a different cultural experience, and those who wish to find a way to help other countries in need, find out more information about the Peace Corps by going to <http://www.peacecorps.gov> or contacting John Brakeall at his office in ECS 157 in the Modesto Maidique Campus or by e-mail at jbrak001@fiu.edu.



COURTESY OF FELICIDAD GARCIA

The Peace Corps offers students an opportunity to receive a master's degree in environmental studies through an integrated program.

Diversions



		5	3				8
							2
1				9	5		4
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	1			5	6		

To solve the sudoku puzzle, every row, column and 3x3 box must contain the numbers 1-9 only once. Check your answers in Friday's issue.

Coffee, tea make first appearance at fourth annual chocolate festival

CHOCOLATE page 5

chocolate-making process was all that was necessary to start any recipe involving dark chocolate. He also stressed how the chocolate has no sweetness to it at first.

Inside the Garden House the first thing visible was a long table with many different kinds of chocolate cakes, all ready for a blue ribbon. This was the chocolate cake and cupcake contest.

"It's the first year we include cupcakes so, as you can see, no one brought any," said volunteer Stephanie Atheas. "Hopefully now that people know they'll bring some next year."

Chocolatiers, including the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory and Mr. Ganache, along with bakers from La Petit Pain French Bakery and L'Atelier Gourmet, filled the perimeter of the Garden House as visions of chocolate fountains – big and small – bonbons and candy apples greeted visitors.

Back in the lawn, the smell of hot popcorn tempted those exiting the Garden House.

Bags of what seemed to be light caramel popcorn were actually kettle corn seasoned with the most harmonious blend of sugar and salt imaginable.

Under the Harmony Kettle Korn tent, owner Bryan Moore clarified why he chose to bring popcorn to a chocolate festival.

"We brought the popcorn to other festivals here in the past and have sort of received a following," Moore said.

Down the path from the Garden House awaited the ChocoSpa, where the aroma of chocolate soaps and candles filled the air.

Rob Valdez from Earthistry gave samples of handmade soaps he made specifically for the event.

"For this weekend I made chocolate, chai, green tea and coffee soaps with ground bean exfoliation and without," he said.

Valdez also sells his soaps and cocoa body butters at local farmers markets,

including the one outside of the Graham Center, every Wednesday.

Massages were offered by students of the American Massage Academy while sitarist Stephan Mikes soothed their ears.

Miami chocolate lovers learned new things about their old favorite this weekend while sampling the tasty treats offered.

For a \$20 admission, and with most foods inside ranging from \$3 to \$20 themselves, the International Chocolate Festival at the Fairlawn is a good weekend rendezvous for a group of friends. Make sure to keep it in mind next year.

The Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is located on 10901 Old Cutler Road. Membership for students is a yearly fee of \$30. For more information, call (305) 667-1651 or visit www.fairchildgarden.org.



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

Chocolate fountains were present at many of the booths throughout the fair.

BASEBALL NOTEBOOK

Sophomore expects to return to mound in '10

CHRIS TOWERS
Staff Writer

Playing in a wooden bat summer league, sophomore infielder Garrett Wittels' Luray Wranglers were down big to the New Market Wranglers, 8-3 in the sixth inning.

Wittels, the starting second baseman, told his coach to put him to pitch and see if he could have better luck.

"I told my coach to put me in and I'll pitch," Wittels said.

As a freshman, Wittels flashed a strong arm in his 28 appearances at third base last year. He shook off the rust of a year plus off the mound and struck out the first batter he faced before loading the bases on a couple of walks and a single. He struck out the next two hitters he saw to close out a scoreless inning.

Wittels impressed in his first appearance and earned himself more opportunities on the mound, finishing the short season with 10.1 innings pitched, 16 strikeouts and just one earned run.

He also earned a vote of confidence from Wranglers manager Mike Bocock.

"My coach talked to Coach [Turtle] Thomas and asked him why I wasn't pitching," said Wittels. "So now I'll be a two-way player."

Thomas sees Wittels playing a vital role for the Golden Panthers on the mound as well as in the field.

"We've got four guys to play three positions [third base, shortstop, second base],"

said Thomas. "By all means, Garrett Wittels is going to get lots of playing time in the field."

Thomas said Wittels figures to be a power pitcher coming out of the pen, featuring a fastball that Wittels calls his best pitch, as well as a cutter, curveball and a change up.

"He could be a guy that comes in and strikes out two out of three in an inning," Thomas said.

MAJOR HOMECOMING

There was a familiar face at FIU Stadium on Monday, but he wasn't wearing his familiar FIU uniform.

Tom Ebert, a 19th round selection for the Boston Red Sox in last season's Major League Draft and the Golden Panthers' top starter last season, was on hand to work out and keep in shape during the offseason.

Ebert, who makes his offseason home near campus while his wife finishes her degree at FIU, has been using FIU's facilities to stay in shape in the offseason.

"I live down here now, so I was coming in in the fall and working out in the morning with them at 5 a.m., trying to get done in the morning," Ebert said.

After leading FIU starters in ERA last season, Ebert struggled some with the transition to the next level, giving up 16 earned runs in 24 innings with the Lowell Spinners of the New York-Penn League.

"The hitters were a lot better than what I thought they'd be," said Ebert. "It's just different."

Golden Panthers improve with reinforcement down low

WOMEN'S, page 8

it's an improvement from last year's six and both players agree that the team's identity has changed as their front court pressure has improved.

"I feel like [our opponents] have to take more outside shots because they know that if they come inside that we're going to have great defense. Either we're going to block it or double team you," explained Carey. "We're not weak inside so they have to find other options."

Adley, however, made it clear that changing the front court's identity has not been an easy task. The two friends have had to help each other out a lot to become the dominant tandem they are today.

"Elisa has helped me lose a lot of weight so that I can run and do what I need to do," said Adley. "We played basketball everyday for about four hours after workout here. She also ate the same food that I ate. The food was gross but she did it."

Carey missed the season's first three games due to a leg injury, but since then she's had a hot hand. This season she has led FIU in scoring eight times and rebounding 10 times.

Adley missed seven games earlier this season, but has played in eight consecutive since then. Most recently she has been moving up on FIU's all-time blocks list, as she passed Jasmine Jenkins for the No. 7 spot on Jan. 17. With 92 to her name now, Adley needs just 10 more for the No. 6 spot.

"We've been working hard," she said. "We've been doing some of the same type of drills that the guards do so that the transition will be easier when we have to play a post player that steps out to the three-point line, or we have to play a drive-in player, or if we have to play a true post player."

Carey agrees that Adley, along with the rest of her teammates, have pushed each other to become better.

"I think we worked really hard over the summer, collectively," she said. "We forced each other to work hard and perform at a higher level. Everybody came back better. I feel like my confidence has gotten better and that makes me more aggressive and that makes me want the ball even more. Just wanting it and taking over the game is what has really improved for myself."

Most recently Carey had success against Arkansas-Little Rock on Jan. 23. She scored a career-high 22 points and added eight rebounds while also going a career-high 10-of-11 from the free-throw line.

Adley's most recent success came against Arkansas State on Jan. 20. She grabbed a game-high 13 rebounds, dished out a career-high seven assists, and blocked three shots in the 65-61 win.

The playmaker, who has a wide frame but says she's only about 5-foot-9, expressed the rush she gets when swatting a shot.

"It's empowering and I get hyped," she giggled. "I try to jump as high as I can every time I jump but people I play are taller so they're usually blocking me but when I get the chance to do it back to them it's great."

Carey, who stands at 6-foot-2, seems to enjoy the feeling as well.

"It's a great feeling," expressed Carey. "It's like you're saying, 'This is my house. Are you serious? Don't come in here with that, if you don't come strong then don't come in here at all.'"

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

FRONT COURT TAKEOVER



CHRIS ADAMS/THE BEACON

Elisa Carey [left] and Marquita Adley [right] have been able to bolster the Golden Panthers' interior defense, as they rank among the conference's leaders in blocks and rebounds, as well as contributing more than 20 points a game between them.

Duo making presence felt after injury riddled start

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

After dealing with injuries early in the season, Elisa Carey and Marquita Adley have worked together to produce an improved front court for the FIU women's basketball team.

The forwards, who are best friends, have become some of the most dominant players on the team and have even made some noise in the Sun Belt Conference standings.

Carey, a redshirt junior, currently leads the Golden Panthers in scoring and rebounding with 11.4 and 9.6 per game, respectively, while also ranking third in the conference in blocked shots and fourth in rebounding.

Meanwhile, Adley, a senior, contributes off the bench with 8.8 points and 9.0 rebounds per game while ranking third in the conference in rebounding and eighth for blocked shots.

Although the Golden Panthers (8-13, 3-7 SBC) have just eight wins so far this season,

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RECRUITING ROUNDUP

With signing day looming, FIU still in mix for many

Football looking to reload with some last-minute additions

With a net that can be cast all throughout the state of Florida, there have been plenty of fish in the deep sea of football talent the state possesses for FIU.

Despite competition from six other Football Bowl Subdivision schools in the state who are in the process of acquiring good classes of their own, there is enough talent left over for FIU to complete arguably its best class ever.

More importantly, the Golden Panthers are separating themselves from their Sun Belt Conference foes.

With signing day a week away, it is becoming increasingly clear that FIU is beginning to grasp the SBC recruiting scene from perennial power Troy.

The Golden Panthers lead the conference with nine three-star recruits, according to *rivals.com*.

FIU holds oral commitments from 20 recruits, but *rivals.com* confirms only 14, leaving Troy barely hanging on to the top ranked class in the conference.

You could hear a pin drop in Boca

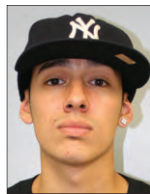
Raton, the home of rival Florida Atlantic, who won two bowls in the last decade before floundering in '09.

The Owls have just 11 reported commitments, but only four are even ranked by *rivals*.

If FIU closes strong before the Feb. 3 national signing day, it could claim the best recruiting class in the conference for the first time ever.

Here is a look at impact recruits on the fence who are considering FIU:

COLUMNIST



JONATHAN RAMOS

OFFENSE

Hillsborough High quarterback Tarean Austin visited FIU a few weeks ago and told *rivals.com* that it "was pretty good." The three-star prospect would join Fletcher High's Jake Medlock in the class, but it wouldn't be a huge loss not to get him.

Austin would be a nice pickup, however, considering that SBC rival Western Kentucky is after him and will get a visit from the dual threat athlete this weekend.

DEFENSE

Pierce Community College defensive tackle David Mahoney visited



PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN.COM

Defensive tackle Todd Chandler of Miami Northwestern highlights the list of recruits FIU is still hoping to nab from bigger schools before the signing deadline.

Miami Springs wide receiver Willis Wright visited FIU last week and his high school coach, Alex Pacheco, said FIU is "right there."

Pacheco said that Wright is down to FIU and West Virginia, and will announce on signing day.

FIU earlier this month.

The three-star defender would help bolster the Golden Panthers' run defense, but is also considering Washington State and New Mexico State.

FIU was hopeful that four-star defensive tackle Todd Chandler would decide to stay home, but the Northwestern High product is now indicating FIU is out of the picture.

Chandler switched his commitment from Miami to South Florida last month, and now claims Louisville as his leader after an official visit.

Northwestern cornerback Khalid Marshall lists offers from Louisiana State and FIU, and is still considering the Golden Panthers. However, the three-star prospect may be deterred by the fact that FIU is bringing in a slew of defensive backs.