

FIU alumni celebrate in matrimony ruling for legal same-sex marriage

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FIU alumni and former student editor for The Beacon, Andrea Vigil and her partner Rebekah Monson always considered Florida to be their home.

It was where they met almost nine years ago at the Sun Sentinel and it is where they knew they wanted to get married.

"We've never wanted to go somewhere else to do it, we wanted to wait until it was legal in Florida," said Vigil, who graduated in 2013 with a degree in Liberal Studies after taking a hiatus from school to focus on work. "This is our town; it doesn't make sense to go elsewhere."

After same-sex marriage became legal in Florida on Jan. 6, the couple joined other eager-to-marry lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered couples in a marriage license bureau downtown, at midnight, to tie the knot.

The couple flew in Monson's mother from Alabama, filled out marriage license forms and were married by an efficient, an hour and a half later.

"It's nice to have it be recognized legally," Vigil said. "You know, if god forbid something happened to Rebekah, I want to be by her bedside in a hospital, which would have been

difficult to do otherwise."

In 2008, Florida passed a constitutional gay marriage ban with the support of 62 percent of voters. Nearly seven years later, same-sex couples are able to marry in 36 states and Washington D.C., now including Florida.

"It's a wonderful experience to finally be able to have my relationship with this person be recognized by everyone," Vigil said. "We thought it was going to take many more years for it to happen."

For years, South Florida gay rights advocates groups like SAVE, have been fighting for equal rights, including rights to the same marriage benefits given to hetero-sexual couples.

Now, since the ruling in Florida, LGBT couples may qualify for state's coverage for health insurance and retirement benefits.

Last week, FIU's Division of Human Resources notified FIU employees that the Division of State Group Insurance (DSGI) will recognize any legal marriages as of Jan 6, and will open a chance to apply for state's benefits programs and family plans through Friday, March 6, 2015.

"I'm glad to see FIU's HR moving forward," said Gisela P. Vega, Associate Director for LGBTQA Initiatives and

Multicultural Programs and Services at FIU. "We [LGBTQA] knew it was a matter of time before the Florida ban was overturned."

Two FIU alums from the LGBTQA community, Cathy Pareto and Karla Arguello, agree.

Last fall, the couple of 14 years were guest speakers during National Coming Out Day at FIU, and have been committed

to LGBTQA initiatives, such as promptly supporting and preparing for the ruling on Jan. 5.

It was that afternoon, Pareto and Arguello became the first same-sex couple married in Florida.

Miami-Dade Circuit Judge, Sarah Zabel, wedded the couple and after the ceremony they stood outside in their cream colored dresses and held a green

sign that read: "IT'S TIME FOR MARRIAGE IN FLORIDA."

To be involved with FIU LGBTQA visit their "Welcome Reception," in MMC Jan. 14, in GC 243, from 4-6 p.m., or Jan. 15, at BBC, WUC 157, from 12-2 p.m.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUCE PINCHBECK.

FIU alum Andrea Vigil(left) and partner Rebekah Monson(right) celebrate in matrimony Florida overturning gay marriage ban.

"Argosy" sculpture to be returned after renovations

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The traffic circle at the 16th Street entrance of the University was blocked off Saturday, Dec. 20 by a crane that lifted the red towering sculpture that is placed there, similar to how Marty's Cube was lifted from its spot in front of Deuxieme Maison in May.

The sculpture, owned by the same collector that retrieved the 15-foot spinning cube, was returned once the base of the sculpture was renovated.

The Margulies Collection curator, Katherine Hinds, said the University informed her that "Argosy," a sculpture by Alexander Liberman, would undergo renovations in December.

The sculpture is part of the Margulies Collection and on loan to the University.

Marty's Cube, however, had been donated to the school around 2009 and the University chose to return it after housing it for 16 years.

In May, President Mark B. Rosenberg made the decision to return the cube to Martin Margulies as a safety measure.

Hinds said back in May that over a period of time outdoor sculptures tend to have maintenance needs.

"Universities make budgetary decisions," said Hinds, who was glad that the University

gave her the opportunity to take back the cube to renovate it and bring it back to top-notch conditions.

After receiving renovations, the cube will not return to FIU.

"We will then decide where to re-donate the work," said Hinds.

Hinds said the cube will be donated to and maintained by another educational institution in Florida.

“Universities make budgetary decisions.”
Katherine Hinds
Curator
Margulies Collection



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

"Argosy," a sculpture by Alexander Liberman, is lifted and removed to allow renovations of the base. The sculpture will return to the University once the renovations have been completed.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

2 hostage dramas unfolding as French police close on terror suspects

French security forces were locked in standoffs Friday with two sets of hostage takers who appear to be part of a single terror cell responsible for the murders of 12 people at the offices of a satirical Paris newspaper.

The first case was unfolding at what was described as the offices of a business not far from Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport, where the men, believed to be Said and Cherif Kouachi, had taken a hostage and had told authorities they were "willing to die as martyrs."

As police surrounded that site, a third and possibly a fourth suspect – believed to have killed a police woman Thursday morning in a Paris suburb – apparently took five hostages at a Kosher grocery store on the eastern side of the city.

Television reports showed anti-terror police frantically moving into position at both standoffs.

Police had initially said that the Wednesday attack on the Charlie Hebdo newspaper was carried out by three people. But authorities had focused on the Kouachi brothers alone after an 18-year-old initially identified as a suspect was found to have been in school during the Wednesday shootings.

But on Friday, authorities said the Charlie Hebdo killings were linked to Thursday's shooting of the police woman in Montrouge in southern Paris and asked the public for information on the whereabouts of two people – a man and a woman – suspected in the case. The man was reported to have been dressed similarly to the assailants at the newspaper office.

A few hours later, Paris authorities said the male suspect in the Montrouge case had taken hostages at the grocery, which is located in Paris's 12th Arrondissement. The French Interior Ministry later identified the Montrouge shooter as the likely third gunman in the Charlie Hebdo killings.

French news reports said the suspect at the grocery store had told police "You know who I am, I won't release these hostages until you end the siege up north," apparently referring to the standoff with the Kouachi brothers.

Authorities identified the suspect as Amedy Coulibaly, who was born in 1982, and said he was an associate of the Kouachi brothers.

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Women are at forefront of China's anti-smoking crusade

TNS STAFF

Nearly every day in China, women go to work in smoke-filled offices, exposed to the fumes of cigarettes smoked mainly by male colleagues. After work is over, many go home to breathe secondhand smoke created by husbands or other family members.

China is known as the Smoking Dragon, but its addiction to tobacco isn't shared between the sexes. According to the most recent national survey, 288 million men smoked regularly in China in 2010, compared with 13 million women.

Lately, the women are striking back. Last fall, China's State Council proposed the nation's toughest restrictions yet on indoor smoking and the marketing of tobacco. The announcement was a major victory for China's tobacco-control movement, which includes several women who've been on the front lines for decades.

"This is a very important step," said Yang Gonghuan, an epidemiologist who's been documenting tobacco's toll on Chinese public health since the 1980s. "It is very difficult to push for these kinds of changes on a national level. ... It has taken many, many years."

Although China is known for its smog and other environment problems, no public health issue poses more of a threat than tobacco. An estimated 1 million Chinese die each year from lung cancer and other smoking-related diseases.

China's anti-smoking movement includes many prominent men. Former NBA center Yao Ming and other celebrities have lent their names to the cause. An activist named Li Enze filed a lawsuit in 2013 against China's tobacco monopoly, alleging that it had fraudulently marketed a low-tar cigarette brand called Black Tiger.

Yet in government and among tobacco-control groups, women are leading the charge. China's health commissioner, Li Bin, has been outspoken in seeking a national indoor-smoking ban. Li sits on the State Council, a top-level panel that drafted the restrictions unveiled in November. Two of her key deputies are women.

Among academics, Yang is known for her extensive research into tobacco use and disease trends. Brookings Institution

researcher Cheng Li said Yang "has played a crucial role in China's anti-smoking campaign," particularly by co-authoring an influential 2011 report that documented the health effects.

Other top anti-smoking advocates include Wu Yiqun, the founder of the ThinkTank Research Center for Health Development, and Xu Guihua, vice chair and secretary-general of the Chinese Association on Tobacco Control.

Angela Pratt, who leads the World Health Organization's anti-smoking efforts in China, said Yang, Wu and Xu had played crucial roles in elevating the issue.

"These people have been the driving force of tobacco control for a long time," she said.

As Pratt noted, the battle is far from won. Although smoking rates have declined in recent years, more than half of Chinese men smoke regularly, according to the WHO. Some 700 million Chinese – twice the population of the United States – are routinely exposed to secondhand smoke, which kills an estimated 100,000 people annually.

It isn't entirely clear why so many women are driving China's tobacco-control movement, but cloud-filled rooms may be a factor. "The issue of secondhand exposure is a big issue for women," Pratt said. Many are increasingly aware of the potential health impacts on children.

Chinese have smoked tobacco for centuries, and up until the early 1900s women regularly could be seen with men puffing on pipes. But with the advent of cigarettes, Chinese intellectuals and foreign missionaries started

frowning on women who smoked. According to Carol Benedict's book "Golden-Silk Smoke: A History of Tobacco in China, 1550-2010," society started to describe female smokers as "modern women," a label also given to the promiscuous and unpatriotic.

As a result, women quit smoking, even as Chinese leaders such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping smoked openly in public, encouraging the habit among men.

Today, China is the world's biggest consumer of tobacco. It's also the largest manufacturer, producing more than 2.3 trillion cigarettes yearly, nearly half the world's total. Unlike in the United States, private companies such as Philip Morris do not dominate the market. Instead, the China National Tobacco Corp. – an arm of the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration – controls nearly all the cigarette brands sold.

That puts the Chinese government in an unusual dual role: One arm of the government, the Health Ministry, tries to restrict tobacco use and warn of its dangers, while other government agencies benefit from tobacco's profits and tax revenues, which totaled nearly \$120 billion in 2012, about 6 percent of government revenues.

"This is why tobacco control in China happens so slowly," said Yang, a professor of medicine who directs the Burden of Disease Research and Dissemination Center in Beijing. "The tobacco industry is very powerful."

Yang, who formerly worked in China's version of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, became interested in

smoking-related diseases and other preventable illnesses while attending medical school in Chengdu in the early 1980s. Early in her career, she studied at Harvard School of Public Health and worked on health projects for the World Bank and the World Health Organization. Because of her WHO experience, she became part of the Chinese delegation that worked on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which China ratified in 2005.

China's signing of that treaty was a triumph for the global tobacco-control movement, but expectations quickly diminished. Smoking has remained common in public places across the country, particularly in rural areas, where half of the population lives. Large numbers of doctors in China smoke. It wasn't until 2010 that the Health Ministry banned smoking in its own building.

In recent years, attitudes toward smoking have started to shift. Top leaders of China's Communist Party are either nonsmokers or are careful not to be spotted lighting up in public. Late in 2013, the party banned government officials from smoking in public or giving cigarettes as gifts. Individual cities have enacted their own restrictions on tobacco.

The draft regulations unveiled in November, if enacted and enforced, would take China into another realm. The proposed rules would ban indoor smoking and make private businesses responsible for enforcing the ban, subject to fines if they don't. It would further limit the marketing of tobacco in China and require larger warning labels on cigarette packs.

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Human development disturbing natural adaption

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I attended an extremely interesting seminar last semester covering the effects of climate change (formally known as global warming) on the rainforest in South America. It was by one of our biology professors Dr. Ken Feeley who also runs a program that takes students to the rainforest to do field research.

According to Dr. Feeley, the Earth is heating quickly, even quicker than originally expected. By 2100 the average global temperature may be as much as three degrees hotter. Three degrees is the difference between the average global temperature now and the last ice age. Six degrees would wipe out humans completely.

How is the rainforest reacting? Not quickly enough. The majority of species are not able to deal with the hotter climate and there's not enough time to change their genetic makeup, so options are slim.

With temperatures rising, plant species are migrating up in elevation, called upward species migration, in attempt to save themselves. But the rate just isn't fast enough.

Plants (mainly trees) are climbing at a rate less than half of what is necessary. And that's not the only problem.

Although space on the Andes Mountain is more plentiful at higher elevations than lower, due to the shape encompassing more plateaus and less peaks, the treeline (cutoff where trees don't grow higher) is not moving up

like the rest of the plants are.

If plants were to move at the necessary rate and the treeline moved up with them, there could be a 20% increase in their numbers. But that isn't happening. Instead, the treeline hasn't moved in 40 years.

Why? Simply put, humans.

As we love to do in our existence we are manipulating our environment for our needs. And although I am not going to say the plight of the locals is less important, it is having a dramatic effect on the local plant species.

At the current rate, if the treeline doesn't move and upward migration continues at its current rate, we will see a loss of 42% of the plant species in the rainforest. With there being about 2,500 species accounted for, that would be a significant loss. And that's not taking into account deforestation which sees thousands of trees being cut down every day.

What can we do? Generally, not much. Manual migration would be too difficult and slightly unethical. Our best plan would be to stop getting in nature's way and allow it to do what it does best.

We must understand we are seeing a global shift at a rate that has never been seen. But just as the Earth has done for millions of years, it will develop a new look. Temperatures will fluctuate throughout the world and weather patterns will change. Animals and plants will become extinct and more adaptive and better-suited species will take their place.

The real question is, will humans be one of them?

Think gun reform not control

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3 years ago, Jared Bretherick was cruising in a car with his family close to Orlando when another vehicle, steered by Derek Dunning, nearly sideswiped their car.

A brief confrontation ensued, during which Bretherick's father dialed 911 and unveiled a holstered weapon. Dunning got back inside his car and began backing it up toward the Brethericks. When officers arrived at the scene, Bretherick was aiming his father's gun at Dunning's vehicle. He was detained, arrested and charged with aggravated assault.

In Bretherick's first court hearing, he pursued legal immunity under Florida's "Stand Your Ground" law. The statute, which attracted national attention following the Trayvon Martin case, protects individuals who use weapons in self-defense.

Bretherick's request for immunity was turned down, but several protests and many months later, he was able to appeal his case all the way to the Florida Supreme Court.

If the Court ruling is in Bretherick's favor, those who own guns would no longer be required to prove that they were acting in self-defense when using their weapons in rough confrontations. Rather, prosecutors would have to prove that the person did not act in self-defense, an incredibly difficult burden of proof.

There are no signs that Bretherick's life was in jeopardy, in spite of the fact that he claimed Dunning said he had a gun, the sole weapon found at the scene was the one in Bretherick's hand.

Luckily, he never fired his firearm, although it is very likely that he could have if it weren't that officers arrived when they did.

The plain fact that this case has standing in a court of law shows how far off track our state's gun policy has developed. At any opportunity, judges and NRA lobbyists support and urge loosening Florida's gun restrictions which can clearly lead to an increase in unneeded violent confrontations.

Of course, as citizens and as students, we should have the right to adequately protect ourselves and our families and friends when their lives are in danger. However, firing a firearm is a serious matter. Those who participate in such an act should have to justify their actions if there is doubt about whether they were warranted or not.

All this spawns a million questions, like whether or not guns should be allowed on college campuses, or if we should reconsider the 2nd amendment altogether. Many believe the 55 percent of students who carry a weapon have no bad intentions; they simply need their gun for protection against the occasional parking spot savage. But the other 45 percent is what should worry all students of FIU as well as our elected politicians.

Just 2 months ago an FIU officer lost his temper and fired his gun inside a police facility on Biscayne Bay Campus. Many students may not grasp the severity of this kind of topic, but when we wake up and news headlines read "High School Shooting in Ohio" or "3 Killed, 2 Injured At Local College", we have to realize that this is happening and it's terrifying.

Luckily, our campus' police department is always working to ensure our overall safety, but as students we should push for gun reform not just for our state and for the safety of our friends and family, but for our country and for all Americans.

Free love comes at a price

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It used to be that a man had to pick up his date at her parents house, get to meet the family and probably go through some sort of awkward experience. The woman would usually wait for marriage before sex, except for the lucky guys who got some action after becoming committed to a relationship with her. Then came birth control and free love. Once millions of women began having casual sex, everything changed and eventually free love became a tool for women to emancipate themselves from the chains of old customs and to help raise their status to men's equal.

Ironically, this tool of emancipation has taken something very important away from women.

Besides the obvious problems of STDs and teenage mothers, there was a change in the dynamic of the relationship between men and women. Before the era of free love, men courted women. They were willing to go through the awkward family visit, to wait for sex, to be gentlemanly, and to do anything that they needed to win over the heart of the woman that he liked, but no more.

Now that sex is free, it has become very rare to find a man that is willing to go

through the hoops for a woman. A cynic might believe this to be a sort of folly of men, but in reality it is the new field that the game is being played in. If one is stranded on a deserted island, slowly dehydrating, he would likely go for the lowest hanging coconut, the one that is easiest to acquire. The problem is that women are at a disadvantage in this game.

When it comes down to it, very few men want to marry the lowest hanging fruit. The men that do are likely low hanging fruits themselves. Perhaps, as a throwback to how things used to be, men value women that are not easily accessible. This means that men wouldn't likely marry a girl who has had many partners in the past. While many women hate to hear this, women also have a shorter biological clock than men. What that means is that women have less of a time to experiment with free love than men, and once they are ready to settle down they have a shorter time to find a partner to raise a family with.

What the big picture shows is that now it's the men who have the power when it comes to choosing a partner. While it might be unfair, society puts a higher value on women's prudence than that of men. As long as men are not hurt by sexual experience, they get to judge women using a different system than women use on them. Since the society values prudence greatly,

a good woman can easily fall short. On top of this, a man can take his time to look for the right partner because he can reproduce and have a family until a much later age. Not only can he look for longer, but he can look for younger women that have the qualities that he wants in a wife. While an older woman can also look for a younger man, she still has to marry at a relatively young age if she wants to bear more than one child.

While this is the current state of affairs, it is not something that is written in stone. Looking further into the past, men arranged marriages for women, so the situation of a man having the power to chose his wife as opposed to the vice versa is more old than new (which is ironic). That being said, it is sad. As a man, I feel great sorrow for the loss of chivalry. It has now become common for men not to behave like a gentleman and to be disrespectful to women.

The future is still a mystery. Perhaps one day, society will not look down upon women who have had active sexual lives. There could also be further advances in medicine that would allow women to have children at a later age and destroy the biological clock. In the short term, both men and women should be more selective, because one-night-stands and friends with benefits are a sign of short-sightedness and do little to help us develop as people.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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Recapping the biggest trends of 2014

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Some of us have already taken down the Christmas lights, unassembled the fake Christmas tree, freaked out about our credit card statements and gained a few pounds from the Christmas dinner leftovers.

The nostalgia is slowly wearing off and the new years resolutions are in full effect. However, before we close the chapter on 2014, below are a few trends and happenings that made it memorable.

Although Brazil left the **World Cup** early like Cinderella at midnight, they made it far enough to give the locals something to talk about. The fever was enough to make LeBron James tweet about his favorite Colombian player James Rodriguez (pronounced Ha-mez) and make everyone jump on the soccer band wagon. People who never cared about the sport were decked out in jerseys of their favorite team and filling up local bars as if it was the Heat play-offs.

The **Ice Bucket Challenge** - raised about 115 million dollars for

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), often referred to as "Lou Gehrig's Disease," and raised many more goosebumps. The challenge required anyone being "challenged" to drop a bucket of ice cold water over themselves while being recorded. The catch - challenging

someone else to do it within 24 hours. If the person declined, they had to make a donation to the site. **ALS** is a neurodegenerative disease that affects that neurons by destroying their structure and/or function. It is because of this challenge that 18.5 million dollars were raised and will be allocated directly toward the advancement of ALS research, according to the ALS association.

Hipsters - Either you love them or you hate them, or you're in denial that you are one - hipsters are here to stay. An easy way to spot most hipster guys are by their handlebar mustaches or beards, a pompadour haircut and tattoos. Most hipster girls wear a black hat that make them look like cute pilgrims and they can usually be spotted in their natural habitat - Wynwood.

One thing is for sure - they mostly have great taste in music and their Spotify playlists consist of artists with less than 400 followers. What's more hipster than that?

Ferguson and police brutality were hot button topics in 2014. Protests and riots blazed in the streets of Missouri with people fired up against police officers use of excessive force against civilians; predominantly African-American men. Beginning with the death of Trayvon Martin which sparked controversy against the Florida "stand-your-ground" law.

The deaths of other black men such as Michael Brown and Eric Garner and Hispanic Israel Hernandez who died after being tasered by Miami Beach Police, have brought forward talks about the use of body cameras on police officers for the protection of everyone involved.

Cats have slowly made their epic comeback but it had been a while since we had seen the furry felines become popularized like the Hello Kitty frenzy back in the 90s. Anywhere from t-shirts, socks, gifs and sweaters, they had cats all over them. There is even a trendy character by the name of Grumpy Cat - who has a ridic-

ulously handsome frown and satirical grumpy jokes.

Pretty sure almost every crazy cat-lady out there did a happy dance when they saw how popular cats became. It's a "boo-yah" and "told-you-so" to anyone that once opposed and just goes to show that these crazy ladies are light-years ahead of all of us.

EBOLA is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with a strain of Ebola virus. The 2014 Ebola epidemic affected multiple countries in West Africa and spread to the United States via travel from people who had returned from visiting countries where the disease had spread.

Thomas Eric Duncan was the first to be diagnosed in America after touring Liberia. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention over 8000 people have died from the disease, but first trials of an Ebola vaccine have began.



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO /THE BEACON



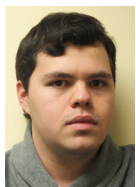
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LEFT: Brazilian soccer star Neymar Jr. smiles with teammates during a practice at the FIU soccer stadium. Neymar Jr.'s spine was fractured during Brazil's game against Colombia and Brazil was eliminated from the World Cup after a 0-7 loss to Germany.

RIGHT: Oliver Garcia (right) a freshman studying mechanical engineering and Brian Garcia (left) a freshman, studying Biology, participate in the ALS ice bucket challenge in September 2014 with pre-med and pre-health club members.

Humor, action make 'Commando' 'enjoyable'

CULT CLASSICS



RAFAEL ABREU

A macho action film, with its tongue firmly in cheek, "Commando" is a cult classic starring Arnold Schwarzenegger as John Matrix, a man who must rescue his daughter by any means necessary.

After a group of men kill men from his former unit, they go after him and take his daughter hostage and threaten to kill her unless he does what they ask. Needless to say, they messed with the

wrong muscular tough guy.

At the forefront is the action, which there is more than plenty of. There's explosions, car chases and more explosions, featuring excellent one liners from Arnold himself.

The film has a sense of humor, and it's never lacking in the character of Matrix, a man who only has one goal in sight and will absolutely achieve it.

A big part of what makes "Commando" so enjoyable is the humor, which sometimes comes off as bordering on parody. Still, the action is excellent and reaches ridiculous upon ridiculous extremes during the climax.

The acting by the supporting cast is good too, even though this is clearly Arnold's show. My only complaint with this whole movie is the casting of Rae Dawn Chong as Cindy, a woman who gets involved with Matrix on his quest. She just comes off as annoying, but becomes less so near the end of the film, where she actually proves to be useful.

The film's plot is kept at a bare minimum, and this is pretty good, since the movie's only goal is to be nothing but action.

The film's score, by James Horner, is notable for not only selling out during its release, but for combining steel drums, giving the film an interesting atmosphere, as far

as the music is concerned. It all comes together real well to give off a pretty serious vibe, which never goes against the film's sense of fun.

It's a thoroughly enjoyable film overall, never having dull moments and being entertaining throughout. The script includes fun lines and memorable characters, and over the top action that seems to be aware that it's over the top.

Fans of Arnold Schwarzenegger have no doubt already seen this film, but anyone who's a fan of these types of films should check it out if they haven't already. Arnold alone would be the main reason to recommend this film, since it's a prime example of him at his best. It's also wickedly funny.

Christmas is the new April Fools as rapper Hopsin pranks fans, announces album

COLUMNIST



ANGELO LOPEZ

Hip-hop artist Hopsin announced on all his social media accounts that he was disillusioned with the rap industry, permanently ending his career, and moving to Australia on Wednesday, Dec. 17 of this past year.

Eight days later, on Christmas Day, he posted a video on YouTube revealing that it was all hoax and that he was releasing an album, Pound Syndrome, sometime this upcoming year.

Hopsin, a native of Los Angeles, started his career in hip-hop as a signee of Ruthless Records back in 2007. His career stalled there, a fact he mentions in many of his songs, while flaunting his rabid hatred for his old record label.

This setback, painful as it must have been, was the catalyst for the bigger and better things he has achieved in his career.

As his exit from Ruthless became inevitable in 2009, he co-founded an independent label (Funk Volume) and got to work.

Slowly, he began to generate a buzz nationally. He released an album (Raw) in 2010, but rather predictably this effort was ignored.

It was the success of his singles released on YouTube that carved him a permanent place on the independent hip-hop scene.

The singles, “Sag My Pants” and the Ill Mind series (“Ill Mind of Hopsin” 3, 4, and 5), have amassed a combined tens of millions of views with the formula of excellent rhyming quality, comical one-liners, and a keenness for exploring subject matters that are taboo to mainstream hip-hop.

Bragging about being broke with no girlfriend? Check. Mocking the biggest names in the industry (e.g. Drake, Lil’ Wayne, Tyler the Creator, and many others)? Check. Calling out and imploring

his own listeners to take responsibility for and change their destructive habits? Check, yet again.

By the end of 2012, it was clear that Hopsin had both established a dedicated and sizable fanbase and cemented a place for himself in hip-hop.

However, his track record as an artist contains too many flaws for a talent of his caliber. No album he has ever released has been anywhere north of mediocre in terms of quality. On his most recent release, Knock Madness, he spends an insufferable amount of time complaining about the issues in his life.

Then there are the antics. He skipped out on a show in Fort Collins, Colorado, in which he was slated to perform in January of last year.

Many can’t get past the fact that he wears white contacts in his videos, and many others complain that he appeals too heavily to skateboarders.

All this brings us back to the publicity stunt Hopsin pulled off this Christmas. Due to his personality and especially because he bailed on a show, this hoax he pulled was very believable.

This will be taken by many as another sign of his childishness. Others will simply be relieved that Hopsin will continue to work on his craft.

In the end, Hopsin’s antics are just a distraction to what’s important -- the music.

Should he continue to churn out subpar albums, there’s a very real danger that the sizable fanbase he has built will begin to dissipate. Make the albums he’s capable of making, and establish he leaves no doubt as to his credibility as an artist.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONDAY, JAN. 12

CLASSES BEGIN

TUESDAY, JAN. 13

SGA DECLASSIFIED: WHAT I WISH I KNEW-
WHEN: 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.
WHERE: GC 243

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14

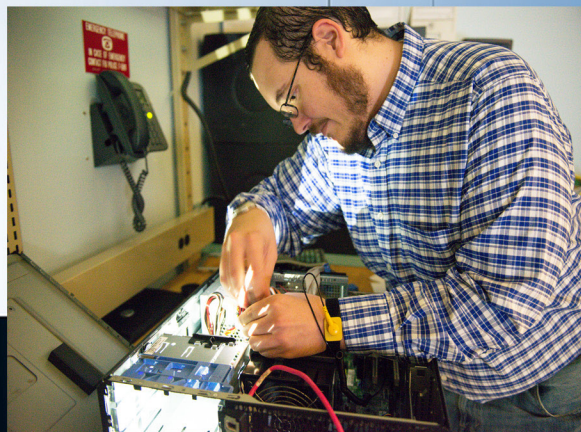
FIU LGBTQA WELCOME RECEPTION
WHEN: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
WHERE: GC 243

FRIDAY, JAN. 16

WELCOME BACK BLOCK PARTY
WHEN: 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
WHERE: Housing Quad

SATURDAY, JAN. 17

MLK DAY OF SERVICE-
WHEN: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
WHERE: MLK Park



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FOOTBALL

University to host Youth Football Championship for next six years



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON

A WCFL All-Stars running back breaks through the Key West All Stars defense at the Orange Bowl Youth Football Alliance Championships on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2014.

DAVID DRUCKER
Contributing Writer
sports@fiusm.com

Via a press release, The University has announced a six-year partnership with the Orange Bowl Committee for the use of Ocean Bank Field at FIU Stadium for the Orange Bowl Youth Football Championships presented by Sports Authority.

“We are very pleased to continue playing the Orange Bowl Youth Football League Championships presented by Sports Authority at FIU,” Orange Bowl Committee Chief Executive Officer Eric Poms said. “It’s exciting for the youth of South Florida to have the experience of playing in an FBS Stadium such as Ocean Bank Field at FIU Stadium.”

The partnership began with this season’s two-day championships on Saturday, Dec. 13, and Sunday, Dec. 14. The competition invites the champions of the organization’s different football leagues from around South Florida to play against one another and crown an ultimate winner in eight different weight classes.

“The Orange Bowl has made a significant impact on youth sports across the South Florida community over the past 15 years,” FIU Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia said. “It’s great to be a part of that impact as the host site for the youth football championships over the next six years. Having hosted the event in the past, Ocean Bank Field at FIU Stadium is a perfect venue to showcase some of the area’s top young talent.”

The Orange Bowl Youth Football Alliance (Orange Bowl YFA) includes over four competitive leagues and six recreational leagues. In the recreational leagues, all children are given the opportunity to play football as long as they live in South Florida. The competitive leagues give young athletes a chance to compete at a high level and network. Some of these players go on to have successful careers in football, such as New York Jets quarterback and former Orange Bowl YFA participant Geno Smith. Now, rising athletes from Lake Okeechobee to Key West will have the opportunity to play in a Division I facility before they enroll at a university.

ATHLETICS

Panthers agree to new deal with Adidas

DAVID DRUCKER
Contributing Writer
sports@fiusm.com

FIU’s athletic department has agreed to a five-year, 2.6 million dollar contract with Adidas for the outfitting of its 18 sports teams. The deal is worth twice as much as the previous agreement with the company and will extend into 2019 with two one-year extension options.

“We’re excited to continue delivering our best and most innovative footwear, apparel and uniforms to Florida International University’s

athletic department,” Director of Team Sports for Adidas America Mark Daniels said. “At Adidas, we’re all about helping athletes perform better. We’re looking forward to driving this mission through our partnership with the Panthers over the next five years.”

Every Division I program at the university will continue to be exclusively outfitted by Adidas. The company has been sponsoring athletic wear for the Panthers since July 1, 2005.

The new contract also includes bonuses for achievement in football, men’s and women’s basketball, baseball and softball. A bonus

will be awarded if a coach wins “Conference Coach of the Year” in any of the five sports.

“We are pleased to announce that the FIU Athletic Department will be outfitted in Adidas for the next five years,” Executive Director of Sports & Entertainment Pete Garcia said. “Adidas is a brand that is recognized globally. We want to thank Adidas for stepping up its efforts as this deal doubles the value of the previous one. Their commitment and level investment in the FIU Athletic Department has been tremendous and we look forward to many more years of success with them.”

FIU was not the only school to receive

a new contract from Adidas in 2015; the University of Miami also agreed to a long-term deal with the Oregon-based company. The Hurricanes’ agreement is good for 12 years and an undisclosed amount of money, although the Associated Press reports that it will be worth “multiple” times as much as the university’s last contract with Nike.

Now that Adidas is also working with the Hurricanes, who had been partnered with Nike for the past 27 years, the company will outfit both Division I Miami-Dade football teams for the first time in company history.

FOOTBALL

Conference USA has strong showing in bowl games

JORGE CORRALES
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The Panthers did not go “bowling” this year, but that did not stop their conference mates from putting on a show. Of the twelve teams in Conference USA, five were selected to represent the conference in post-season bowl games. Marshall University, Rice University, Western Kentucky University, Louisiana Tech

University and University of Texas at El Paso combined for a 4-1 record in their bowl games. This included two wins against the Mid-American Conference, a win against the Big Ten Conference and a split against the Mountain West Conference. The only slip came in a 21-6 UTEP loss to Utah State University.

The biggest win for the conference was Marshall’s domination of MAC champion Northern

Illinois University. The C-USA champs thrashed the Huskies with a score of 52-23. For much of the regular season, Marshall was regarded as one of the top 25 teams in the nation. The Thundering Herd started the year 11-0, their first and only loss coming in a 67-66 overtime shootout against Western Kentucky. Marshall defeated FIU 45-13 at Ocean Bank Field at FIU Stadium on Monday, Oct. 13.

Although C-USA is not listed as one of the “power five” conferences, C-USA teams have fared well recently. Over the last four years, C-USA is 15-6 in bowl games. In this day and age, conference strength is a huge factor in determining strength of schedule. C-USA’s exceptional post-season performance gives hope for the rise of the conference.

2015 Conference Bowl Records

	W	L	Pct.
C-USA	4	1	.800
Pac-12	6	2	.750
SEC	7	5	.583
Big Ten	5	5	.500
Mountain West	3	4	.429
American	2	3	.400
Mid-American	2	3	.400
ACC	4	7	.364
Sun Belt	1	2	.333
Big 12	2	5	.286

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WEEK OF WELCOME

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WOW

MONDAY, JANUARY 12TH

Ask me info Tables - 9 AM - 4 PM | AC I Area
Week of Welcome BBQ - 11 AM - 2 PM | Panther Square
SPC Dancing with the Wolfe: Salsa and Bachata - 12 PM - 2 PM | Rec. Center

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13TH

Ask me info Tables - 9 AM - 4 PM | AC I Area
Involvement & Volunteer Fair - 11 AM - 2 PM | Panther Square (Organized by SOC, Campus Life and CLS)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14TH

Councils and Cocoa - 11 AM - 2 PM | Panther Square
Peer Advisor & Panther Camp Announcement - 2 PM | Panther Square (Organized by Orientation and Parent Programs)
SPC Dancing with the Wolfe: Belly Dancing and Haitian Kompa - 2 PM - 4 PM | Rec. Center

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15TH

New Year's Brunch - 9 AM - 11 AM | Panther Square

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16TH

Yoga by the Bay - 10 AM - 11:30 AM | Lawns by the Bay (Organized by Recreation & SHS)
Panther Packed Friday - 12 PM - 1 PM | Panther Plaza (Organized by Panther Power)
SPC Dancing with the Wolfe: Modern Dance - 4 PM - 5 PM | Rec. Center

**WORK HARD,
PLAY HARD!**

FIU Student Affairs

Campus Life at Biscayne Bay Campus

Presented by the Office of Campus Life at Biscayne Bay. Funded by SGA. Qualified individuals with a disability requesting an accommodation to attend this event must make the request no less than five working days in advance by calling 305.919.5804 or TTY via FRS 1.800.955.8771. FOOD IS BASED ON FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED. For additional event information please call 305.919.5804 or visit WUC 141.

CAMPUS LIFE BBC

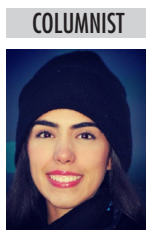


BBC students bring FIU Panther spirit



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

A statue of José Martí has been planted on a patio at the south-west corner of the Academic 2 Building. The statue will be officially presented at the 15th Annual Jose Martí Breakfast on Jan. 28.



CAMILA FERNANDEZ

COLUMNIST
As we wave goodbye to last year's memories, we welcome in 2015 with excitement and pride to be FIU Panthers. There is a lot to look forward to this year as FIU embraces its 50th anniversary as the only student centered public research university in South Florida. Despite BBC's smaller student population, there's just as much student life here than at MMC, the University's main campus.

With a breathtaking scenery of nature and the waters of our bay, certainly we carry an advantage over MMC. At last year's newly opened Panther Plaza stands a fierce panther that represents the University's strive and vigor to help us be truly World's Ahead.

With a welcoming space at the plaza and grassy areas throughout the campus, students have to come agree that BBC's quiet and more peaceful environment than at the main campus, has its perks. Walking outside near the bay area, the fresh, warm breeze of the waters help me feel at ease with the stress of a life as a busy college student.

Rather than walking through MMC's Graham Center, the heart of the campus, I choose to lay underneath a palm tree and read whatever my next assignment may be. As a journalism student, I've been given the opportunity to broaden my horizons and meet different professors who aspire to help me grow in my field.

Looking across the bay, I see myself interviewing a future President of the United States and perhaps as a global CNN correspondent. I don't mean to sound pompous, but I do have high hopes for myself.

At BBC, hospitality, environmental, business and journalism major students lurk these halls with passion in their eyes. Personally, I'm anxious to try the next all-time food and wine dish at the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management's South Beach Wine and Food Festival -- a highly-esteemed festival of its kind.

Not only are University students setting their hearts on their goals at the Bay, but so are the younger generations of BBC's high schoolers. These students from the MAST @ FIU Academy, a public magnet secondary school on campus, also look forward to a

rigorous and exciting academic experience. I look forward to meeting the youngsters who are undoubtedly benefiting from university professors and activities.

Along with the MAST @ FIU students, University students, faculty and staff have been persistent in bringing awareness about South Florida's frightening consequences of sea level rise. Professors like Peter Harlem, coordinator of library's Graphic Information System Center, has developed a system of maps that depict the severity of sea level rise within 100 years.

On the other hand, 15 of the high school students and five School of Journalism and Mass Communication students have participated in an "eye on the rise" project with journalism professor Robert Gutsche. The project aims to raise awareness in South Florida communities about the challenges that come with sea level rise and its possible solutions.

I probably sound like a ranting cheerleader, but with the growth of our University, many positive and challenging experiences are sure to come by. At BBC, we look forward to another year as the close-knit community of FIU.

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Bike By the Bay, students to rent bikes on campus

SOFIA GALIANO
Staff Writer
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Students looking to cycle across campus on a fully-equipped beach cruiser are in for a treat this semester.

FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus Recreation Center will launch Bike by the Bay, a bicycle-sharing program that allows students to rent bikes and gear needed for a fun and safe ride.

"[Students] will be able to come to our department, rent a bike, use that bike to either leisurely ride around campus... or have fun with other riders," said Jonathan "JT" Torrey, recreation administrator at BBC.

The program has been in the works for over a year now and was originally scheduled to launch last fall. However, the purchasing of helmets and reflective vests, and training rec center staff led to a delay.

Torrey said Bike by the Bay was a culmination of wanting to provide students with a recreational activity that also serves as a mode of transportation.

Eight Townie Electra Original 7D cruiser bicycles are currently housed in the Aquatic Center shed, in addition to all cycling accessories needed for a safe ride.

All bikes are equipped with a bike lock, cargo rack, bell, water bottle cage and a self-powered bike light and students can choose between a riding a red, green or grey Townie cruiser.

"What I like is, we provide you with everything," Torrey said.

To rent a bike, students are to visit the BBC REC Center, swipe their FIU OneCard, and ask the staff member to rent a bike.

After completing all required paperwork, such as liability forms, waivers and road rules, REC Center staff will use the

student's ID to open the electronic key box holding all bike keys.

Students are then to follow the staff to the shed and pick out the ride of their choice. Staff members will make sure bikes are safe to ride and then students are free to ride.

The program is funded by students' activity and service fees paid each semester, unlike other recreational activities offered at the center like kayaking and paddleboarding that charge additional fees.

Torrey said students can ride along the 3-mile bike path around campus or can ride off campus to local restaurants and shopping centers.

However, students are discouraged to take the bikes far from campus. In the event a bike or other equipment malfunctions, the center will be not be able to assist riders in those situations.

To ensure a safe ride, Torrey said it is planned to host safety seminars for prospective cyclists.

Rentals will be between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday throughout the term, excluding semester breaks. On Saturdays, students can rent bikes between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., and between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Sundays.

The program will only be launching at BBC, however, Torrey said the program may provide opportunities for students to ride at the Modesto Maidique Campus.

The REC Center is considering to allow students to check out bikes at BBC, take them on the shuttle to MMC and commute to class.

The program will run for a few terms and then issue a survey for participants to complete, assessing the program's success.

After evaluating the program, the REC Center will consider re-fencing the Aquatic Center shed to house more bicycles.

Renting a Bike

FIU BBC Rec Center
By Sofia Galiano

Swipe FIU OneCard at Biscayne Bay Campus Recreation Center

Complete waiver and liability form

Follow Rec Center staff to your new ride

Ride off into the sun along the bike path around campus or go on your own adventure

Retrieve safety gear from shed as Rec Center explains road rules

Return the bike and all equipment to the shed at sundown and sign-in the bike at the front desk

Spring 2015 Schedule
Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

SOFIA GALIANO/THE BEACON

BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS WEEK OF WELCOME

MONDAY, JAN. 12

WOW BBQ
WHEN: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
WHERE: Panther Square

FREE T-SHIRTS

TUESDAY, JAN. 13

WOW INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEER FAIR
WHEN: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
WHERE: Panther Square

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14

WOW COUNCIL AND COCOA
WHEN: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
WHERE: Panther Square

FREE COFFEE AND MUGS

THURSDAY, JAN 15

WOW NEW YEARS BRUNCH
WHEN: 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
WHERE: Panther Square

FREE FOOD AND BLANKETS

FRIDAY, JAN. 16

WOW PANTHER POWER - FIU'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
WHEN: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
WHERE: Panther Plaza

WEAR FIU SPIRIT GEAR GIVEAWAYS!

REC CENTER - YOGA BY THE BAY
WHEN: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
WHERE: In front of the bay, grassy area behind the BBC pool.

