

Students unsure what happens to dining dollars at semester's end

VINSON PRESSLEY
Staff Writer

Students who live on campus and have meal plans may have questions and concerns that come with their meal plan. Concerns include whether or not Dining Dollars roll over to the next semester or does the University take the excess dollars back?

"All Dining Dollars roll over until the end of the summer B semester in which they expire," said Patricia Williams, marketing manager of Panther Dining Services.

According to Williams, this means that Dining Dollars purchased in the fall will transfer into the spring semester; Spring dining dollars will roll over into the summer A semester and summer A dining dollars will roll over until the end of the summer B semester.

Williams said what Dining Dollars were by first mentioning that they used to be called "Panther bucks," but was it was changed about three years ago to the more descriptive phrase "Dining Dollars." Williams said that the phrase "Panther bucks"

could lead to confusion because students may believe, "I can use [Panther bucks] at the bookstore," which isn't accurate.

According to Williams, dining dollars can be used at any place that Panther Dining Services serves food except the café at Barnes and Noble, RechargeU and the vending machines. Williams said that the phrase "Dining Dollars" accurately reflects what it is to be used for, to dine and eat at the restaurants on campus. Williams said Dining Dollars is a "check-book for your food" and that "you don't want to lose track [on spending]." Williams stressed the importance of managing Dining Dollars by not only spending so much that one runs out of funds before the semester ends but also not pinching so much one has Dining Dollars not used either; she considered it a balancing act.

Students have varying perceptions of the Dining Dollars that accompany their meal plans.

"I don't spend my own money and I think you get a discount," said sophomore criminal justice major Cassandra Parrado.

She has been using Dining Dollars for two years. Parrado uses

Bringing Awareness



ALFONSO YEC/THE BEACON

Miniature flags representing statistics of those potentially affected by sexual assault decorate the GC Lawn and touch a subject generally brushed off by students.

her Dining Dollars at places like Pollo Tropical and Jamba Juice and said her dining dollars last her the entire semester and she uses them all.

TruLe'sia James, a freshman international relations major, who lives on campus and has used Dining Dollars for a year, has a completely different view on Dining Dollars.

"This campus is catered to commuters, nothing is open after 8 p.m." said James.

James said that since she lives on campus and most of the places close after a certain hour, she is forced to spend her dining dollars at expensive stores after hours.

James said that last fall she began using Dining Dollars and had ran out by October and that nobody she knew who has used Dining Dollars ever had any left at the end of the semester. James asserted that the amount of Dining Dollars should be increased in the meal plans offered.

Shari Gayle, junior interior architecture major who used Dining Dollars for three semesters, said she would have excess Dining Dollars at the end of the semester. Gayle said she would "pinch so much during the year," she would have Dining Dollars saved up and at the end of the semester, would spend the remaining balance at Chili's and buy the more expensive items that she wanted.

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Professor studying communication of monkeys

JUNETTE REYES
Staff Writer

Psychology professor Eliza Nelson and her "monkey team" comprised of biology and psychology undergraduates are conducting research on brain organization in humans by studying monkeys.

The research is unique to FIU because of the involvement of non-human primates but also because of the model species being studied -- spider monkeys. The team is

concerned with how motor development is influenced, primarily focusing its work on children and non-human primates.

"Primates are our closest relatives, so understanding the patterns in any aspect of their behaviors and features is a good way to learn about ourselves," said Alexandra Figueroa, senior biology major and team member.

Nelson said the multidisciplinary involvement of her students has been beneficial to the project because they each bring

something unique to the lab as part of their undergraduate training.

"I was interested in communication of animals, but this goals a lot with it," said Stephanie Albright, psychology student and team member. "I got really lucky to be able to join this lab because before this, nothing like this existed in the psychology department."

Nelson said the teams gives the same experimental tasks they give the children to the spider monkeys in order to see if they

show a preference to one side of the body with their tail.

"I was fascinated with the concept of brain lateralization, not only in humans, but in nonhuman primates, and the uniqueness of the spider monkeys as the subject," said Maria Fernanda Gonzalez, senior biology major and team member. "Spider monkeys have a prehensile tail that they use as an extra limb."

SEE MONKEYS, PAGE 2

Student affairs vice presidential candidate speaks

DIEGO SALDAÑA-ROJAS
Staff Writer

Candidate for Vice President of Student Affairs Vicki McNeil spoke on Wednesday afternoon in GC 243 about her experiences with higher education and presented her plans if elected.

McNeil was raised on a farm in the small town of Pawnee, Oklahoma and is a first generation college student and has held four senior level positions at four different institutions. She is currently associate vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Her other accomplishments include leading the design and construction of a \$91 million, 225,000 sq. foot student recreation center, reduced wait times at student clinic by re-designing their intake and scheduling systems and provided for expanded in-house prescriptions and over-the-counter medica-

tions for students.

McNeil was challenged with identifying three critical issues that affect student affairs departments at Universities. McNeil listed diversity, engaging students and mental health.

Stephanie Doscher, associate director of the Office of Global Learning Initiatives asked McNeil

how as a leader she would stay in touch with staff and students. McNeil said that she would attend student government meetings, meet with the student programming board, several Greek organizations and with all department directors regardless as to whether they respond to her or not.

The last candidate to

present their platform for the position of VP of student affairs is Brian Haynes. Haynes will be speaking on April the 17th in the West ballroom from 2:30pm- 3:45pm and on April 18th at BBC in room 223 of the WUC.

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WORLD NEWS

US couple in jail after fleeing to Cuba with kids

A Florida couple accused of kidnapping their two young sons and fleeing by boat to Cuba were handed over to the United States and imprisoned, and their children were returned to their maternal grandparents, who have official custody, authorities said Wednesday.

Joshua Michael Hakken and his wife, Sharyn, were being held Wednesday at the Hillsborough County Jail on charges of kidnapping, child neglect, and interference with custody, according to the jail's website.

In Venezuela election, food is a voting issue

Venezuelans complain that what goes into their Sunday dinner plate comes from abroad: Steak, from Brazil; plantains, the Dominican Republic; rice, South Africa; Parmesan cheese, Uruguay; oats, Chile. Even coffee, in a country famed for it, often is Colombian.

30 Pakistani soldiers killed in northwest valley

Four days of fierce fighting in northwestern Pakistan left 30 soldiers and nearly 100 militants dead as the army attempted to wrestle control of a remote, mountainous valley from the Taliban and their allies, military officials said Monday.

The army launched its offensive in the Tirah Valley on Friday after weeks of fighting between rival militant groups forced tens of thousands of civilians to flee the area.

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

Professor and students are “monkeying” around

MONKEYS, PAGE 1

“We have this interest in the motor system because we want to know more about how the brain develops and how it’s organized,” Nelson said. “We choose to do it in monkeys in addition to the work we do in kids because we want to understand how that brain has changed across evolutionary time, how it has changed across the primate order.”

One spider monkey in particular, 2-month-old Penelope, is being observed through her development. Penelope is watched and studied as she grows up in a habitat of nearly 400 primates, at the Monkey Jungle, where the team works, located in South Miami-Dade.

“It is very important to have this connection to FIU to get those students and to give them that experience but also to just take advantage of the collection that they have at Monkey Jungle, to do this kind of behavioral research that hasn’t been done before that we hope contributes to this growing body of knowledge,” said Nelson.

The students expressed a similar sentiment in terms of what they’ve learned in the lab.

“As a biology major, this project has given me the chance of becoming familiar with the different research

methods that will be useful when I conduct my own research project in the future,” Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez joined the team by assisting Nelson through the identification of the spider monkeys at Monkey Jungle.

Figueroa, however, said she learned about it through a friend and joined for the research experience.

“I’ve learned a lot about what it takes to conduct research with primates, collect data properly, and interpret results in a way that makes a meaningful contribution to the scientific community,” Figueroa said.

Albright found out about the lab by chance while searching online. She said she had been interested in animal behavior for a long time but never really knew where to look.

Nelson said the lab is open to students who are interested and are willing to dedicate their time for the extensive amount of training and work.

“It’s a huge investment of time for the students to be in the lab and for me to train them to be in the lab. I think the reward of it is immense because being out in the enclosure with the animals is tremendous,” said Nelson. “It is completely different than anything else there is.”

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Man to be executed in girl’s slaying

BRENDAN FARRINGTON AP Writer

Florida is scheduled Wednesday to execute one of the longest-serving inmates on its death row, 32 years after he kidnapped and murdered a 10-year-old girl who was riding her bike to school after a dental appointment.

Larry Eugene Mann was set to die by lethal injection for kidnapping and murdering Elisa Vera Nelson on Nov. 4, 1980.

Mann tried killing himself immediately after the slaying, slashing his wrists and telling responding police officers he had “done something stupid.” They thought he was talking about the suicide attempt until a couple of days later when Mann’s wife found a bloodied note written by Elisa’s mother explaining why she was late for school.

While Mann sought to die the day he killed Elisa, his lawyers have succeeded in keeping him alive through scores of appeals since then. His lawyers haven’t contested his guilt, but rather whether he was properly sentenced to death.

His death sentence has been thrown out twice since his conviction only to

have juries resentence him to the same fate. His first death warrant was signed by then Gov. Bob Graham in 1986.

Elisa was riding her bike to school on the day she was killed. Mann kidnapped her, took her to an orange grove, cut her throat and then beat her head with a pole with a concrete base.

“Larry Mann is the poster child for what is wrong with the system,” said Wendy Nelson, the girl’s mother. “His guilt has never been an issue.”

That was in 1996. Another 17 years later and Elisa’s family is hoping this is really the end of the case.

“It’s been 32 years, and people say, oh you know, closure. There’s never closure,” her aunt, Wanda Vekasi, said recently. “But at least my tax dollars will no longer be supporting that creep.”

Of the 406 inmates on

death row in Florida, only 28 have been there longer than Mann.

Mann woke up at 6 a.m. and had his final meal at 10 a.m. He ate fried shrimp, fish and scallops, stuffed crabs, cole slaw, hot buttered rolls, a pint of pistachio ice cream and a soda.

His only visitors were his two lawyers and a spiritual adviser. His mood was calm and somber, said Department of Corrections spokeswoman Ann Howard.

Mann has appeals pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. His lawyers argue that his death sentence should be overturned because the jury that recommended it wasn’t unanimous. They also argue Mann’s constitutional rights were violated because Gov. Rick Scott used a secret and standardless process before signing Mann’s death warrant.

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the news never stops,
and nor do we.



Staying informed about the housing process

ADRIANNE RICHARDSON
Contributing Writer

To start things off, I would like to send my condolences to those students who wanted to live in the new Parkview dormitory next semester and were denied due to lack of space. Click faster next time.

The housing office strives to provide organization when it comes down to signing up for housing through housing appointments. These appointments are given to each student within a one-to-three week period and each student is responsible for remembering their own appointment time or it's better luck next time.

Now, here is what I don't understand on the student's part. Why is it that some students claim to not have a place to stay when everyone receives a sign up time? Three students that I spoke with prior to writing this article admitted to missing their sign up time and "having to be assigned to a dormitory that they didn't want."

Here is some advice for incoming freshmen and upperclassmen that are considering on campus housing for next fall/spring semester:

The Housing Office has a waiting list

the size of forever and the time to sign up through assignments has passed, so start looking for an apartment of some kind which holds up to your standard of living, just to be on the safe side.

Now, to those students who want to live on campus for summer, the appointments have yet to be released but please be on the lookout for those times. Summer fills up fast because all of the dorms are not available for sign up. For this upcoming summer term, Everglades is on the menu for upperclassmen.

Another important reminder is that financial aid is not given during the summer term unless it is your first term as a student in college. As a consequence, to stay on campus you will either have to use a loan or pay out of pocket.

"I really love the on campus life, I live in Apartments," said sophomore Shancovia Pearson. "[But] when I found out there will not be financial aid for the summer term I knew immediately that I would be living at home."

It is very important to know your surroundings, especially when living on campus. For example, one day while I was walking to class, a student came up to me and asked where the Housing Office was on campus because they needed to pay something. Obviously, the fact that

they needed to pay something means that they lived on campus. The example proves that some students still haven't learned their school.

By now, you should know where everything is located especially the housing office if you live on campus. The Housing Office is located in University Towers dormitory; this is the huge overarching building near Panther Hall, Lakeview, and the POD store in the Housing Quad. Now, if you do not know where any of the aforementioned places are, then sign up for a tour with FIU's Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

As students here at FIU, we have no reason not to know when important dates are coming up. Everyone gets the emails and it is up to you whether or not you decide to read them! I highly suggest that you do for your own benefit.

The on-campus life can be a wonderful experience, but it is only an experience rewarded to those who pay attention to deadlines. Not just anyone can handle this life, everything that glitters isn't gold. Do your research before deciding where to live, and by research I mean ask around – don't ask me though.

Thank me later.

-*opinion@fiusm.com*

The never-ending popularity contest

ASHLEY VALENTIN
Contributing Writer

Going to college is a huge milestone in your developmental process. This is the last step before we're fully integrated into the frightening world of adult life. We begin to pay bills, work on a career and develop more mature relationships. But with all of our responsibility and growth of character and talk of the real world, there's still a part of us that connects very deeply to our immature high school days.

If you're like me, you're social media obsessed. Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and Vine dominate your life and help keep you connected to everyone around you at once.

But have you ever noticed how social media is just like high school?

You've got your gossipers on Twitter, the hipsters on Tumblr, the class clowns on YouTube, trolls on 4chan, the online gamer kids, attention seekers on Instagram, the best people you'll ever meet on Reddit, a lot of Regina George references, and no matter where you are on the Internet, everyone is hungering for popularity.

When I get a new follower on Instagram I become extremely proud of myself. I feel self-validation when people are interested in my conceited "selfies" and Game of Thrones twitter rants, as does everyone else on the Internet, I'm sure. In a commuter university (and in life outside of college) where most people are too busy for clubs and organizations, social media gives us a way to develop our interests with throngs of other like minded people online, and it helps us form our identities.

But besides the cliquish sense of community we have on social media, we also have the gossip, the childish stalking of your exes, excessive bullying, emotional rants, cyber fights, and a number of other behaviors more suited to the halls of high school than to the adult world, and yet here we are -- so very addicted to social media.

Why do we feel the need to behave this way online?

It could be because we don't have enough time in the day to socialize face to face. It could be because our generation is holding on to their childhood longer than any generation before them -- getting married and starting their careers later in life than our parents and grandparents -- and this behavior is just a reflection of our immaturity.

Either way, it seems that even when we get to college, high school never really ends.

-*opinion@fiusm.com*

Professional benefit of sororities

MARIA BRITOS
Contributing Writer

Walking around campus, it is always easy to spot girls wearing their respective sorority letters across their chest or on their bags. They come in packs or they simply walk in pairs, but it's hard to miss them. They may seem like too many, but in reality the number of affiliated sorority women on campus is barely a quarter of the entire female student population at the university.

I didn't rush until my sophomore year because I wasn't really sure what it was about and the process of getting into a sorority.

My freshman year I was like many other people and did not understand all the professional benefits. For some people themed mixers, cattiness, the movie "Legally Blonde" and the color pink are things that may come to mind before job success. But actually sororities are a great place to learn professional skills that will carry you through the rest of your career.

One relevant skill is networking.

A big component of Greek

Life is the social aspect and though Rush may not seem like the most serious thing at the time, it is actually a great launching pad for being an expert networker.

Since the late 1960s, sororities have been intermittently viewed with skepticism, if not disdain, their members derided as airheads with no goal more absorbing than matching their pedicure to the color of their sandals. With this misconception, most people fail to see the greater opportunities that sororities can provide to its members.

Professional networking has become a larger aspect of sororities now a day, especially with the chapters on this campus.

The first time I started seeing the benefits of networking was when my sisters told me how they found their jobs, scholarships and internships through alumnae and other sisters. This happened during my first year within the sorority.

There have been more efforts concentrated on the practice of networking as this has become a key factor for students to land the dream job.

Harnessing your sorority network is key. Most of this

networking isn't always just professional either. Members help each other with school, getting an internship and advising each other.

Connecting with an alum from your fraternity or sorority is a great way to gain insight into a particular career track or company, get insider tips on how to succeed in the job search, and potentially receive job leads. During this harsh economic climate, networking is more important than ever.

When you rush a Greek organization, members lure you in with promises of strong alumni connections and lucrative job/internship hook-ups, among other things.

It's true; one of the benefits of being in a Greek organization is access to the group's national alumni network.

Depending on the strength of your fraternity/sorority and the involvement level of alumni, this may be a major boost or a minor boon in your job search.

While many people can spend countless hours searching for a job or internship, sororities and fraternities can save you time and a recommendation and some guidance

from a sister or brother is a major benefit.

I believe that more people need to be aware of the changes that sororities are facing now to completely remove the image of a group of wild women who only come together to party or have fun. Instead, I think more attention should be focused on the professional benefits these groups can provide for its members.

Closet Deep, co-owned by another sister, Kristine Navas, needed a new intern because she was leaving for a another job. I then followed the directions that she annouced and emailed Kristine my resumé and then had an interview in which I was hired for my fashion marketing internship," junior Ashley Kerbel, major found out about a fashion internship from one of her sister.

"A sister announced that the fashion boutique she interns for needed a new intern because she was leaving for a another job. I emailed Kristine, the co-owner, had an interview [and then I] was hired for my fashion marketing internship," she said.

-*opinion@fiusm.com*

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Housing Olympics to bring unity and fun to FIU

ALFREDO APARICIO
Staff Writer

It's time to be a kid again. At least for one afternoon in the Housing Quad, as student housing celebrates its first annual Housing Olympics, where the residence halls will compete to win in a good, old-fashioned field day.

The event, which sprang from an idea first suggested by Larry Lunsford, interim vice president for student affairs and University ombudsman at one of the monthly president's meetings for the Residence Hall Association, was spearheaded by Kristy Lynn Shore, a sophomore journalism major and national communications coordinator of RHA.

Shore, who had organized a field day as class president in her high school, was on board with the idea since its initial proposal.

"Organizing the field day at my high school was one of the events I took pride in. I felt this was a way for students in the residence halls to get engaged

and remind them of when they were kids because getting old is intense."

Each of the six participating residence halls—Everglades Hall, Panther Hall, Lakeview North and South, University Towers and University Apartments—has put out a sign in sheet where a maximum of 10 to 12 students can

pre-occupational therapy major and president of RHA, the event has the most potential to become a great event and lasting tradition on campus.

"This event is about instilling school pride and building healthy competition in the residence halls. We want students to be proud and excited about

while incorporating new games like the Sweat Pants Relay, where students will dunk a pair of sweatpants in a bucket of water and walk from point A to point B before going back and handling the sweat pants to another team member, and Send in the Clowns, where each team will choose one participant to dress up as a clown and be judged by a panel.

"We wanted events to keep the students interested by creating a combination of games that were fun but not completely for kids," explained Shore.

Among the benefits of participating are bragging rights for the first winner ever of the Housing Olympics, having a good time and meeting new people students might not have met unless they had participated.

"It's a good way for the students to feel a sense of community with each other so they're not focused on just their respective residence halls, especially since they will move to different residence halls next year."

The help of Housing Senator Clement Mario Winter, Interim Residence Life Coordinator of Panther Hall Joe Haeffel and Interim Residence Life Coordinator of Lakeview Village Jackie Klinger have also been instrumental for the event's successful execution.

"They're help has been vital. [Winter] has put money into the event from the SGA budget and having awesome advisors like [Klinger] and [Haeffel] has helped move the process along," said Shore.

"It's hard to get students to give up their Saturdays but everyone's helped to get students involved and hyped up."

The RHA e-board has also been involved in planning the event, coordinating the logistics via Renee Gibson, a junior, accounting major and treasurer of RHA as well as advertising and promotion via Maybeth Furtado, a junior, psychology major and historian of RHA.

"The e-board has done a lot to make this happen and I'm proud of their contri-

bution and [Shore's]. She took the whole thing on and she's done a great job with it by grabbing the bull by the horns and running with it," Sattari said.

Shore hopes the event builds a good foundation for future events of its kind and gives students an opportunity to enjoy their time at the University. "Who knows what's going to happen next year but the possibilities are there. This is a 'last hoorah' for the year but it will give students something they can put up in their residence hall, something they can be proud of accomplishing."

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"This event is about instilling school pride and building healthy competition in the residence halls. We want students to be proud and excited about living on campus and competition is a way to bring out that pride."

Ali Sattari
President
Residence Hall Association

sign up to represent their respective residence hall team. When the teams are finalized, they will be able to choose a specific color to tie dye onto their shirts.

For Ali Sattari, a senior,

living on campus and competition is a way to bring out that pride."

The Housing Olympics will include timeless field day games such as the Tug O' War and Sack Race

Students prepare to celebrate Pan-American Day

KEILA DIAZ
Contributing Writer

Students will gather at Bayside Marketplace this Sunday, April 14, to celebrate the voluntary union of the American nations into one continental community.

April 14 marks the anniversary of when the countries of the Americas formed a union to work for the peace, security, welfare and humans' rights of their people.

That union is represented today through the Organization of American States headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Pan-American Day is celebrated all across the United States through special

projects, plays, parades and social events like the one that will take place this Sunday.

The event on Sunday was the idea of members of the FIU Colony of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity. One of the goals of the fraternity's FIU Colony is to promote Pan-Americanism.

"Pan-Americanism involves pretty much the entire Western Hemisphere and many people are not even aware about it. This is a great opportunity to learn and show some pride in our united countries, bring a flag," said Miguel Sanchez, vice president of the FIU Colony of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity and information technology major.

Guest speaker Giovanni Abril will discuss the topic of Pan-Americanism and will open the floor to the audience for discussion of the topic.

Students planning to attend the gathering are encouraged to express their thoughts on Pan-Americanism through poetry, singing or simply speaking.

The gathering, which is set to start at 5:30 p.m., will take place by the statue of Simon Bolivar.

-life@fiusm.com

PAN-AMERICAN DAY

Where: 401 Biscayne Blvd., R106
Miami, Florida 33132-1924
When: Sunday, April 14 from 5:30-7 p.m.

Ride for a cause



ALFONSO YEC/THE BEACON

Senior Rodrigo Aldorino, business management major (center), is one of the many participants who biked during the Anthony's Light Foundation 24-hour bike ride. The fundraiser, which is held annually every April and dedicated to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning victims Anthony Perez and Janelle Bertot, upholds their mission of raising public awareness on the dangers of this "silent killer."

Michael Largo comes to campus for book signing

ALFREDO APARICIO
Staff Writer

“I wanted to fully commit to becoming a writer. The only thing I loved to do is write and I had to find some way to make that happen,” said Michael Largo, best-selling author of “God’s Lunatics,” “Genius and Heroin,” “The Portable Obituary,” the Bram Stoker Award-winning “Final Exits: The Illustrated Encyclopedia of How We Die,” as well as three novels and a collection of poetry.

Largo will be holding a book reading and signing copies of his latest publication, “The Big, Bad Book of Beasts: The World’s Most Curious Creatures,” on April 16 in the Barnes & Noble Bookstore on campus at 7 p.m.

Largo began his career with an associate’s degree in environmental science from the College of Staten

Island and originally wanted to be a veterinarian. However, his love of words, and the lives of the authors who wrote them led him to Brooklyn College to study with poet John Ashbery, eventually receiving a B.A. in English and publishing a collection of poetry by the age of 19.

“I remember my father was very upset when I first told him and asked me how I was going to make money and I said ‘I’ll figure it out,’” explained Largo. “I looked at the great writers in history and noticed that if I wanted to write something fantastical I had to be out in the world, doing research and gaining experiences.”

Largo’s extensive research has taken him to all parts of the world and exposed him to various topics, some which have become the subject of his books.

“I have held all kinds of different jobs; in college, I worked as a night watch security guard. I was by myself but the free time allowed me to read and write all night long.”

The Big, Bad Book of Beasts is the most recent creation that has strung from Largo’s ability to research, document and collect information as well as his love of animals.

“I have books in my library from 30 years ago. Every time I go out somewhere I do the touristy thing, photographing the animals and looking at their habitat and finding out what is the local, wild animals of the places I visit.”

The inspiration for the encyclopedia’s format comes from ancient encyclopedias of beasts made popular in the Middle Ages via illustrations called bestiaries, whose popularity was only rivaled by the Bible, and counts with 282 illustrations drawn by Jesse Peterson, an alumni of the University.

“Philosophers like Aristotle tried to study animals and that was, in a sense, the beginning of science. They created sciences to try and explain the animals that lived around them and kept adding to the animals they have when new travelers

would come by and discuss their findings or after doing controlled experiments,” said Largo.

One of the encyclopedia’s novelties is its inclusion of mystical, extinct and present-day species of animals explaining how various myths such as griffins, mermaids and hydras came to be included in bestiaries and how scientific discovery has helped clear up these creatures that were thought to have existed in the past.

“I try to talk about animals, what the ancients thought about it and then, using science, explain what the animal could’ve been if it could’ve existed at all,” said Largo.

One of these myths, regarding the origins of the Cyclops, came from the Ancient World’s observations of giant, stone monuments where they would find the skulls of a small elephant that had a giant eye socket where its trunk used to be.

“Part of what the book is about is these myths and where they originated

from,” Largo said. “Not all the creatures in this encyclopedia are imaginary and, by reading some of the scientific explanations, you can see that some of their descriptions might not have been so ludicrous and were based on something observed. In the end, this remains a predominantly scientific book.”

Another one of these myths, regarding mermaids, may have come from Christopher Columbus and Henry Hudson’s observations of manatees or walrus.

“Animals are constantly being discovered, rediscovered and re-evaluated all the time, this book will hopefully stimulate interest in science and bring back the wonder of the connections between humans and animals,” Largo said. “They’ve mostly been here for our usage but we have to think about all we’ve learned from them because we wouldn’t be here without animals; they have provided food, clothing and shelter for centuries.”

Largo also hopes the encyclopedia brings back

the respect animals used to have during earlier times in history. “A lot of early religions used to worship animals. Native American shamans, for example, believed every animal had a particular spirit. In the end, that’s the underlying theme of the book, the more humane treatment of animals. Hopefully someone will get it.”

In the near future, Largo will be writing a compliment to “The Big, Bad Book of Beasts” focused on plants.

“I’m in the process of getting it all worked out and making it informative but still interesting to everyone. That’s the challenge with nonfiction but it’s something I love to do and it continues to be a great challenge.”

Copies of “The Big, Bad Book of Beasts: The World’s Most Curious Creatures” will be available at the bookstore for \$18.99. The event free and open to the public.

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April brings art heist lecture and new exhibit to the Frost

NATALIE MONTANER
Contributing Writer

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum will be bringing more than art to the University this month with an art heist lecture, followed by an opening exhibit reception.

The first part of the event will be a lecture helmed by Robert Wittman, former FBI agent, and will address the art heists that have occurred throughout history and the FBI’s efforts to apprehend these international criminals.

Wittman, labeled as “the most famous art detective of the world” by the Times of London, is the founder of the Bureau’s National Art Crime Team, whose purpose is to recover stolen art and cultural property and work to fight art theft.

Back in 1990, the “single

largest art theft in US history” was said to have taken place in the Isabelle Stewart Gardner Art Museum in Boston. With \$500 million in valued paintings by Rembrandt, Degas and Manet among others stolen by crafty thieves, then FBI agent Wittman was heavily involved in solving the case.

Using the pseudonym Bob Clay, Wittman was directly involved with a sting operation that occurred in Miami and the hunting down of the art criminals who were then attempting to sell off the works they had stolen.

Wittman will be using these first-hand, FBI experiences during his talk about the art criminals and the various heists he was directly involved in.

“Here’s a lecture that will appeal to everyone, because his accounts leave you at the

edge of your seat. I would think that criminal justice, art history and international relations students and faculty would find this especially interesting,” said Emmett Young, assistant director of marketing & communications at the Frost.

The lecture will take place across from the Frost at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center. This event will be free of charge and open to the public.

Immediately following the lecture, there will be a preview reception, also free of charge, for the “Spanish Colonial Art: The Beauty of Two Traditions” exhibit at the Frost with wine and hors d’oeuvres for all.

This exhibit showcases the Spanish art brought to the Americas by explorers and the subsequent merging of imagery of the indigenous tribes of the

Americas with that of Spanish art and culture.

Carol Damien, Frost Art Museum director and the exhibit’s curator, noted, “the variety of works created in the Americas, especially Latin America, offers a unique perspective on the people and culture of the time. The vast territories of the Americas, with their diverse ethnic groups and varied population centers ranging from tribal villages to the extraordinary cities of the Aztecs and the Incas, also gave way to regional styles in the Colonial period.”

The exhibit will host pieces from the Frost’s permanent collection as well as pieces on loan from private collectors. The exhibit will be on display at the Frost from April 24 to Aug. 25.

-life@fiusm.com

----Robert Wittman Lecture

When: April 20 at 4-6 p.m.

Where: Wertheim Performing Arts Center

----Preview Reception: “Spanish Colonial Art: The Beauty of Two Traditions”

Where: The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum

When: April 20 from 6-8 p.m.

The exhibit will be on display at the Frost from April 24 to Aug. 25.

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Sand volleyball set for a Fiesta tomorrow



PHOTO BY ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

Jessica Mendoza, front, and Maryna Samoday have enjoyed a lot of success with a 14-2 record as the No.2 pair on the sand volleyball squad.

DANIEL BREY
Contributing Writer

This Fiesta on Siesta Key taking place tomorrow and Sunday does not require a trip to Party City. There will be no pastelitos or fancy napkins present, to the many spectators dismay. This fiesta, however, will serve a myriad of aces, a determined look on many faces, and settle the pending cases for every team still competing for a spot at the American Volleyball Coaches Association National Championships.

After being upset by Tulane at the Surf and Turf Tournament on March 30, the University's sand volleyball team has won six of their last eight matches, with their most recent victory coming in dominating fashion on Ocean Drive last weekend against Florida Gulf Coast University.

"Not only did Jessica [Mendoza] and I play well, but our entire team performed great on an entirely different stage playing at South Beach," junior Maryna Samoday said. "Everyone was so focused--the overall atmosphere was incredible."

This weekend's performance at the Fiesta on Siesta Key Tournament will likely determine if FIU sand volleyball gets a "yea or nay" from the AVCA committee board to compete in nationals.

There is still reason to believe the squad will receive a nationals bid with an exceptional performance at Siesta Key.

Despite a bumpy start to begin the inaugural season, the Panthers have journeyed to a solid 6-5 duals team record and are undefeated in two pairs tourna-

ments this year.

Given that next week is the last regular season tournament, the Panthers, and especially junior Jessica Mendoza, are confident they could extend their current winning streak to four matches.

"We are very confident and very determined," Mendoza said. "If we come out, I mean, when we come out with a bang at Siesta, we want to make sure we carry that over to nationals."

Aside from being confident, Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett also stressed the importance of improving their team résumé and ending the weekend on the right foot, with a win.

"This momentum going into the tournament will really help us in our hopes for a team bid for the national championships," Buck-Crockett said. "We really have to have a strong showing the entire duration of the tournament because there are so many good schools out there."

SECOND IS THE BEST

Whether it is Samoday's trademark digs, or Mendoza's unique swagger, there is never a dull moment when Samoday and Mendoza take the court.

The pair, ranked second out of all FIU duals teams, has compiled a 14-2 record and are undefeated when competing against opposing No. 1 duals teams.

"Maryna and Jessica have been playing really well," Buck-Crockett said. "They could easily be a number one duals team at any other school."

At the Surf and Turf Tournament earlier in the season, Samoday and Mendoza defeated fellow teammates and the No. 1 FIU duals team, Kate Stepanova and Ksenia Sukhareva, in

their second matchup in a tournament final.

Regardless of Samoday and Mendoza's victory, Buck-Crockett decided to keep the pair ranked second in last weekend's win over FGCU.

"I looked into the possibility of changing the rankings around, but I decided to leave the pair ranked second," Buck-Crockett said. "I know they played great against Kate and Ksenia, but it was only one match. We have duals during every week and Kate and Ksenia beat Samoday and Mendoza in training matches. I go with those results over one match."

The fact that both began the season with a different duals partner .

BOTTOM THREE SHOWING IMPROVEMENT

After compiling a record of 3-9 after their first four matches, the 3, 4, and 5 ranked duals teams for FIU has seen a relative spike in performance during the latter part of the inaugural season.

The overall performance from each respective duals team during last Saturday's match against FGCU elicited praise from a usually quiet Buck-Crockett.

"They have really stepped up, which has been a huge difference for us as a team this year," Buck-Crockett said. "In the beginning it was really our top two teams winning, but now we are getting some wins from our 3, 4, and 5 spots."

The Fiesta on Siesta Key tournament will feature 26 teams including season rivals Tulane, Florida Atlantic University and Georgia State University.

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Panther pitching struggling to understand French

FRANCISCO RIVERO
Staff Writer

If you're wondering where to find the Panthers' pitching ranks, look no further than the bottom of the barrel.

The team is second to last in earned run average (4.52), runs allowed (144) and walks given up (148).

No one understands the struggle of FIU pitching more than the man in charge of it, Pitching Coach Drew French. French is in his second year of duty with FIU after coming over from Alabama and he knows it all starts with him.

"That just says that we haven't been very good and that starts right with me and the starting pitching, there are no excuses," French said. "We've played teams that are consistently strike throwers and have better numbers than we do, but the thing is our pitching staff from top to

bottom has better stuff than anybody in this."

Of the 16 pitchers on the roster, only two are seniors with one of them, closer Michael Gomez, out for the year with Tommy John surgery. The rest of the pitchers consist of eight juniors and six freshmen.

"Look, we've got a lot of young guys and that's not an excuse by any means, but the majority of these guys that are pitching for us this year have never pitched in division one baseball before," French said. "When you come from high school or junior college, you're throwing one pitch out of the strike zone that gets a swing and miss, but here, hitters don't do that. Here, division one hitters aren't blown away by 90 miles per hour, so you got to learn how to locate and pitch."

One curse that FIU pitching had both this year and last year has been the

issue of giving up walks. French believes that walks and bad defense go hand in hand with each other.

"A lot of the times when I go back and look at my game notes from game to game, we typically walk a guy after we make an error or we walk a guy and then make an error," French said. "The defense and the pitching spiral out of control and go in the wrong direction at the same time usually, it's like clockwork and to me that's all on our pitching staff. We got to have good tempo and stay on the attack and that keeps the defense on their toes and ready to make plays."

Another handicap for this Panther team has been the revolving door with injuries. Mike Franco is returning from Tommy John surgery and can't go deep into games. The team's season-opening starter, Michael Ellis, is out with a lower back issue.

Health in general has been a topic of interest for this Panther pitching staff.

"For us, it's always been next man up," French said. "We got guys waiting in the wings and we thought that we were going to have a ton of depth this season, but that just goes to show you that you can't assume that you're going to have that luxury."

The biggest of the injuries for FIU would have to be the loss of pitcher Ellis, who was predicted to be the Panthers' ace throughout the year.

"It's huge because in the scheme of things, he was our number one pitcher last year and it's a big blow," French said. "But it's an opportunity for other guys to step up and prove that they are worthy and prove that they are capable of getting division one hitters out consistently."

As FIU begins their weekend series tonight against the University of

Louisiana at Monroe (13-20), French understands that it's been a tough year, however, people should keep an eye out for this young Panther team because there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

"Right now, we are taking our lumps but I can tell you this, we are only going to get stronger and better with the experience that we are getting from this," French

said. "It's like I was told as a kid, the only way you're going to learn is by doing it and screwing up. They're having a lot of trial by fire but there's no doubt that they're going to be stronger both mentally and physically by going through the things they're going through right now."

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HURTING ON THE MOUND

Where FIU pitching ranks

CATEGORY	FIU	Rank
ERA	4.52	9th out of 10
Hits allowed	297	7th
Runs allowed	174	9th
Walks allowed	148	9th
Wild pitches	29	T-1st
Hit batters	26	8th

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US judge in Philly weighs NFL concussion suits

MARYCLAIRE DALE
AP Staff

Senior U.S. District Judge Anita Brody has a billion-dollar problem on her hands.

Brody, of Philadelphia, heard arguments Tuesday on whether lawsuits that accuse the NFL of glorifying violence and hiding known concussion risks belong in court or in arbitration.

Brody could side with the 4,200 players and let them pursue lawsuits, or she could rule for the league and find that head injuries are covered under health provisions of the collective bargaining agreement.

Or she could issue a split decision, letting some of the fraud and negligence claims against the NFL move forward in court. Her decision could be worth more than a billion dollars — and is expected to be appealed by either side, spawning years of litigation.

“There are people who aren’t going to be able to be around long enough to find out the end of this

case, and my husband is one of them,” said Eleanor Peretto, the widow of guard Ralph Wenzel, who played for Pittsburgh and San Diego from 1966 to 1973. “He died last June, and I’m here for him. He was sick for almost two decades and, in the end, had very, very severe, debilitating dementia.”

In the closely-watched court arguments Tuesday, NFL lawyer Paul Clement insisted that teams bear the chief responsibility for health and safety under the contract, along with the players’ union and the players themselves.

“The clubs are the ones who had doctors on the sidelines who had primary responsibility for sending players back into the game,” Clement said at a news conference after the hearing.

The players argue that the league “glorified” and “monetized” violence through NFL Films, thereby profiting from vicious hits to the head.

Players’ lawyer David Frederick also accused the league of concealing studies linking concussions to neuro-

logical problems for decades, even after the NFL created a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury committee in 1994.

The panel was led by a rheumatologist.

“It set up a sham committee designed to get information about neurological risks, but in fact spread misinformation,” Frederick argued.

In recent years, scores of former NFL players and other concussed athletes have been diagnosed after their deaths with chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, including popular Pro Bowler Junior Seau and lead plaintiff Ray Easterling. Both committed suicide last year.

About one-third of the league’s 12,000 former players have joined the litigation since Easterling filed suit in 2011. Some are battling dementia, depression or Alzheimer’s disease, and fault the league for rushing them back on the field after concussions. Others are worried about future problems and want their health monitored.

Brody honed in on whether the

collective bargaining agreement specifies that head injuries are workplace safety issues and belong in arbitration.

“It has to be really specific. That’s what I have to wrestle with,” she said.

Frederick called the contract “silent” on latent head injuries, and said players therefore have the right to seek damages in court. Brody is not expected to rule for several months.

Players and family members on hand for the hearing included Kevin Turner, a former Philadelphia Eagles running back now battling Lou Gehrig’s disease; Dorsey Levens, a veteran running back who made a 2012 documentary on concussions called “Bell Rung,” and Easterling’s widow, Mary Ann.

One wrinkle in the NFL’s argument is what it calls the “gap year” players, who played from 1987 to 1993, when there was no collective bargaining agreement in place. The league, eager to avoid opening up its files in a court case, argues that those players were bound by previous

contracts or contracts later in effect when they collected pensions.

“I certainly admit that the gap year players ... are the most difficult cases,” said Clement.

However, he said very few people played only those years, and not before or after. For most, “there’s no way to say the only hits that hurt you are the hits from those years,” he said.

Tom McHale played in the NFL from 1987 to 1995, before the All-Ivy League athlete died of an accidental overdose in 2008. He was 45 and had battled depression and addiction toward the end of his life.

Lisa McHale, of Tampa, Fla., hardly recognized her once-gregarious husband. After his death, he was also diagnosed with CTE. She believes the player lawsuits, and the willingness of retired players to go public with their problems, will help her three teenage sons understand their father’s illness.

“To know it wasn’t his fault, that there was something neurological going on, it helps,” she said.

Boxers work to knock out Parkinson’s symptoms

PAMELA ENGEL
AP Staff

When Mary Yeaman was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in 2006, she could barely bring herself to leave her house.

Her muscles were weak, and she was having a hard time coping.

“I’ve always done sports and stuff like that, and it was getting to be too much just sitting and doing nothing,” she said.

In 2007, she found Rock Steady Boxing in Indianapolis. She now attends classes every week and has seen her symptoms ease as a result of a rigorous regimen of punching, jumping, jogging and stretching.

“It makes my muscles stronger. I can walk

better,” said Yeaman, 64.

Rock Steady, founded in 2006 by former Marion County prosecutor Scott C. Newman after he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s at age 40, gives people suffering from the disease an outlet to ease their symptoms and improve their physical fitness. Through boxing-inspired fitness classes, participants use exercise to slow the symptoms of a progressive neurological disease that causes tremors, muscle rigidity, loss of balance and cognitive, speech and vision impairment.

“Sometimes people get very discouraged when they are diagnosed with Parkinson’s, understandably facing a disease that is progressive, that’s going to worsen over time and that can take a big toll on them,” said neurologist

and Rock Steady board member Dr. S. Elizabeth Zauber.

“When they come to a gym and realize that ... there are people that are experiencing the same thing (and) there is something they can do about it to get better and perhaps slow down the course of their disease, then that improves their overall outlook. They realize they’re still very capable physically even though they have a neurological disease.”

Rock Steady offers 16 classes a week. The organization’s 125 clients range in age from late 30s to early 90s.

Classes start slow with a warm-up before participants dive into more rigorous exercise. Coaches set up several stations throughout the small gym with a different exercise at each

one. Participants punch hanging boxing bags and speed balls, jump rope and toss medicine balls.

The exercises at Rock Steady are based on boxing drills, and they’re meant to extend the perceived capabilities of those suffering from Parkinson’s. There are four different class levels, based on the severity of the symptoms.

Boxing works well to combat the disease because of the range of motion required in the exercises, Zauber said.

“I see all the time in my patients that start exercising or my patients that are exercising that they tend to function better,” she said. “They have improvements in their balance, improvements in sleep, in mood and energy level.”

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Students and faculty try to determine the stench around campus

REBECA PICCARDO
Contributing Writer

As the students cringe at the smell that surrounds the Biscayne Bay Campus, some faculty members and students consider where the stench might come from.

Joanna McNamara, a junior in advertising, said she did not smell anything on campus, but rather on her drive to and from campus.

“Every time my sister and I carpool, we pass by US-1 and 151 Street, and that area always smells,” McNamara said. “At first, we thought it was our car.”

One of the possible contributors to the smell in the Biscayne Bay area is the superfund site that neighbors BBC.

According to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection website, “Years ago there was less understanding of how dumping or improper management of chemical wastes might adversely affect public health and the environment.”

In 1980, Congress passed legislation to establish the Superfund program. The Environmental Protection Agency manages the Superfund Program in order to locate, investigate and clean up the chemical waste sites.

According to the EPA website, the Munisport Landfill operated from 1974

until 1981, when it became a superfund site. Due to an investigation and assessment completed by EPA, it was determined that “the landfill posed no threat to human health.”

Richard Brinn, senior lecturer at the College of Arts and Sciences, said in an e-mail that he did not think the superfund site was a major contributor to the smell.

“Some of this waste was visible when they built those high rises next to BBC and I’m not sure they would get a permit if gases were still escaping from the site,” Brinn said.

The two other possible contributors to the smell are the mangrove trees that are planted around campus or the wastewater treatment plant that is neighboring the campus.

“Most likely, [the smell] is related to the hydrogen sulfide from the mangroves and the waste treatment plant, which is fairly large,” Brinn said.

Mary Lou Pfeiffer, professor from the University Honors College, considers that the source of the smell may have been caused by the North District Wastewater Treatment Plant.

“I thought the smell was coming from the treatment plant, but that was years ago. I haven’t smelled it

recently,” Pfeiffer said.

Pfeiffer thinks that some of the water treatment facilities have been relocated, and that the public does not have access to the facility.

“I did drive onto the road that leads back to the treatment facility,” said Pfeiffer in an email. “There were huge ‘No Trespassing’ signs with a locked metal gate.”

Peter Craumer, associate professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, considered that the smell could come from both the treatment plant and the mangroves trees.

“You get hydrogen sulfide from both sources,” Craumer said. “It is hard to know which one you are smelling.”

However, Craumer said that the smell is probably mostly from the mangroves, because of their natural, anaerobic decomposition process.

The sewage treatment plant, however, should not have a smell.

“They are aerating the sludge when they process it, which is aerobic decomposition,” Craumer said.

Phalancia Louisy, a sophomore English major, said she has taken all her classes at BBC and she smells the odor coming from the streets leading towards BBC, but not on the campus itself.

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Get your vote on



SANA ULIAH/THE BEACON

On April 10, students lined up in Academic I to plug in their votes for the 2013-2014 Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus. All votes were recorded via iPads at the voting booth. In order to vote this year, students were required to present student identification to the poll worker.

Students use silence to make a stand for gay rights

VINSON PRESSLEY
Staff Writer

Students will use the power of silence to advance a national movement.

“It’s an event that speaks out loud even though no one is speaking at all,” said Blanca Jara, sophomore chemistry major.

The Day of Silence will be happening on April 18 at Panther Square on the Biscayne Bay Campus between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There will also be a Breaking the Silence event from 2 to 3 p.m. in the Wolfe University Center, room 155. Both events were coordinated by the Multicultural Programs and Services.

A table will be set up in Panther Square and students will be given information about the movement and will be given “speaking cards” so students will be able to explain

why they are not speaking and spread awareness about the cause.

The Breaking the Silence event will allow students to share and discuss their experience when they participated in the Day of Silence.

The National Day of Silence is a national youth movement that protests the silence faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies and spreads awareness about the harassment and bullying that members of the LGBT community go through.

According to Gisela P. Vega, associate director of MPAS and LGBTQA Initiatives, the movement started in high schools and branched out to colleges and other schools in the country. This year marks the University’s 10-year anniversary of participating in the National Day of Silence.

The first Day of Silence was in

spring 2003.

Some students agree that silence is an effective method of conveying the message of this movement.

“By being silent, people will [feel the] silence and hopefully people will realize they’re supposed to speak out,” Jara said.

“My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by harassment, prejudice and discrimination,” was the message written on the speaking cards given out last year at the Day of Service event and aligns with Jara’s sentiment.

Sofia Galiano, a sophomore

journalism major, is a supporter of the movement but not a fan of how the message of the movement is conveyed.

“I feel like you can go about it a different way,” Galiano said. She said she would rather raise awareness by being vocal and talking about the issue or hosting events instead of choosing silence as a method of conveying the message.

Students may have different opinions on how the message is conveyed but support for the cause itself is alive and well.

Priscilla Torres said events help make more people aware about the cause and that social media would be a great way to spread the message of the Day of Silence.

“I do want to show my support for LGBT people,” Torres said.

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“It’s an event that speaks out loud even though no one is speaking at all.”

Blanca Jara
Sophomore
Chemistry major