

 <p>GREECE</p> <p>98 migrant hunger strikers hospitalized</p> <p>More than a third of the 240 North African immigrants on hunger strike in a central Athens mansion for the past 37 days have been hospitalized with severe health problems.</p>	 <p>RUSSIA</p> <p>Russia demands Japan investigate protest</p> <p>Russia is demanding Japan investigate a protest that took place outside the Russian embassy in Tokyo, warning it could open its own criminal case in the matter.</p>	 <p>GERMANY</p> <p>Church offers up to \$6,900 to abuse victims</p> <p>Germany's Roman Catholic church on March 2 said it planned to offer up to \$6,900 to victims of abuse by clergy or church officials while they were minors.</p>
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PLAY FOR LIFE

Event aims to raise \$85,000 for American Cancer Society

ALFREDO APARICIO
Staff Writer

Six years ago on the front lawn of the Graham Center, students banded together and held the first official Relay for Life at the University.

In the following years, Relay for Life has only gained momentum with this year's goal set at \$85,000. This year's theme, "Play for Life," will incorporate childhood games and promises to bring a night full of fun.

The event will bring together caregivers, survivors and the families and friends of those who have succumbed.

Alan Meca, 22, who lost his father to two brain tumors in 2009, describes learning of his father's cancer as "being in a glass box, I was protected, but when my dad was diagnosed, it was like the glass shattered and everything came crashing down."

In the subsequent years, Meca was no longer just a participant in the Relay, he was one of the many who are touched, directly or indirectly, by cancer. During last year's Luminaria ceremony Meca couldn't help but breakdown.

"I was there. I couldn't help but fall to my knees and cry because it brought back all the memories," said Meca.

Meca is now enrolled in the developmental science doctoral program and attributes his father every year for pushing him to succeed. "He was like my guardian angel," said Meca. "He was never really there with me because he had to work but he always kept on pushing me, 'do not give up and always do better especially in school.'"

"I can't think of just one story," said Angela Baker, 21, a senior and the executive director of Relay for Life. "So many have touched me."

Baker, whose grandmother has been a survivor for 40 years, has been involved with the American Cancer Society since she was eight years old. "When you're small you don't really understand," said Baker. "It is when you get older that you begin to understand."

When she came to FIU, Baker engrossed herself in the event, becoming advocacy chair her sophomore year, marketing chair her senior year and executive director last fall. "It's something that I have been involved with for so many



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Participants in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life will be camping out from March 4 to 5 outside of the Ryder Business Building and taking turns walking or running around campus to raise money for cancer.

years and have seen grow," said Baker.

Shamira O'Neal, 21, a junior, has been involved since her high school

years. She began her freshman year as a participant and then became a Luminaria chair her sophomore year. Her senior year she became

a team captain for the debate club, for which she was the president.

RELAY, page 5

Four regular season games to be nationally televised

IGOR MELLO
Asst. Sports Director

The Golden Panthers will start their 2011 campaign the same way they finished their previous season – on an ESPN network.

For the first time since August of 2006, and the first time in the Mario Cristobal era, his team will play a game on a day

outside of the traditional Saturday. In fact during the 2011 slate, FIU will play four out of their 12 regular season mid-week games, including two in the first couple of weeks.

The 2011 FIU football schedule also includes three nationally televised games. It'll be the first time in school history that any regular season football game will be televised on one of the major ESPN

networks.

On Thursday, Sept. 1, the Sun Belt Conference champions will open their season in hopes to defend their title against North Texas at home, televised on ESPN3. Last season FIU defeated the Mean Green 34-10 in Denton, Texas.

After their home opener, the Little Caesars Pizza Bowl champions will travel to Papa John's Cardinal Stadium to

face Louisville, winners of the Beef 'O' Brady's Bowl.

Unlike last season where FIU had a bye week in the opening week of the season then in week eight, the Golden Panthers will have a bye in weeks seven and four. It'll be the first time FIU's young, Division-I football history, that they'll host six

FOOTBALL, page 3

Protests in Tunisia, Egypt reverberate through region

NICOLAS SARAVIA
Staff Writer

The uprising in Tunisia spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa, as millions took to the streets in signs of protest against their current regimes.

The fall of Tunisian and Egyptian Presidents, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, have inspired an uprising in Libya and major protests in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan and Djibouti.

High unemployment, corrup-

tion and political repression led the youth of Tunisia to successfully oust Ben Ali from the presidency on Jan. 14, after 28 days of protests. Tunisians inspired Egyptians to rise against Mubarak, who resigned the presidency after 30 years on Feb. 11.

After the resignation of Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi an interim government was installed, while in Egypt, the military is currently in control.

"If the interim governments intend to be responsive to their

citizens, they must begin the difficult process of organizing free, fair and transparent elections," said John Clark, professor at the Department of Politics and International Relations. "The first step would be the institution of a new constitution, or revision of the existing constitutions that allow free political competition."

Islamic fundamentalism has become a major concern for both the Middle East and the West in the post-dictatorship days of Tunisia and Egypt.

"[Tunisians] witnessed the Algerian civil war and of course the danger of Islamism, they are ready to deal with Islamism within a democratic structure," said Maya Boutaghou, modern languages professor and Algerian citizen.

Boutaghou highlighted the importance of high access to education, which for Tunisians, accounts for 97.7 percent of the population between age six and 11.

Also, 37 percent of the Tun-

sian population between the ages of 18 and 25 has access to higher education.

"I will not feel that confident about Egypt, which did not really offer education for all. [Their] human development index is not as good as in Tunisia," added Boutaghou.

The eyes of the media have shifted toward Libya, as its citizens demand the resignation of President Muammar Gaddafi,

PROTESTS, page 2

NEWS FLASH

Westboro Baptist Church Wins Supreme Court Appeal

The Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that a grieving father's pain over mocking protests at his Marine son's funeral must yield to First Amendment protections for free speech. All but one justice sided with a fundamentalist church that has stirred outrage with raucous demonstrations contending God is punishing the military for the nation's tolerance of homosexuality.

The 8-1 decision in favor of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan., was the latest in a line of court rulings that, as Chief Justice John Roberts said in his opinion for the court, protects "even hurtful speech on public issues to ensure that we do not stifle public debate."

Julian Assange Claims 'Jewish' Conspiracy Against Him

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange complained about a Jewish smear campaign against WikiLeaks emanating from journalists in Britain.

In a call related by Ian Hislop, editor of the satirical magazine Private Eye, Assange reportedly bemoaned that the magazine had previously published a piece critical of WikiLeaks because it had been taken in by "a conspiracy led by the Guardian which included journalist David Leigh, editor Alan Rusbridger and John Kampfner from Index on Censorship—all of whom 'are Jewish,'" the Guardian is reporting.

Assange denied the claims, saying, "Hislop has distorted, invented or misremembered almost every significant claim and phrase."

— Compiled by Alexandra Camejo

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pres. Obama visits Florida schools

**BRENDAN FARRINGTON
CHRISTINE ARMARIO**
AP Staff

When President Barack Obama and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush stand side by side at a Miami high school, it will be an opportunity for the Democrat to show a bipartisan approach to education reform while allowing the Republican to push his own nationwide message on the issue.

Obama and Bush have common ground on education. Both support increasing the number of charter schools, tying teacher evaluations to student performance on standardized tests and setting high standards and accountability.

They also believe education is key to invigorating U.S. competitiveness.

The joint appearance comes as Obama aims to rewrite the No Child Left Behind Act — signed into law by the governor's brother, former President George W. Bush, no less.

One of Jeb Bush's legacies during his eight years as governor, which ended in January 2007, was an overhaul of Florida's school system.

Public schools are now graded on a scale of A to F and are rewarded or punished based on their grades. Bush continues to push Florida-style education changes around the country through the Founda-

tion for Excellence in Education. A number of states are in the process of adopting similar changes.

"Like with everything in politics, it's mutual convenience," Jack Jennings, president of the Center for Education Policy and former general counsel of the House Committee on Education and Labor, said of the joint Obama-Bush appearance.

On Friday, they will be at Miami Central Senior High School, one of hundreds of low-performing schools across the nation that have received money from the U.S. Department of Education to execute one of four turnaround models. Jeb Bush selected the school as an example of a school that has made gains through reform.

"Because of high expectations for students, hard-edge policies that focus schools on learning and an array of choices for families, the Sunshine State is leading the nation in rising student achievement," Bush said in a statement.

He said he looked forward to sharing the state's "model for student success" with Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Obama has pushed Florida-type reforms through the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top program, which rewards schools for taking on ambitious reforms to close achievement gaps and improve student performance.

The initiative has prompted states

to adopt Common Core standards, and led to an increase in the number of charter schools and changes in the way teachers are evaluated.

"Both of them have pushed the envelope," said former West Virginia Gov. Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education. "Both of them have been willing to go out on issues that are controversial."

White House officials say the joint meeting shows the president believes education is not a Republican or Democratic issue.

Obama has sought to show a broader sense of outreach to the GOP after his own party took a beating in the midterm elections, as well as a willingness to work across party lines.

Toward that end Obama will be appearing alongside the brother of a president he constantly assailed during his own 2008 campaign.

Obama also wants Congress to overhaul the No Child Left Behind Act, including by changing the way student progress is measured. The brand name has become so unpopular among many parents and educators that the White House tends not to even use that title.

Duncan will also attend the event. Central High received \$784,700 in Title I School Improvement Grant funds in 2009. It has 1,826 students, many of whom come from low-income families.

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 22, Issue 19 of *The Beacon*, "On the Prowl" stated that Passion Parties had 3000 consultants. That statement is incorrect, it is actually more than 100,000 sales consultants.

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

Countries try to appease protestors

PROTESTS, page 1

who has been in power since 1969.

"Gaddafi is guiding his country to civil war. He does not want to leave, when I hear him over the

radio or TV screaming and encouraging his people to enter the civil war he sounds as if he lost his mind," said Boutaghou.

Protests have also appeared in some of the richer Gulf states, where it is being handled in a different manner.

According to *Reuters*, in response to demonstrations, the monarchy of Bahrain attempted to appease their citizens by offering each family the equivalent of \$2,650.

Saudi Arabia, which is also a monarchy, adopted a similar strategy and announced a raise of salaries for state employees by 15 percent.

"I think it is quite likely that these countries can contain the protests going on within their borders, particularly Saudi Arabia. But the monetary payments are only part of the reason why protests are not likely to succeed in these countries," said Clark.

According to BBC, over 4,000 refugees fled Tunisia to the small island of Lampedusa, causing concern for the Italian government and the European Union.

"Basically, the previous approach of Italy of paying dictators such as Gaddafi millions to keep the would-be migrants out of [European Union] territory was

unethical and as the tumultuous events show, unsustainable," said Markus Thiel, assistant professor at the Department of Politics and International Relations and research associate at the EU Center of Excellence.

The Italian government offered to send policemen to Tunisia to prevent further migrants; however, the petition was denied.

"The EU needs to fundamentally rethink their relationship with the North African countries, and provide them with a sort of financial 'Marshall Plan' that aids in democratization and stabilization of those countries," added Thiel.

THE BEACON

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For an application packet, please contact Robert Jaross (xjarossr@fiu.edu) or Alfred Soto (sotoa@fiu.edu). Applications can also be picked up in GC 210 or WUC 124.

All applications are due by 5 p.m. on March 11

MEN'S BASKETBALL

FIU opens tourney against Denver

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

The most important game of the year will be played this Saturday, Mar. 5 when FIU takes on Denver in the first round on the Sun Belt Conference tournament at 9:45 p.m. in Hot Springs, Arkansas. It will be a rematch of a first round game last year where the Pioneers bounced the Golden Panthers out of the tournament.

In some circles, it can be looked at as a revenge game, especially considering that they also suffered a tough overtime loss to Denver earlier this year.

"In the back of my mind, Denver knocked us out last year and they beat us this year so you will never forget things like that," Phil Gary said.

Others like Coach Isiah Thomas are taking a different approach to Saturday's matchup.

"I don't look at it that way, I just try to get the team to play the game that's at hand," Thomas said. "I thought that last year we had an excellent shot at winning the game, and we came up short, I'm hoping that we don't come up short this time."

It has been a year since that game, and many things have changed, except their place in the standings which have still remained the same.

Even though Isaiah has totally revamped his team, the outcome at the end of the year has not improved. The one benefit that

they do have is the amount of talent compared to last season. Players like Phil Taylor, Eric Frederick, Dominique Ferguson and DeJuan Wright all have made them still a team to be reckoned with, despite what their 5-11 conference record indicates.

Earlier this year, they took Denver to overtime on the road and eventually lost 79-70, without both Wright and Taylor. That combined with their poor 20-36 shooting from the free throw line caused them to lose the game.

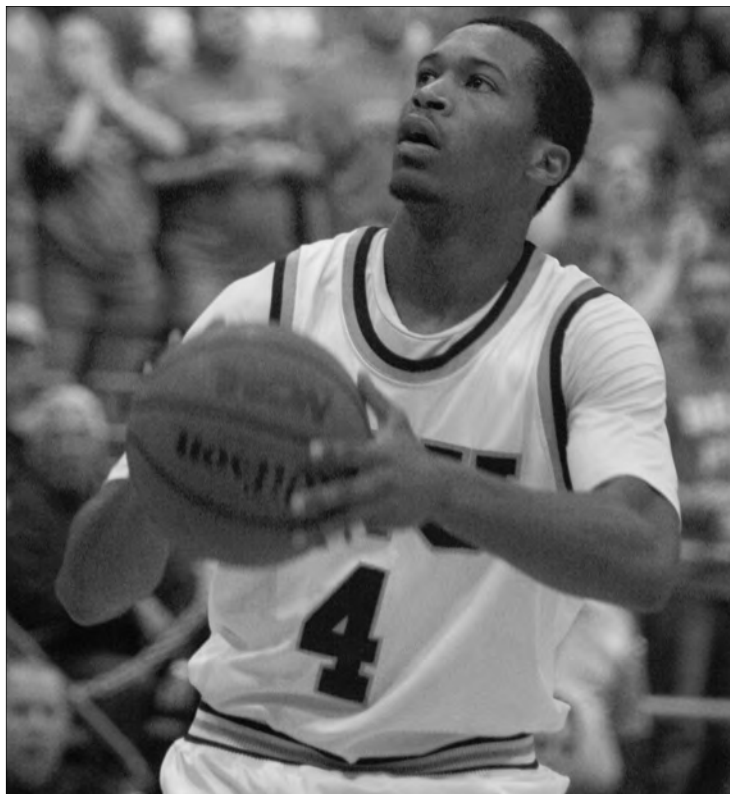
A lot can be taken from the loss, including how the Pioneers like to play against FIU.

"They're a very patient team, they run the shot clock down and you have to be ready to play for 30 to 35 seconds on every possession," said Thomas. He also added that "they like to use the back cut a lot and their good shooters."

For the Golden Panthers this season, any player can be the leading scorer on any given night, and they do not so much rely on player specifically. Denver is a team that likes to play a matchup man and switch off of screens, so many times a smaller player will be guarding a big man and vice-versa.

Phil Gary took advantage of having a big man on him last game where he scored a team high 22 points, but any player can do so depending on the opportunities that Denver gives them.

The confidence of the team going into the tournament this



REBECCA VILLAFANE/THE BEACON

Phil Gary [above] scored 22 points in an overtime loss to Denver earlier this season.

year had not been on the rise, at least up until they finally ended their 5 game losing streak on senior night against Troy. That win should give them motivation and confidence against Denver.

If they win, they will have the privilege of playing Middle Tennessee on Sunday at 9 p.m., but for now they are just taking it as any other team is....one game at a time.

SUN BELT TOURNAMENT

FIU vs. Denver

- Time: 9:45 p.m.
- When: 03/05/11
- Where: Hot Springs, AR

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coley makes big impact in first year

RICO ALBARRACIN
Asst. Sports Director

As the season draws to a close, and the FIU woman's basketball is waiting for their first matchup in the Sun Belt Conference tournament, freshman Jerica Coley is contributing to a team that is playing well.

Coley is currently leading the team in scoring with 15.7 points per game, enough to place her fourth in the SBC leaderboard. The St. Petersburg Times "Player of the Year" while in high school, Coley has garnered awards throughout her freshman season, including SBC Player of the Week twice this season. While at St. Petersburg Catholic High School, Coley led her team to the regional semifinals while averaging 23 points per game.

The scoring is only part of what Coley brings to the Golden Panthers. The St. Petersburg native has provided an offensive threat that rivals many SBC teams, while also contributing to one of the better defensive backcourts in the conference.

COLEY, page 4

New schedule features four nationally televised games

FOOTBALL, page 1

home games.

"We are excited that our fans will be treated to six home games this season, giving them and our team the opportunity to take advantage of the college football game day experience here at FIU," Athletic Director Pete Garcia said.

Four out of their first five games will be at home to start the season, including a week three showdown at home against cross-state foe Central Florida on Sept. 17. Central Florida won the Conference USA last season and is the only opponent FIU will face that finished in the top 25 BCS rankings last season.

The Knights were ranked 25th by the end of the season after upsetting Georgia 10-6 in the Auto Zone Liberty Bowl.

After their home stretch, FIU will have to play five out of their final seven games on the road to finish off the 2011 season, including the last two regular season games on the road.

Other out-of conference oppo-

nents include Duke, at home, Oct. 1, and at Akron on Oct. 8. The other nationally televised games for FIU will be a pair of consecutive Tuesday night games. On Oct. 18, FIU will play at Arkansas State, on ESPN2 leading up to a clash between co-SBC champions on the following week.

FIU will try to upend Troy once again, after they upset the Trojans in their homecoming night last season, 52-35. The Golden Panthers will host Troy this time on Oct. 25, on ESPN2.

On Nov. 12, Cristobal's crew will try to do something they haven't officially done in school history - defeat their rival. FAU will travel to FIU Stadium, as the Golden Panthers will try to avenge their 21-9 loss last season at Lockhart Stadium.

"This year's schedule will be a good test for FIU," Garcia said. "The team is coming off its most successful season and this schedule sets us up nicely to build on that success. I want to personally thank Dave Brown and ESPN for showing the confidence in our football program by showcasing four of our games on national

television."

FIU may have an easier path to build on that success.

Last season, opponents combined to have a 65-84 record, a winning percentage of .436. FIU's 2011 opponents have combined to have a 57-92 record, according to last season. This season's opponents had a .383 winning percentage last season, a fairly easier percentage compared to last season for the Golden Panthers.

"Our entire football program is excited about the challenges and opportunities presented by our 2011 schedule," Head Coach Mario Cristobal said. "It will be the first time in school history that we will play four nationally televised games and will face four 2010 bowl participants. The caliber of opponent from start to finish further reinforces that we must have the most demanding and productive off-season that we have ever had."

Cristobal's off-season regimen is underway. Spring Practice is began March 3 for FIU as they prepare to play their spring football game on April 1.

2011 FIU TV SCHEDULE



*Selected conference games will also be carried on the Sun Belt Network



Freshman guard helps bolster FIU defense

COLEY, page 3

Along with senior Michelle Gonzalez, Coley is averaging 2.3 steals per game, with Gonzalez averaging the same, giving FIU the third and fourth ranked averages in the SBC respectively.

Coley reads the passing lanes with such precision, the crowd can sense when she will intercept a pass. Her focus puts pressure on opposing guards and forces awkward shots. Along with forcing bad shots, Coley rebounds at a high rate, enough to lead the team with 6.3 rebounds per game.

Stats only tell part of the story. Watching Coley in person gives people a different perspective of what Coley does on the court.

She has a calm intensity to her. She makes her presence felt without any shouting, exaggerated body movements, or aggression. Coley's style of play is very "business as usual" but at a high level of play.

When the ball is in her hands, the opposing team puts their focus on her. Coley has teammates that can generate offense, such as Gonzalez, or junior Rakia Rodgers. That added threat of not knowing where Coley will go with the ball makes her even

2011 Regular Season Stats



ASHLEY MCCLAIN

* 2011 Team Leader

PPG: 15.7*

FG%: 47%

REB: 6

STLS: 2*

more effective.

Whether she is driving to the basket or pulling up for a three-pointer, Coley can effect the game in many ways. Her control of the offense shows the confidence head coach Cindy Russo has put in Coley.

"What coach has told, when the ball is in my hands, is to make the best decision," Coley said. "When you have players who can score like Rakia [Rodgers] and Michelle [Gonzalez], it makes it easier on offense."

Coley got her start in basketball while she was in middle school, having her aunt, Tamika Coley, guiding her throughout the playing days.

"Coach, well she's not my coach but I call her that, has

helped me since I was in middle school," Coley said. "She helped me a lot."

Coach Cindy Russo has seen many players come through in her 34 years at FIU, and she enjoys when a player just plays with great decision-making skills.

"Jerica [Coley] is a coaches dream," Russo said. "She is just really great."

Coley will be the first to tell you that she is a laid-back person. She won't yell. She won't raise her voice. A soft spoken person, Coley still draws respect from her teammates.

"She's a great player," Gonzalez said. "She is very active and plays hard. It's great to have her."

When Coley is not playing basketball, she enjoys her free time playing tennis. Coley was a tennis player in high, and led her tennis program to the Class 2A state tournament in 2009, advancing and eventually falling in the No. 2 doubles final. Along with tennis, Coley watches movies in her spare time.

"I don't really like going out," Coley said.

Coley, and the rest of the Golden Panthers now have their sights set on the SBC tournament. FIU is the number two seed



KRISTI CAMARA/THE BEACON

Jerica Coley [above] has scored 15.7 points per game in first season.

in the East division and has a first round bye. The Golden Panthers will play the winner of Troy vs. Louisiana-Monroe.

"We played Troy just recently

and ULM a while back," Coley said. "Right now we're focusing on ourselves, on what we can do to get better. I think we can win the tournament."

MIAMI HEAT

Former FIU star Arroyo cut after Bibby signing

TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer

LeBron James spoke with Mike Bibby after a game last week, and the NBA's two-time reigning MVP is keeping the exact details of that chat private.

This much is known: It was a recruiting pitch.

"I gave him the eye," James said. "And I guess the eye worked."

By Wednesday night, James and the Heat will be able to say that with certainty.

The Heat cleared a roster spot Tuesday by parting ways with Carlos Arroyo, and although the team made no formal pronouncements because of NBA rules, several players — James, Dwyane Wade and Mario Chalmers among them — said they will have Bibby aboard soon.

Bibby is expected to be in South Florida on Wednesday, will likely participate in Thursday morning's shootaround practice and should be in uniform when the Heat play the Orlando Magic that night.

"I think it's a big thing for us," said Heat guard Eddie House, Bibby's brother-in-law. "He's going to do a lot of things that can help LeBron, Dwyane and everyone else around here."

Miami announced the Arroyo move in time for the veteran guard to sign with

another team and be eligible for its post-season roster.

"This was a very difficult decision to make because Carlos has done a great job for this team and this organization," Heat President Pat Riley said. "He is truly a first class individual and professional. We wish him nothing but the best."

Bibby was traded by Atlanta to Washington last week. He was in Miami on Friday for his first — and ultimately, next-to-last — game with the Wizards, saying he was aware of buyout rumblings but did not know what the future held.

"I can't control it," Bibby said.

The Wizards and Bibby reached a buyout agreement on Monday, and he didn't take long to pick his next destination. It means the Heat, at a crucial time of the season, will be giving a new point guard on-the-fly training about how they play the game.

"It's easier with veteran players with high IQs and if you have a definitive system and philosophy," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "Which we do."

Since Bibby won't be a Heat player until Wednesday, Spoelstra could not speak about him specifically.

James could.

"He's going to help us out tremendously," James said.

"This was a very difficult decision to make because Carlos has done a great job for this and this organization. He is truly a first class individual and professional."

Pat Riley
Miami Heat Team President

The Heat had conversations with other players who hit the market through buyouts, including Troy Murphy, who is expected to sign Wednesday with Boston. If Murphy picked Miami, the Heat would have likely waived little-used big man Jamaal Magloire to create another roster spot.

Magloire was relieved to be in practice Tuesday.

"I would have been disappointed otherwise," Magloire said.

Spoelstra said he cannot wait for the speculating about what'll happen with Miami's roster to end.

"Once you get past this date, you can focus on absolutes — who you have and who you don't have," Spoelstra said. "And we're close. ... I feel that our team is good enough."

Miami (43-17) entered play Tuesday one game behind Boston (43-15) and a game ahead of Chicago (41-17) in the race for the top spot in the Eastern Conference.

Bibby averaged 9.4 points and 3.6 assists as a starter with Atlanta this season, his 13th in the league.

The Heat would become his fifth NBA team, a list also including Vancouver, Sacramento, the Hawks and the Wizards, with whom he shot 1 for 9 in two games after the trade that he said caught him by

surprise last week.

He's also appeared and started in 80 postseason games, which is more than any other current Heat player. James and Zydrunas Ilgauskas have been in 71 playoff games, all during their time in Cleveland together.

"Certain moves are surprising and unexpected," Wade said. "The Mike Bibby (trade) was probably the most surprising, unexpected move. A lot of people think it was the Kendrick Perkins move (from Boston to Oklahoma City), but I think it was Mike Bibby. No one expected that."

He became available and when opportunities present themselves you've got to jump on them."

Arroyo was not at practice and did not immediately respond to a text message. He started 42 games for Miami this season and played in seven others, but logged only 27 minutes of court time since Jan. 30 — more than half of that coming in a Feb. 16 game at Toronto.

"It's never easy," Wade said. "It's always bittersweet, especially in this situation for Carlos."

You look at it, he was doing a great job starting, really didn't do anything wrong. It's very unfortunate. The one thing we can do is hope that he ends up in a good situation."

CLASSIFIEDS

SUMMER JOBS

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BRINGING BACK A CLASSIC

Play *Pride and Prejudice* to teach audiences life lessons

KATHY PAZ
Staff Writer

Pride and Prejudice are two words that have remained as prevalent today as they were when Jane Austen penned her novel *Pride and Prejudice* in the 1800's.

The stage version of *Pride and Prejudice* will be the second production of the spring semester. Starring performance major students Fadoua Hanine and Jair Bula as protagonists Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy respectively, the performance is directed by Professor Phillip Church.

Adapted for the stage by Jon Jory, the play, like the book, unfolds a classic story that revolves around themes of love, morality, manners and upbringing.

"The show is about a young girl who sees the posturing and the pretensions that go on around her, in her own family and in those above her station," said Church.

"She is one of literature's central archetypal rebels, and college students, male and female, will identify with that impulsive and rebellious spirit."

The story takes place in the 19th century. Because of its setting, upbringing and social

status carry a lot of significance, not only for the analysis and understanding of the play, but also in terms of the writing.

"This era, the Georgian period, is of particular importance to the students training in performance. The roots of Jane Austen's comedy lie in the Restoration era's *Comedy of Manners*," said Church.

"Traces of this style are still very much in evidence even though, as a writer, she was bringing her readers into a world of everyday realism. There is so much discipline involved with this style - physical, vocal AND spiritual. The essence, or the spirit of the times, is essential to the success of playing Austen's characters. I think these young actors are capturing this essence remarkably well."

The cast and crew of *Pride and Prejudice* followed a strict schedule to prepare for the production's opening. Rehearsals were held each night from Monday through Friday and lasted almost three hours. Yet, things still felt rushed.

"[It's] frustrating, but a reality which we have to live with," said Church. "A great job was done by the choreographer, Mical Nevitt, and the dance captain, Yerelis Chavez. Austen's world



LAURA PACCHIONI/THE BEACON

Angie Esposito (left) and Ileana Mateo work on costumes in preparation for the theatre school's newest production.

really explodes into life. They have contributed a lot toward that end."

The play is scheduled to open this week. Performances will run from Mar. 3- 6 and from Mar. 10-13. The show will take place at 8:00 p.m. except for Sunday's presentation, which will be at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for all

FIU students.

Professor Church hopes the community will walk away with some life lessons from the play.

"I want audiences to stop and think and consider and listen before responding with knee-jerk reactions," said Church.

"Both Darcy and Elizabeth learn the essential lesson

of learning to listen. It is only when we listen to each other that we really begin to consider the other person's needs - the other person's perspective. Most of the time we are so preoccupied with listening to ourselves that we fail to listen to another. A lot of relationships self-destruct because of this."

Students get involved in Relay for a good cause



ESRA ERDOGAN/THE BEACON

RELAY, page 1

O'Neal, whose grandfather had been diagnosed with colon cancer twice, describes her experience at Relay for Life as a mix of emotions and a bittersweet experience.

"You're there for the cause and the personal stakes just make it more emotional," said O'Neal. "Every year we rise to the challenge and raise the money."

Janelle Lago, 18, a freshman whose best friend has gone through cancer twice and her mother four times, welcomes the experiences she has had from being part of Relay for Life. "As a freshman, I feel like I've done a lot and it's exposed me to many different people who you sometimes pass by and you don't know their stories."

Lago hopes to surprise her mother by bringing her to Miami for Relay this year.

"Sometimes it hurts to be so far away from her but I know I'm here [in Miami] for a reason and I know that I'm making her proud," said Lago.

And while some relay for those who are fighting, others fight for those who have fallen.

Ben F. Badger, 25, a senior and online chair, relays for his grand-

father who succumbed to cancer at the age of 70.

"I learned about Relay by accident. When I was a freshman I joined the Russian Club and one day the president of the club came to me for help in tabling at Relay. I had never heard of it but I came back every year after that and would help with the cause," said Badger. "I saw it as a big carnival."

Badger, who became involved in Relay for Life as part of the planning committee this past fall, describes the experience as rewarding.

"Everything I'm doing is for a great cause. All we raise literally goes to helping someone in the present. In a way, everything I've been through has prepared me for the relay," he said.

Badger's position has opened up other mediums of advertising for Relay for Life. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts have all been opened to advertise and spread the word about Relay for Life.

"This year I did everything from scratch. I made flyers and managed the website to make sure everything is in order and that the word is out about what we're doing," said Badger.

Apart from all the students, Relay for Life also plays host to the community representative from the American Cancer Society, Beatriz Newborn.

"My job is to partner with committees and its volunteers and charge missions and motivation into the event," she said.

Newborn has been involved with charities from any early age and started volunteering for ACS as an undergrad.

"My cousin battled breast cancer, my grandfather is battling leukemia and my grandmother passed away from cancer," said Newborn, "So it's amazing to see so many survivors together to celebrate. We put them forth and honor them and make them feel special," she said.

To Newborn, it wasn't surprising to see so many young people involved with the cause.

"All my life I worked as volunteer and seeing students so involved speaks volumes of our giving, service-oriented culture," Newborn said.

Relay for Life begins Friday Mar. 4 at 12 p.m. with the Pre-Relay. The Relay for Life Event officially begins at 6 p.m. with the opening ceremony and survivor lap.

Junior Dominique Grooms, a criminal justice major, poses as a homeless person and calls out to people for donations for Relay for Life.

Fairy tale classic gets a science fiction twist

JUAN LOPEZ
Contributing Writer

Cinderella is a timeless fairytale and the childhood classic will be getting a face lift from the School of Music with their production of Jules Massenet's *Cendrillon*.

Cinderella, Prince Charming and the rest will be transferred to the world of steampunk where the supernatural aspect of the story will conflict with steampunk's science-fiction setting. The combination is rarely seen in the classical world of opera.

Professor Robert B. Dundas, the director, chose *Cendrillon*. He was careful in his choice, as he wanted to pick something that would highlight the talent of his current crop of students, said Dundas.

It was a risk to choose *Cendrillon* but one Professor Dundas was willing to take due to the faith he has in the performers.

"I believe it is very important that

the students have the opportunity to have solos; it is the way you learn more about the craft," said Dundas.

"I put the fear of God into these performers but they have risen to the occasion. I can already hear the difference in their voices. I'm very proud of them."

After the opera was chosen, the production team was split into three teams tasked with coming up with a unique way to present this classic tale. By the end, steampunk was the clear favorite among all the performers.

During this time Dundas gave each performer a character profile to study. He would then sit with each student to discuss how the character should be portrayed.

Dundas' dedication, attention to detail and efficiency does not go unnoticed by those he directs.

"Mr. Dundas is great to work with. He is open to discussion on character portrayal and we find common ground. He is very detailed," said

Marian Lobaina a graduate student who plays the title role of Cinderella.

The performance of this opera will also be a historic one for the University because it will be the first piece performed entirely in a foreign language, in the case of this piece, French.

"First you have to break down the lyrics," said John Cabrali, the graduate student who will be playing Cinderella's father.

"You learn the diction. Then after the French, you take on the notes by themselves. After you've mastered both you merge them. Afterwards you get an idea of how your character works. The great thing about opera is that it is the complete art. It's singing, acting and movement all in one performance."

Steampunk is a very distinct style of design, but costume designer Katherine Smith, a graduate student, was up to the task.

Smith's mother did a lot of costume

design for a local theater where they lived, and she did the costume design at her previous school, Florida Southern College.

When the crew for *Cendrillon* learned this they offered her the costume design job. "I researched steampunk extensively. I checked out a book on 19th century fashion and examined everything," said Smith.

"Clocks are a staple of steampunk design which works perfectly with the themes found in our version of Cinderella. It took a lot of work, but I'm very proud of the results especially Cinderella's dress for the ball."

Of course, when dealing with *Cinderella* production is also dealing with characters that are iconic and firmly ingrained in popular culture. There is a lot of weight to these roles but the performers are ready.

Kathryn Rodriguez, a senior majoring in vocal performance, said, "It is an honor for me to be playing the step mother especially since such

major roles are usually reserved for graduate students. It is a little nerve wrecking but it's great because the character is so different from me. It's always fun to play the villain."

"I'm a little nervous since it is a character little girls grow up idealizing," said Lobaina about playing the iconic fairytale princess.

"But as I got into the character and explored her I got excited. She is a very human and real character. There is a little bit of her in all of us."

In the end, Dundas gives credit to his students for such a massive undertaking. "The students should take the credit. They are very ambitious. I have no regrets in choosing this project."

Cinderella premieres Friday, Mar. 4 at 7:30 p.m. and is performed again on Saturday, Mar. 5 at 7:30 p.m. Both performances will be at the WPAC Concert Hall. Tickets will be \$5 for students, \$10 non-students, \$15 for faculty and staff and \$25 general admission.

Condition could not keep Tizon from her passion

TIZON, page 8

"I'm sure she'll never regret her decision to do so," public relations major Amy Faulkner said.

Faulkner, a Phi Sigma Sigma sister, has been friends with Tizon since sixth grade.

The Osceola High School Chorale has won a mass amount of national championships, including the 2009 Cruise Festival Overall Grand Championship Award in the Bahamas on board the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's "Monarch of the Seas."

Tizon and her chorus were also invited to sing at Carnegie Hall in New York as a part of the 2008 National Carnegie Hall Choir, had the opportunity to sing backup for Kenny Rogers in 2009, and won the national "Music in the Parks" award in Los Angeles in 2010.

Tizon began writing love songs at

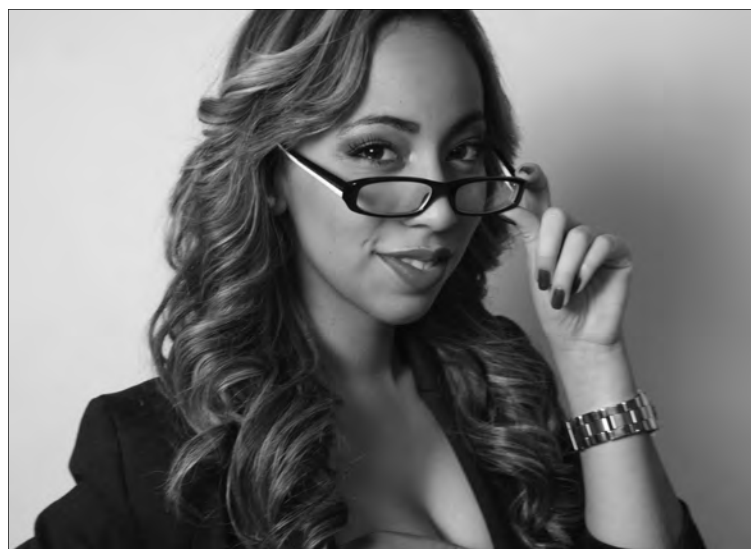


PHOTO CREDIT/THE BEACON

Tizon has performed with artists like Kurtiz the Kid

age seven. Her father, Victor Tizon, was a freestyle DJ for Stevie B., best known for his 1990 hit "Because I

Love You (The Postman Song)."

"When Desiree was in kindergarten she wanted to join in the

elementary school choir, but you had to be in at least first grade to join and she begged them to let her join and eventually they let her when they heard her sing," Victor said.

Last summer, Tizon recorded her latest single, a re-interpretation of Fabolous' "You Be Killin' 'Em," at her uncle's studio. Her uncle, Isaac Arevalo, is the co-founder and partner of the Coalishun Records production team in Yonkers. A video shot at Club Nocturnal in February is due shortly.

After impressing the owner with her talent, Tizon celebrated her website's re-launch party at Dream Nightclub in Miami Beach on Jan. 21.

Tizon just performed songs for Miami artists Kurtiz the Kid and Mercy, will work with Ghost Rider and J. Nics, who has opened up for Curren\$y, Wiz Khalifa and Big Sean,

and had a meeting with producers Cool and Dre.

On March 6, the 2011 Miami Kidney Walk will take place at Crandon Park in Key Biscayne starting at 8:30 a.m. She'll walk alongside her sorority sister, whose philanthropy is the National Kidney Foundation, and her father.

About one out of 750 people are born with a single kidney, more commonly males and the left kidney is usually absent more often, according to the National Kidney Foundation.

Like Tizon says in her "You be Killin' 'Em" remix, "you girls really need to step it up, nails done, hair done—I do that on the regular." At 18, she's already due to be a junior in fall 2011.

"My ultimate goal is to get signed, but at the same time, music is something I love to do," Tizon said.

THIS WEEKEND

FRIDAY, MAR. 4

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES



WHEN: Reception-7 p.m., Show-8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$15 FIU faculty, \$20 general admission
WHERE: FIU Wolfsonian

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE BY JOHN JORY

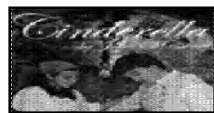


WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$12 seniors, FIU faculty and staff, \$15 general admission
WHERE: WPAC Main Stage

TO SHOOT AN ELEPHANT

WHEN: 3-7 p.m.
WHERE: MMC RB 120

FIU OPERA THEATRE: CENDRILLON BY JULES MASSENET



WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$5 students, \$10 FIU faculty, staff and seniors, \$15 general admission
WHERE: FIU Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Concert Hall, FIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT THE WOLFSONIAN



WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free and open to the public
WHERE: FIU Wolfsonian

DR. RICHARD KURIN
Presented by the Steven & Dorothea Green Critics' Lecture Series.
WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: Frost Museum

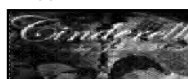
SATURDAY, MAR. 5

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES



WHEN: Reception-7 p.m., Show-8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$15 FIU faculty, \$20 general admission
WHERE: FIU Wolfsonian

FIU OPERA THEATRE: CENDRILLON BY JULES MASSENET



WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$5 students, \$10 FIU faculty, staff and seniors, \$15 general admission
WHERE: FIU Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Concert Hall

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE BY JOHN JORY



WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$12 seniors, FIU faculty and staff, \$15 general admission
WHERE: WPAC Main Stage

UNITED FOR HAITI DONATION DRIVE



They will be collecting items to take on our 2011 spring medical mission trip to Haiti.
WHEN: All day
WHERE: MMC HLS II-654

SUNDAY, MAR. 6

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES



WHEN: Reception-6 p.m., Show-7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$15 FIU faculty, \$20 general admission
WHERE: FIU Wolfsonian

SIGMA STUDY SESSIONS

A place for students to come and complete their work or study for any upcoming tests, quizzes, etc.
WHEN: 5-7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Graham Center, in front of Bustelo and Burger King

FIU JAZZ SERIES: WDNA / FIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC BENEFIT CONCERT



WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$15 FIU faculty, staff and seniors, \$25 general admission
WHERE: FIU Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Concert Hall

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE BY JOHN JORY



WHEN: 2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10 students, \$12 seniors, FIU faculty and staff, \$15 general admission
WHERE: WPAC Main Stage

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Abortion display, while graphic, within its rights

GISELLE RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

The sun shines on the bright orange warning sign and I stop to read it on my way to the Graham Center from the Blue Garage. "Warning," it says in all capital letters, "Disturbing Images Ahead." Next to this sign is another one with an 800 phone number and the words, "Confidential Post-Abortion Help Line."

The anti-abortion truck was back.

While the truck sparked a lot of dissension and complaints from the people gathered around it, I thought it provided an essential source of discussion in a dialogue that is too often represented solely by its polarizing sides.

Full of representatives from the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform, the giant truck emblazoned with graphic post-abortion images was on campus Feb. 21 and 22. This year, the protest was accompanied by a fence around the Pro-Life supporters and a "Free Speech Board" outfitted with dangling Sharpies for all and sundry to make their opinions known.

Abortion is something that tends to drive a wedge between those who are "pro-life" and those who are "pro-choice" with no room for a nebulous opinion or even one that is not quite as extreme. While these trucks are obviously "pro-life," the inclusion of the "Free Speech Board" allowed those with dissenting opinions to argue their position in a relatively safe space.

Even the pro-lifers who walked around asking if you would be interested in

discussing your opinion were polite and low-key. As I moved around the rest of the campus that day, most of the conversations I overheard seemed to be along the lines of people complaining. I heard someone say that "those crazy Conservatives" had struck again and someone else said the truck was showcasing "unnecessary pictures."

But the truck, the pictures and the fenced-in pro-lifers were all doing something most people are not willing to do by honestly and un-antagonistically expressing their opinion. They were also more than willing to calmly explain their opinion if anyone wanted to discuss.

The truck and its supporters were sparking debate in something that does not really get debated outside of the political stomping ground. The usual complaints offered by both sides revolve around the rights of women and the rights of the unborn. However, these are such touchy subjects, and there does not seem to be an un-vitriolic way of even having these discussions.

Regardless of the graphic nature of their display, the group was calmly expressing their opinion and asking others to do the same. It is difficult to complain about a group expressing their right to free speech.

If it takes pictures of dead babies to get a discussion on abortion rolling at the collegiate level, then the Center and its display have done their job, even if the conversation sparked is a two paragraph rant against the Center on their "Free Speech Board."

Abortion display done in poor taste, misleading

JASMYN ELLIOTT
Opinion Editor

When I received an email regarding the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform's so-called "Genocide Awareness Project" making an appearance on campus, I thought the name said it all: a genocide awareness project.

I did not expect to see multiple three-square-foot photographs of aborted fetuses.

I am all for free speech and expressing one's opinion on important social issues, especially one that affects women all over the globe. I am also in support of those on opposing sides of an issue coming together to discuss those opinions and at least come to an understanding of the opposite point of view. However, I am not for showing graphic imagery in an inappropriate manner under false pretenses.

When it comes to graphic medical imagery, I am not squeamish. Both of my parents have worked in the medical field and, as a result, I have been exposed to such imagery at a young age and have even taken a personal interest in women's health. However, other students may not be so lucky and could have easily been distracted, if not nauseated, by the explicit imagery that the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform used in their installation.

Also, in addition to the photographs of aborted fetuses, images from the Holocaust and other genocides depicting heaps of dead victims were also included, adding to the alarming nature of their display. On top of that, at one point a woman in association with the center got hold of a micro-

phone and began shouting into the crowd, drawing even more attention to it.

True, they did have signs warning people of the disturbing imagery ahead-and, I give them credit for it-but the images were blown up to such a large size that they were easily seen from a distance. I hate to use the cliché, but the images were like watching open-heart surgery: disgusting, but very difficult to look away from.

Also, for those that received the email, I must say that the title "Genocide Awareness Project" is very misleading. When one mentions the word "genocide," I would say that the majority of us would think of the Holocaust, the ethnic cleansing in Rwanda in 1994 or Darfur during the new millennium. By definition, genocide "is the deliberate and systematic destruction, in whole or in part, of an ethnic, racial, religious, or national group," according to the Oxford English dictionary and the Geneva Convention.

While people have varying opinions on when "life" begins, I think it is safe to say that "Fetus" is neither an ethnic group nor a religion.

Abortion is a social issue that always produces deep, spirited discussion, but there is a time and a place for it. One of these places would be a college campus, but the method the Center used, while attention-grabbing and definitely likely to produce a strong response, was inappropriate. I do not mind if they return, but with a method that does not rely on deception and shock value to engage students in the discussion of a serious issue.

Miscarriage bill an attempt to rescind rights

BROOKLYN MIDDLETON
Staff Writer

Georgia Representative Bobby Franklin's proposed bill, titled HB1, is a total infringement of personal privacy and unprecedented disregard for women's physical and mental well-being.

The issues of women's freedoms and the myriad of ways in which it is under attack is often an esoteric, abstract issue that is difficult to articulate. Not so in Representative Franklin's bill that would not only make abortion illegal, but also criminalize miscarriages that could have potentially had "human involvement."

The blatant and total disregard for women's health detailed in this bill is so obvious and unapol-

ogetic that there need be analysis as to why a bill like this would even be given the smallest amount of credence.

The overview of the 10-page bill introduces the idea of "prenatal murder," which is "the intentional removal of a fetus from a woman with an intention other than to produce a live birth or to remove a dead fetus; provided, however, that if a physician makes a medically justified effort to save the lives of both the mother and the fetus and the fetus does not survive, such action shall not be prenatal murder."

Furthermore, "Such term does not include a naturally occurring expulsion of a fetus known medically as a 'spontaneous abortion' and popularly as a 'miscarriage' so long as there is no human

involvement whatsoever in the causation of such event."

This last sentence is the one that is incredibly worrisome. The idea of "human involvement" is extremely subjective and puts women in a time of crisis at the pinnacle of a legal investigation. What is "human involvement in the causation" of a miscarriage? Drug use? Alcohol abuse? Too much caffeine?

The personal lives of women, and specifically the uterus, have become the stage for the political theatrics of politicians who lack insight on how to deal with issues that actually affect public health.

As *Mother Jones* points out, this bill holds women "criminally liable" for a complex phenomenon that occurs in over a quarter of pregnancies. Though it is not

"The personal rights of women have become the stage for the political theatrics of politicians who lack insight on how to deal with issues that affect public health."

new that women's reproductive freedoms have been challenged this new bill is demonstrative of a strategic move by anti-choicers.

The strategy is conscious and intentional. While the bill will not stand, it creates the opportunity for a challenge of the constitutionality of *Roe V. Wade*, which in turn threatens the provisions and laws the landmark Supreme Court case encompasses. This strategy is often referred to as a "chipping

away" of abortion rights, and it is a successful one.

While this bill, similar to the outrageous bill proposed in South Dakota which sought to potentially make the murders or attempted murders of abortion providers a form of "justifiable homicide," will indeed not pass, the mere notion that these bills could be copied, amended or reworked to be implemented is equally worrisome.

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BRAZIL

Driver accused of hitting Brazil cyclists jailed

Ricardo Jose Neis, the motorist accused of running down dozens of bike-riding activists in southern Brazil injuring at least 40 people, was arrested in Porto Alegre after a judge ordered his preventive detention.



CUBA

Jesse Jackson makes appeal to Cuba

Jackson appealed to Cuba to release an American contractor facing a possible 20-year sentence on charges of trying to undermine the government, saying granting him freedom could lead to better relations.



MEXICO

Friction evident as Mexican president visits US

The human and financial costs of Mexico's drug war, diplomatic cable leaks, the influx of U.S. arms and a wave of anti-immigration initiatives in the U.S. are all taking a toll on improved Mexico-U.S. relations.

Students enjoy hangouts, but want more options

NICOLE COSSIO
Contributing Writer

Whether it's listening to music on a bench under sunny skies, reading a book in a quiet corner or taking a nap on couch, students have taken advantage of the hangout spots available and have also thrown in a few suggestions for further improvements.

Since opening its doors for students in 1977, the Biscayne Bay Campus has built very relaxed atmosphere where students can study and hang out in the gratifying weather South Florida offers practically year round. With benches and tables set up on balcony floors and comfy couches in every main hallway of the Wolfe University Center that look incredibly inviting for a tired student, the BBC offers various locations for students to study and play.

Every so often on the south side of WUC, students are catching up on sleep on the set of couches on the first floor by the piano, probably after pulling an all-nighter.

However, some students picked a corner to study or chose the benches outside to have a drink or two while reviewing notes. Some seemed to choose a random seating area just to open up a laptop.

Some students believe these areas are great spots to hang out but also deem there are shortcomings as well.

Amy Hughs, a University alumna with a degree in poetry, expressed her feelings of the swinging bench tables and its romantic setting, as she gazed at the lake separating WUC

with the marine biology building.

"It's really comfortable and it's nice to be working outside and still be able to be in the shade when it gets hot," Hughs said.

Every bench was occupied with at least two or more people and may suggest the reason for the scarcity of these comfortable "nooks" that students really appreciate.

"I'd like to see more clusters like these around campus and in doors as well to have coffee with friends or sit and read a book between classes," Hughs added.

Also sitting at the table across from Hughs sat Charles Galan, who is pursuing a certificate in restaurant management.

Galan said BBC needs more outdoor restaurants for students to grab a bite and hang out after class. However, he gave in on the view and scenery.

"The area is real nice and tranquil, that's why I like to come out here and work", Galan said.

In a quieter sector, this time inside WUC rather than the outdoor spots, lies couches that stretch in a circular shape, possibly to imply a short snuggle break or social gatherings.

On one side lay a girl who was probably on cloud nine with books still in hand. On the other sat undergraduate Frances Arce, a communications major with his feet rested on a small footrest.

"It doesn't seem like many people come here, so I like to enjoy

some alone time and get some work done," said Arce.

Near the stairs in the same premises, sat a group of giddy girls, whispering and paper-shuffling. This group added a little more detail on the add-on list for BBC to heighten their student hangouts.

Adiana Traxler, public relations major, depicted the ant problem there is outside, hence their decision to sit indoors. Traxler also added the demand for larger, circular surroundings indoors for people to meet and socialize.

Celia Trevino, journalism major, elaborated on Traxler's proposal by insisting on seating areas in general in the Marine Science building in particular.

Although BBC has the right hang out spots for students, according to students, scarcity of spots is the problem.

For students who go to BBC more than three times a week, making the campus cozy and homey is what students are looking for. Seating that is closer together and hangout spots that are perfect for outdoor weather but without ants are what students want to see more.

Until then, students will continue to choose comfy couches and study in the nooks outside while enjoying the beautiful weather at the bay as much



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH BRUNA PINEDAT/THE BEACON



Top: Students hanging out at the Loggia.
Bottom: Myesha Canada, Tanisha Burke, Carolina Chavarria and Rosa Pereverzev hanging out at the circle couches in WUC's piano room.

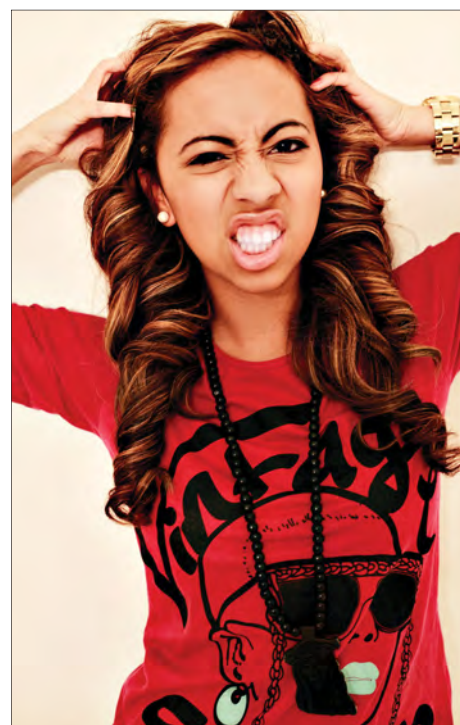


PHOTO COURTESY OF DESIREE TIZON

Desiree Tizon, a freshman public relations major, was born with one kidney and two uteri. Despite her condition, she joined the Osceola High School Chorale, one of Florida's best choirs, at a young age.

Freshman singer born with rare condition

LIANAMAR DÁVILA SANABRIA
Staff Writer

All those laps Desiree Tizon had to run before choir practice at Orlando's Osceola High School Chorale could have ended her singing career. While physically strenuous activities can be challenging for healthy people, for Tizon the risks are significantly increased.

The freshman was born with one kidney and two uteri, a condition that requires her to avoid strenuous activities altogether.

But Tizon joined one of Florida's best choirs anyway, and her condition didn't keep her from a fruitful recording career: three singles, all original compositions, posted on her website, www.desireetizon.com.

Although hip-hop is a male dominated business, Tizon wants to change that. The self-proclaimed "hip-hop head, sole collector and biggest J.Cole fan" is an aspiring public relations major who

started at the University during Summer B in 2010.

In Fall 2010, Tizon met English major and senior Christina Perez while rushing Phi Sigma Sigma, a sorority who's philanthropic efforts have included participation in on-campus events such as Golden Idol and the annual Phi Sigma Sigma Fashion Show. Thanks to Phi Sigma Sigma, she has been able to perform around campus.

"She will be famous because she won't take 'no' for an answer; she makes sure she finds her 'yes,'" said Perez. "She may not be the next Whitney Houston but she doesn't want to be [because] she will be 'Dezi' no matter what situation she's in."

Tizon is from the same city where musical talents such as DMX, Lady Gaga, Steven Tyler, Styles P, Jadakiss and Mary J. Blige – one of Desiree's biggest influences – have emerged from, Yonkers, NY.

Tizon aspires to become another successful female soul artists comparable to the likes of her inspiration, Alicia Keys.

"I started playing piano because of Keys. She can sit and play the piano the whole time, and everyone would love her. Everybody respects her. That's what I want," Tizon said.

After Sept. 11, at a time when many were fleeing New York, Desiree's family moved to Orlando, with a Disney career in her sights.

She enrolled in The Lisa Maile Acting and Modeling School, where acting students were instructed to memorize and record commercials for dissection later. Singing, she realized, was her true calling.

"I liked acting but it just didn't feel like it was for me. It did help me because I learned how to take constructive criticism," Tizon said.

When the time came to choose a high school, Desiree passed up the local performing arts school for public school.

"Desi made the right decision by attending Osceola, their choir program was amazing and it opened many doors and opportunities for her.