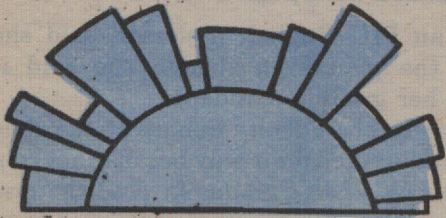


Radio station  
hits snag...  
page 2

Hurricane season  
hits South Florida...  
pages 4,5

Soccer team  
signs three...  
page 7



FIU's only independent student newspaper

Tuesday  
June 25, 1985

Volume 2  
Number 23

# The Sunblazer

An Independent Student Newspaper at Florida International University, North Miami/Miami, Florida

## Coming up...

### Fireworks at Tamiami

Metro Parks is sponsoring a fireworks show at 9 p.m. July 4 at Tamiami Park, 10901 SW 24th St. If the show is rained out, Metro will shoot the works the following evening.

For those who don't tote along a picnic basket, there will be yummy foods available at concession stands. The show attracted about 75,000 people last year. For more explosive details, call 223-7070.

### Remember Johnny Mann?

For all those old enough to remember Johnny Mann's "Stand Up and Cheer" Singers, the master will be making a personal appearance himself this summer at Walt Disney World's EPCOT Center.

Mann will join the 1985 Walt Disney World All-American College Orchestra for a red, white and blue extravaganza on June 28, 29 and 30, and for a special musical performance on July 4.

### A 'Universal' opportunity

Local college students majoring in communication are being sought to staff the media center at the upcoming Miss Universe Pageant at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Miami.

The students will work with reporters and broadcasters and help filter information to the media covering the festivities. For further information on this beautiful event, call 666-7606.

### FIU opens new school

FIU President Gregory B. Wolfe has announced the formation of a new School of Health Sciences, slated to open July 1.

Reba Anderson, currently the chairperson of the department of occupational therapy, has been appointed acting dean. The school will operate on the Tamiami Campus.

## New grades will start in fall

by Jeffrey L. Kleinman

Sunblazer Editor

This fall, FIU students will be seeing pluses and minuses alongside their final letter grades.

The new transcript grading system was approved last year by the Faculty Senate and by the FIU administration.

Registrar Bill Younkin said the Faculty Senate had been tinkering with the idea of voting on a grading system change for a couple of years. "A good number of the faculty wanted the flexibility," said Younkin.

The proposal passed the Faculty Senate February 7, 1984 with a vote of 16-8. The proposal was then referred to FIU administrators on April 7, 1984.

The new scale, which will begin when classes start in August, will add pluses to all grades except A and F, and add minuses to all grades except F.

"The (straight) grading system has been in a state of flux and a number of people have been unhappy about it," said Sam Shapiro, an FIU math professor and chairman of the Faculty Senate. Shapiro said with the new system, instructors "could more precisely describe the student's performance in class."

Shapiro gave an example of two students, one averaging an 80 and the other an 87. "That's a big difference in their performance," he said. "Some professors thought it wouldn't be fair to give them the same grades." Now, Shapiro said, the students who receives an 87 would be able to earn a higher grade.

Shapiro said he hasn't yet thought about restructuring his classroom grading system to accommodate the pluses and minuses.

continued on page 2 ▶▶▶▶▶

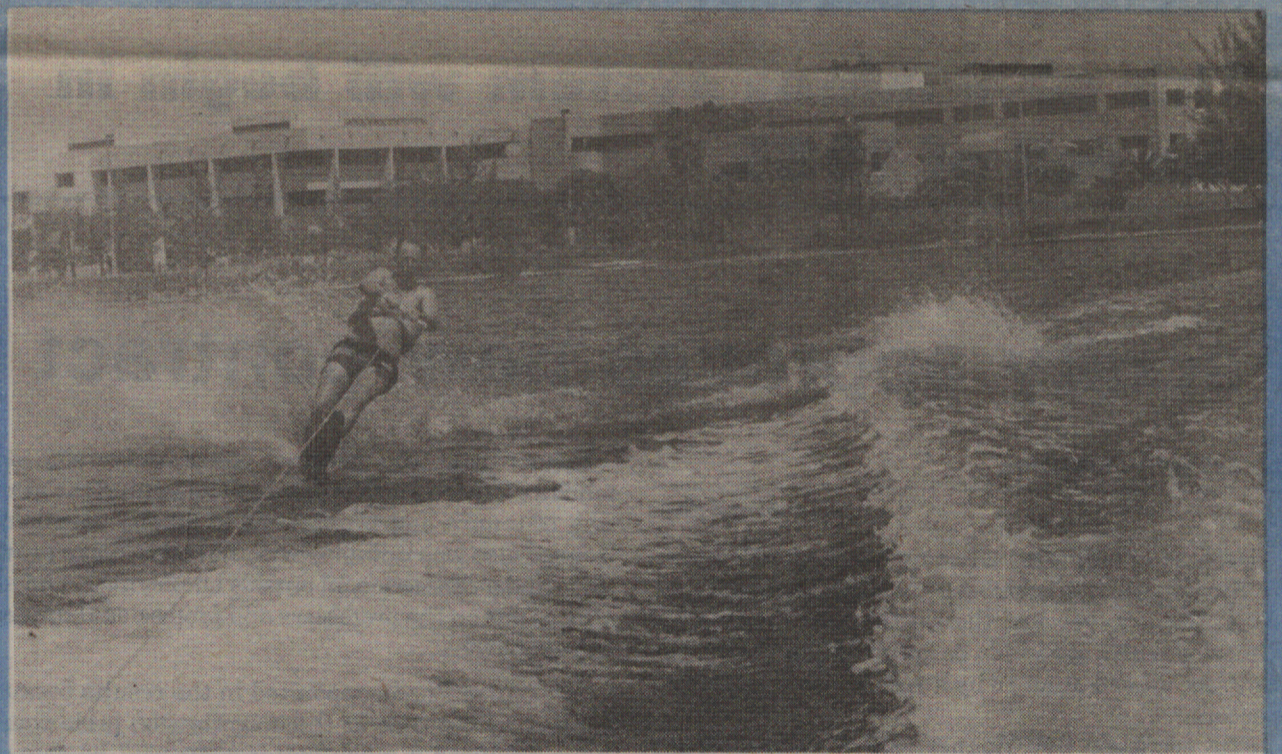


Photo by Lillian Cano

It's summertime An FIU student slaloms his way around Biscayne Bay just off the Bay Vista Campus on a hot summer afternoon.

## Will Tamiami dorms drain BVC?

by Jeffrey L. Kleinman

Sunblazer Editor

The director of the Bay Vista Campus dormitories said she is not worried about losing students to the Tamiami Campus dormitories once they open in August.

"We'll lose a few," said BVC director Sharon Gottlieb, "but I don't think it would be a significant amount."

Several students who live on BVC take most or all of their classes on the Tamiami Campus and have to either drive or take the university's shuttle bus.

Gottlieb says the attractions on BVC are enough to keep most of those students living on the campus. "They have made friends here," said Gottlieb. "They love the pool."

Conchita Bretos, the director of the Tamiami Campus dormitories, agrees with Gottlieb.

"There doesn't seem to be a lot of (transfers) from Bay Vista. So far we have had only 10 or 15 -- no more than that.

"A lot of students say they like the (BVC) surroundings," said Bretos. "It's a beautiful place. Why move unless there's a strong incentive? The dorms at Tamiami are more expensive."

Bretos, the marketing director for both campus' housing, said she is not spotlighting the Tamiami complex and ignoring BVC. "We will not fill Tamiami at the expense of Bay Vista," said Bretos.

"We in fact, try to underplay the benefits at Tamiami," she continued. "We exult the pleasant surroundings of Bay Vista."

Bretos said she predicts 90 percent of the complex's 738 units to be filled by the fall semester. She said if the rate of 15-20 applications she receives a day is maintained, the 10 buildings will be practically filled.

Gottlieb said the BVC complex is "doing quite well as far as occupancy." By July 1, she said, all 552 beds will be occupied. But during the summer, many of the residents are temporary -- members of conventions or summer camps held at the campus.

Gottlieb said she has received 46 new applications for the fall semester. She added she doesn't expect to lose near that many to the Tamiami Campus.

"This is not a competitive situation," she said. "It's providing services to the students."

## New grading system

Grade	Point equivalent
<b>A</b> .....	<b>4.0</b>
<b>A -</b> .....	<b>3.67</b>
<b>B +</b> .....	<b>3.33</b>
<b>B</b> .....	<b>3.0</b>
<b>B -</b> .....	<b>2.67</b>
<b>C +</b> .....	<b>2.33</b>
<b>C</b> .....	<b>2.0</b>
<b>C -</b> .....	<b>1.67</b>
<b>D +</b> .....	<b>1.33</b>
<b>D</b> .....	<b>1.0</b>
<b>D -</b> .....	<b>0.67</b>
<b>F</b> .....	<b>0.00</b>

**This plus-minus system will begin in the fall of 1985.**

## Faculty approves new contract

by Jeffrey L. Kleinman

Sunblazer Editor

Despite an eight-day effort by four State University System faculty members -- including a professor from FIU -- to prevent the ratification of the latest United Faculty of Florida bargaining agreement, the contract passed June 19 by a vote of 59 percent to 41 percent.

FIU professor Bob Hogner said he was unhappy with the provisions of the contract, and sent out thousands of blue fliers statewide exclaiming, "Vote No!" Hogner, the president of FIU's chapter of the United Faculty of Florida, said he "will just have to live" with the three-year agreement.

Hogner said the contract gives university administrators too much power in determining the granting of tenure and promotions to faculty members. Hogner also was unhappy with new sick-leave provisions and a restriction on outside employment and activities put on the professors and professional university employees.

"Of course I'm disappointed in the results because I felt a second time at the (negotiating) table would have produced a much better contract," he said.

Hogner said the Board of Regents "meddled" in the election. "We didn't expect the Board of Regents to involve itself in the election. The contract is to its advantage."

## Radio station faces funding cut

by Melissa Kroll

Sunblazer News Editor

After a considerable financial setback, the Student Government Association's radio station committee remains optimistic about the future of an FIU radio station.

A few months ago, the Florida Board of Regents approved about \$78,000 for two radio stations, one on each campus. New SGA comptroller Sandy Curtis -- who questions the feasibility of a radio station -- has designated the money to a special project fund.

Several projects in the fund need the money that the Board of Regents allocated for the station. "As of now, the radio station has been given about \$43,000 and we can't really expect to run a station on that,"

said Manny Becerra, spokesman for the station and SGA president pro-tem.

Becerra became involved in FIU's quest for a radio station when his brother began working for radio station Love 94.

In August, Love 94 will be renovating its equipment. "Usually, radio stations donate equipment to technical schools," said Becerra. "But if we can present a good enough proposal to Love 94, we have a chance of getting it. That would surely lower our costs."

If FIU does start a station, there is talk of the photography room as a possible location on the Tamiami Campus. Limited funds may force the pro-radio SGA members to strive for one station instead of two.

## Grades

←←←←←continued from page 1

Mary Free, an FIU English professor, said she doesn't favor the plan even though she said it wouldn't alter her grading standards.

Free, who was on the Faculty Senate at the time of the vote, said she voted for it only because her constituents at the Bay Vista Campus favored the proposal. "That's what my colleagues wanted," said Free. "I represent my constituents, not my own views."

## Change in system spurs controversy

by Adrian Walker

Sunblazer Ass't News Editor

FIU students have mixed feelings about the university's decision to start a plus and minus grading system this fall.

"I'm in favor of it," said senior business student Mercy Junyent. "It can add half a point. It will make a difference."

Sarah McManus, a senior, looks forward to a system she calls more accurate. "If you have a B in a class and do well on the final, you could get a B plus."

At least one professor likes the idea also. "Why not?" asks English professor Donald G. Watson. "I get aggravated, like when I have 12 B's in a class. You want to make distinctions."

"I think the student will probably not benefit," he continued. "The faculty's inclinations will be to give B pluses instead of A's. On the other hand, the grade will be worth more. This will cut down on grade inflation."

But like all things in life, there are those that oppose the new system. "It's a useless complication of a system that has sufficient distinctions," said Jorge Diaz, a senior. "There's 12 distinctions on the new system. It's bureaucratic nonsense."

## Florida grading

- FIU (in fall of '85)
  - pluses & minuses
- University of Florida
  - plus only
- Florida State Univ.
  - pluses & minuses
- Univ. of Miami
  - straight letter grades
- Florida Atlantic Univ.
  - straight letter grades
- Miami-Dade Community College
  - straight letter grades
- St. Thomas Univ.
  - plus only
- Barry Univ.
  - straight letter grades

## Campus Crime

The following police reports were compiled by Sunblazer staffer Keith Donner. All police records are public record and may be obtained at the Tamiami public safety office.

**June 3:** Two telephones were taken from PC 537, police reported.

**June 5:** A studio portrait with a walnut frame was taken from Maprid Whidden's desk in DM 417, police said. The photo was of her husband, and is valued at \$75, police said.

**June 5:** Thieves broke into Eptore Ronconi's 1973 Datsun parked in the PC lot and stole his \$160 Pioneer car stereo, police reported.

**June 6:** A 4-foot hurricane fan was reported missing from the patio of the No. 2 East building on the Tamiami Campus, police reported.

## Editor's Forum

by Jeffrey L. Kleinman



**SUMMER THOUGHTS:** Six-week courses are nothing but quick fixes. Snort some history here. Shoot up some psychology there. Just like the temporary euphoria of a drug addict, the feeling certainly doesn't last.

Within a week after completing the final exam, the knowledge crammed in 12 classes begins to slowly drip out of a student's head, to be lost forever among the piles of notebooks stashed in the back seat of his car. Of course it's nice to earn three credits in such a short period of time. It's not so nice, however, to inject yourself with overwhelming doses of facts, figures and theories, only to methodically spit them back out in such a short time frame.

A week after a six-week course ends, I have almost no recollection of what I learned. But then again, summer is not synonymous with learning. Summer is for swimming, sleeping and vegetating.

\*\*\*\*\*

An FIU radio station would be both a blessing and a curse to the university. Sure, students would be able to hone their broadcasting skills at the station. And sure, there must be some people who would actually listen to a student-produced radio show. But I'm not so sure any of these benefits would outweigh the problems that may be created.

For instance, my first magical question to the FIU-powers-that-be: Which campus would get the station? FIU's broadcasting school is on the Bay Vista Campus. Perfect place for a learning laboratory, right? Well, not exactly. The clear majority of FIU's population is at the Tamiami Campus, and that's where a station would get listened to the most.

\*\*\*\*\*

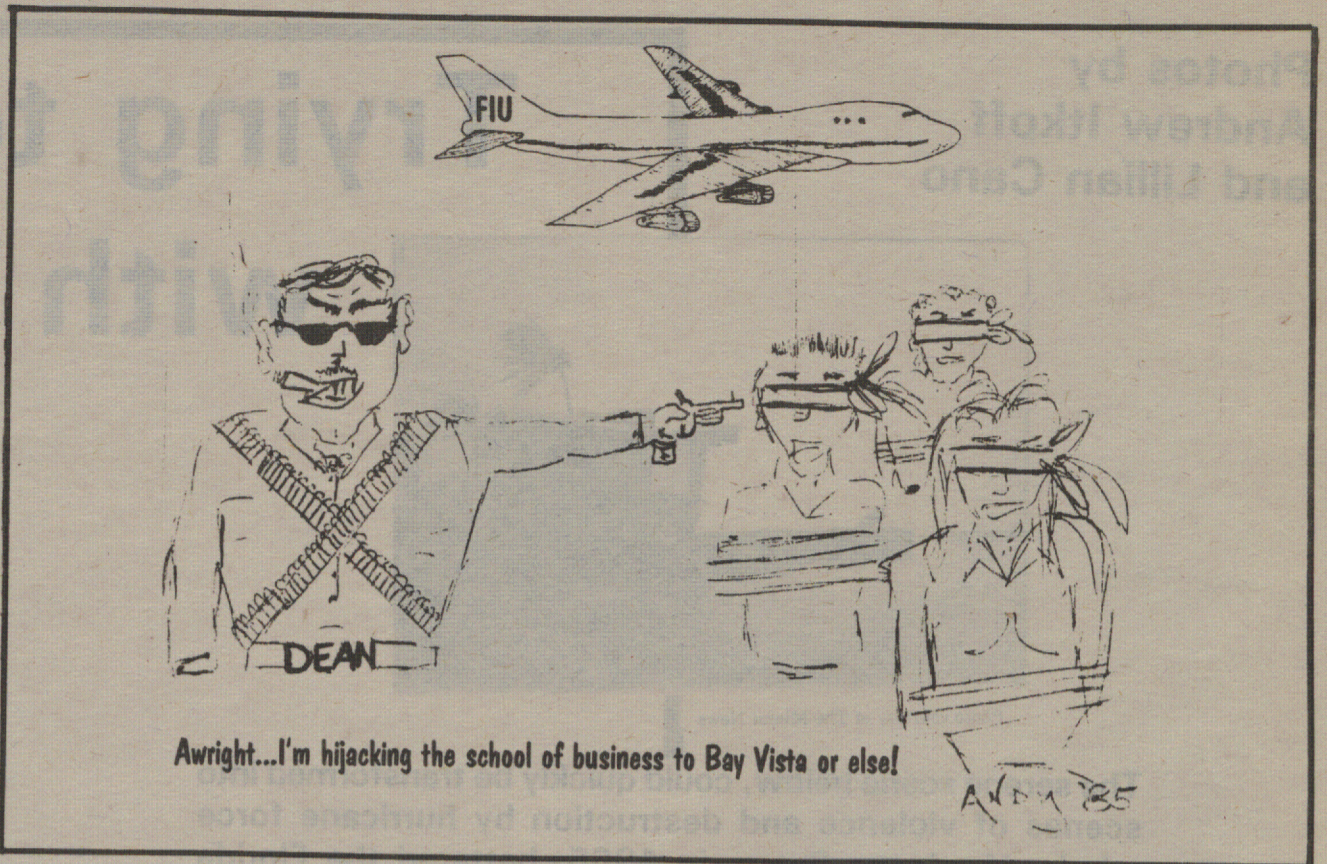
One of the nicer things to happen at FIU since I've been here was the May 31 wedding of Patricia Salgueiro and Gunnar Kristjansson. The couple took their vows in front of the Tamiami Campus fountain.

You know, I could never figure out the perfect place to get married. I've just added the first suggestion to my list.

### Letter policy

The Sunblazer welcomes your views. If you would like your letter published, you must sign your name and write a phone number for confirmation.

Please keep letters brief and to the point. We may condense letters for space and will correct errors of spelling and grammar. Please address letters to: The Sunblazer, FIU Bay Vista Campus, SC 253, North Miami, FL 33181.



## This move would be bad news

by Isabel Fernandez

Sunblazer Contributor

Why has there been so much commotion about FIU's business school moving to the Bay Vista Campus? It's a fact that the majority of the faculty, staff and students aren't happy with the move, but it's the people that count, isn't it?

Has the dean considered the jobless secretaries who will not be able to move to BVC along with their departments? Has the dean considered the faculty members and their difficulties and added expenses related to travel alone? Has the dean considered how many fewer students will be enrolling for classes at BVC's business school?

AHA! I think I struck one there! That's it. The dean DOES want student enrollment to drop. I've hypothesized that the dean's intention in moving to BVC is the notion of a different clientele. In other words -- to put it lightly -- Dean Charles Nickerson perhaps has in mind that moving his school to BVC will create obstacles and cause a great deal of minorities to consider alternative sources of education.

Could it be that reducing the number of minority students will increase the quality and grades of FIU's students? That remains to be seen. Luckily, I won't be around to have to see it.

As for the staff members of FIU's business departments who will find themselves unemployed, sorry. You were just one of those variables who were not given priority when the dean drew up his strategy.

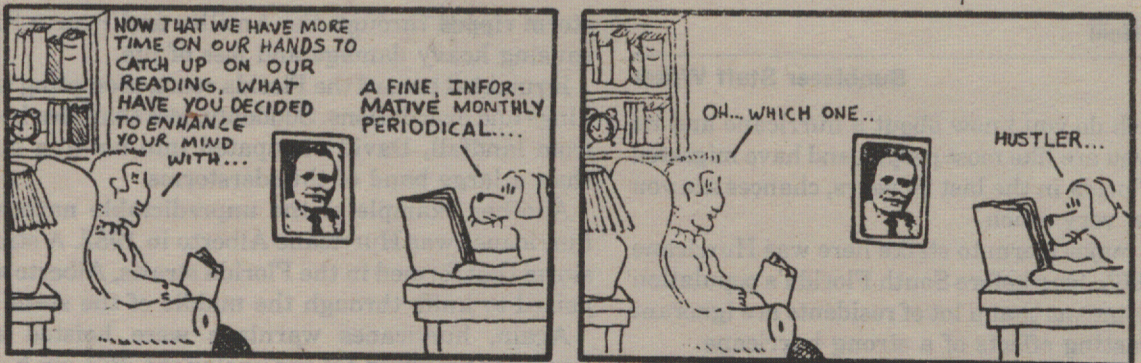
*Isabel Fernandez is currently a graduate student in the School of Public Affairs and Services. She served as editor of The Sunblazer last year and has worked as an aide for the department of decision sciences.*

### Just a reminder...

For those of you who are hesitant to open the doors of our blue and gold news boxes, The Sunblazer is still free. You don't have to stuff your coins in any slots because there are no coinboxes. The news boxes are located on the first floor of PC, UH and DM on the Tamiami Campus and on the first floor of ACI on the Bay Vista Campus. Thank you very, very much.

### SANDHAVEN

by M. RAMOS



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Guest articles do not necessarily represent the view of the editorial board. Written responses are encouraged.

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# Sex involves disease and hang-ups

by Mina Socarras

Sunblazer Features Editor

We are all adults here. Physically, we eat, drink and have sex.

Once we figure out our sexual identity, our problems are solved, right? Wrong.

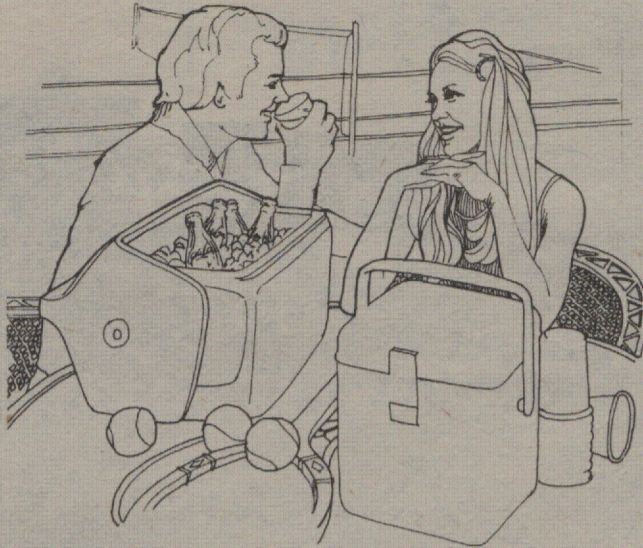
"We encounter many college students who are unsure of their sexual identity," said Rosa Sanchez, of the FIU counseling service. "There is much confusion and depression when one has to come to grips whether they are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual," she said.

In an age when one seems to be coming out of the closet, it is also an age when one seems to be stepping into a gym to work out in order to express those urges with a great body. "The physical appearance has completely taken over the individual and that is why we have so many diseases including eating disorders such as bulimia (where you eat an enormous amount of food only to vomit it out) and anorexia (where you constantly diet and truly believe you're overweight even if you're not).

Sanchez says the biggest fear about sex for college students is acquiring a sexually transmitted disease. The awareness of herpes, syphilis, AIDS puts a restriction on the collegiate's libido.

"One of the biggest fears now days is the discovery that AIDS is not only transmitted throughout the homosexual community, but has infiltrated the heterosexuals as well," said Sanchez.

FIU may be culturally diverse, but sex is a universal concern. "Anglos and blacks who were born in the United States are more liberal (about sex) than traditional Hispanics not born in this country," Sanchez said.



Sexually, Hispanics -- especially men -- have been forced to change because of women. The Latin woman has opted not to remain a virgin and the Latin man is slowly casting off his machismo shackles, she said. "Deep inside, a Latin man wants his wife to be like his mother.

"But since woman has changed so much, the Latin man has had to bargain on what he can get," added Sanchez.

But college students in general are becoming more liberal about sex. They don't see that because they are used to such values and morals.

"Men aren't complaining so much on sexuality as much as the emotional part of sex," said Sanchez. "Men need emotional ties too. Sometimes we don't seem to tap into their emotions and feelings. Men have feelings too."

Women's liberation has not only given the woman the right to go after work and have a few drinks with her friends, but has given women the right to be more active sexually, she said. "Women's sexual roles are on a constant change than say, 25 years ago when men wouldn't think of putting up with things like that from a woman. Women were reserved for their husbands."

But Sanchez said she believes FIU is a sexually conservative school. "This is primarily a commuter school and commuter schools generally are more conservative because there's not much life."

## Chlamydia: Old disease, new threat

by Holly Goodman

Sunblazer Contributor

*This is the first of a two-part series on sexually transmitted diseases.*

"Tetracycline pills for 10 days, don't have sex and come back when you've finished the medication."

This may have a familiar ring for many people. It's been the common treatment for gonorrhea for years, and it's still the one prescribed most often today.

But even though this treatment hasn't changed much recently, treatments for other sexually transmitted diseases have improved considerably.

Chlamydia, a little-known, but widespread bacterial disease, has been difficult and expensive to diagnose and treat until the past few years.

"Twenty to thirty percent of the college population in the United States has been diagnosed as having Chlamydia," said Elvira Velez, an FIU nurse practitioner. She said she obtained the figures at the American College Health Conference in Washington D.C. earlier this year.

Between three and ten million Americans contract the disease each year, according to an article published in *Time* magazine last February.

Until recently, the disease could be detected only by a complicated and expensive seven-day test offered at few medical centers in the country, the article said. Now chlamydia can be detected in a matter of hours by two new inexpensive tests.

"We couldn't adequately diagnose it in the past with the equipment and growth media we had," said Velez. "Now the labs are giving us the correct medium for the test."

Velez said the tests cost the FIU clinics as much as \$50 in the past. She attributed part of the expense to the subtle symptoms of the disease. "Chlamydia sometimes shows classical symptoms that mimic the symptoms of other diseases," she said.

Signs of the disease in men include a burning sensation during urination and a mucoid discharge, the *Time* article said. The symptoms are almost identical to those of gonorrhea.

In women, the situation is more complex. A woman may have the same gonorrhea-type symptoms that men have, or she may show symptoms of other sexually transmitted diseases. They might show a change in the cervix, Velez said, or have the severe lower abdominal pain characteristic of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease.

"Chlamydia has been around for a long time," said Kathy Morrison, another FIU nurse practitioner. "It's just that with the new tests, it's more readily identifiable." Repeated doses of the antibiotics tetracycline or erythromycin over a one-week period are needed to get rid of the disease, according to the article.

The Dade County Health Department performs tests only when a person with gonorrhea-type symptoms has shown negative results on a gonorrhea test, said James Raab, a spokesman for the department's Sexually Transmitted Disease Program.

The Health Department now administers tetracycline to clients with symptoms, because both gonorrhea and chlamydia respond to it.

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## LA Lakers may be next dynasty in the NBA

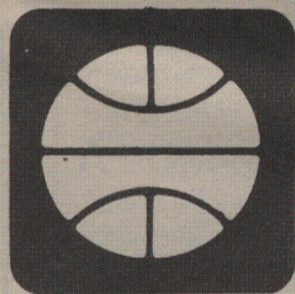
by David Miller

Now that the NBA playoffs are finally over, here are a few observations:

The Los Angeles Lakers' six-game victory was not too surprising, as the Lakers should have won in four games last year. If James Worthy hadn't made a dreadful cross-court pass and if Magic Johnson hadn't choked a couple of times, LA would have been 1984 NBA champions and thus would have defended their title in 1985. The word "dynasty" isn't used too often sports, but in the six years Magic Johnson has been in the NBA, the Lakers have won the championship three times and finished second twice.

I didn't think LA could beat Celtics at the start of the series because ever since Jamaal Wilkes got injured the Lakers haven't had a small forward. They played in 1985 with two power forwards in the lineup—James Worthy and Kurt Rambis. Worthy, who had a great series against Boston, is a potential superstar. Rambis belongs in Italy. Nonetheless, the combination of Worthy, Rambis, Bob McAdoo, Michael Cooper and Mitch Kupchak at forward proved very effective against the Celtics.

In the long run, the Celtics' lack of depth proved fatal. Ever since the late 1950's, Boston has had outstanding bench strength. Frank Ramsey was their first great sixth man, followed by Hohn Havlicek and, in recent years, Kevin McHale. However, in 1985, McHale had to become a starter due to an injury to Cedric Maxwell, and against LA the Celtics never developed a reliable sub. Scott Wedman went beserk in the first game, but that was it. Ray Williams proved highly disappointing as a reserve guard.



On the other hand, the Lakers got good play from their subs. Cooper hit some key outside shots and played fine defense against Larry Bird. Kupchak, whose career almost ended because

of severe injuries a few years ago, gave LA needed strength under the boards. The Lakers mixed outstanding scoring from starters Jabaar-Worthy-Magic with hustle by the reserves, and the combination proved to be enough for the victory over Boston.



Photo by Robert Stark

**Almost snagged** A member of the TKE softball team lunges for a line drive hit during an intramural game against The Rathskeller team. The Rathskeller came out on top with a seven-run first inning to win the game on June 19, 12-7, at the Tamiami Campus.

Kevin McHale played his heart out for the Celtics, but one man can't win an NBA title, as Jerry West proved so many times. Larry Bird, normally the finest all-around player in the league, was ineffective because of several nagging injuries, and center Robert Parish looked like a zombie throughout the six games. Parish's inability to stop Jabbar and Bird's inability to stop Worthy were two of the keys to Boston's demise.

The Lakers, meanwhile, reminded me of the great Celtics of the late 1950's and early 1960's. The Lakers had a dominating center in Kareem (the old Celtics had Bill Russell); the Lakers had a super sixth man in Michael Cooper (the old Celtics had Frank Ramsey). The 1985 LA Lakers also had a devastating fast break, just like the old Celtics. By contrast, the 1985 Celtics were one of the slowest teams in the league. Dennis Johnson and Danny Ainge aren't in the same league as Cousy, Sam Jones and Jo-Jo White.

Kareem said he'll play one more year, so perhaps when he's 39 in 1986 the Lakers will repeat as NBA champions for the first time since the 1969 Celtics. Even if Bird is completely healthy next year, I can't

see the Celtics going all the way. They'll have to make a trade for two Magic-type guards if they want to compete with the Lakers. For now, the "dynasty" means more than just Joan Collins and Linda Evans.

## FIU soccer signs top notch players

The FIU men's soccer team, which captured the NCAA Division II championship this season recently signed three community college players.

The Sunblazers signed Matt Adams and Jody Weil of Dade-South and Rick O'Connor of Florissant Valley Community in St. Louis.

Adams played as a forward-midfielder for the Jaguars and scored 10 goals while being named an All-Region player for community colleges last season.

Weil was a defender for the Jaguars in 1983 when the team won the national championship.

O'Connor, who was named the most valuable player at the National Junior College Tournament in which he scored two goals in one game, had 10 goals last season.

## Gator President a "clown"

As a taxpayer and a long-time resident of Florida, I am becoming increasingly annoyed at the in-temperate words and actions of the University of Florida President, Marshall Criser. This man had the gall to tell the Southeastern Conference (SEC) that it had no RIGHT to withdraw the 1984 SEC Football Championship from UF despite the fact that the team that "won" it was the product of violations of NCAA and SEC rules so flagrant and numerous that its notably dishonest coach, Charley Pell, was given his walking papers in mid-season.

And then this so-called "President" of a major State University implied that he might withdraw the UF from the SEC if he doesn't get his way!

This Criser is the same dim-bulb crybaby that was predicting the near-demise of his "great university" several weeks ago when a few prominent South Floridians had the nerve and intelligence to suggest that the Legislature get around to fully funding a great university right here in our backyard. Just who does this arrogant clown think he is anyway? The SEC title is not his or UF's to keep, anymore than the tax money of three or four of the most populous Florida counties is his or UF's to keep!

One is tempted to sympathize with the fine UF team that did play so well in 1984, and with honest, well-

meaning UF fans who back their teams, but Criser's remarks are just so typical of many UF officials, mad-dog alumni and "fans" who through years have laid down one of the worst records of sportsmanship and team behavior in collegiate history. Witness—another UF "President" who had to be ejected from the FSU locker room after invading it at half-time to threaten the FSU basketball coach that "he would see that UF never played FSU again if the FSU team kept using delaying tactics in the game." And then there was the atrocious "let's-all-lie-down" defense used by a UF football coach to insure that their hot-dog quarterback set an NCAA passing record several years back; and many of us experienced those numerous occasions at Florida Field where opposing teams and fans were pelted with groves of oranges by so-called UF "supporters."

If this silly child doesn't make good on his hint that he will withdraw UF from the Conference, I personally hope that the SEC boots him and school out for good. Schools that won't play by the rules and be reasonably sportsmanlike, and irresponsible officials who support and condone outrageous behavior shouldn't be associated with the SEC or any other athletic conference! **Make our day, Criser! It would be good riddance to bad rubbish!**

Robert Holley

## Men's Intramural Softball League



June 12 results:

Rathskeller 1, Tekes 0

June 19 results:

Rathskeller 12, Tekes 7

Fitness Flippers 6, Spartans 0

### Standings

	W	L
Fitness Flippers	5	0
Rathskeller	5	2
Spartans	1	4
Tekes	1	6

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The Sunblazer will soon be preparing for its fall publication schedule. If you're interested in becoming a staff member in the fall, call 940-5684. All of the editorial positions will be open. The paper also will hire advertising and business managers.

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Photos by Andrew Itkoff and Lillian Cano

## Trying to reason with the hurricane season

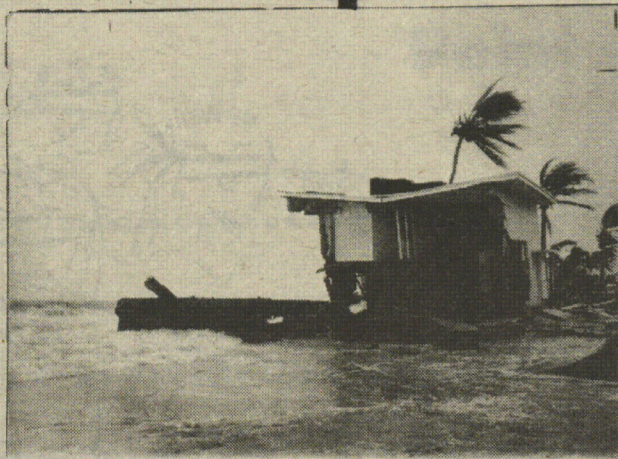
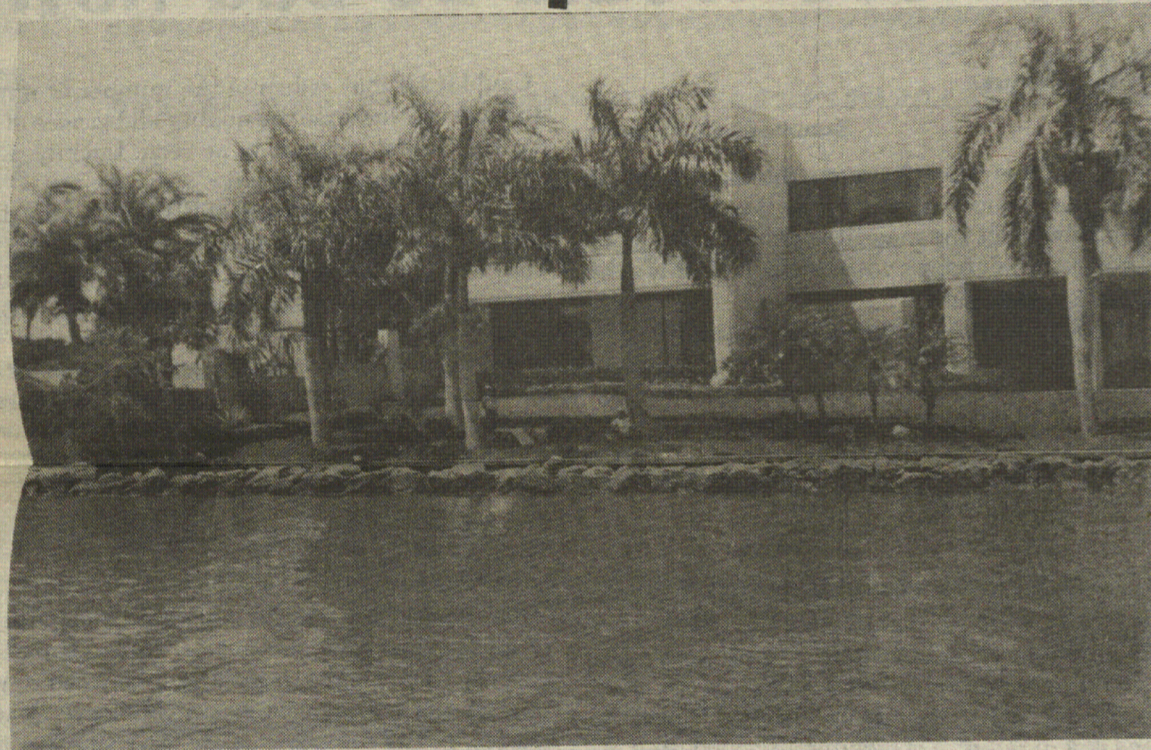


Photo courtesy of The Miami News

The serene scene below, could quickly be transformed into scenes of violence and destruction by hurricane force winds. Hurricane Betsy, in 1965, battered the Florida coast and caused the damage pictured here.



Photo courtesy of The Miami News



## Is South Florida ready?

by Jon O'Neill

Sunblazer Staff Writer

How much do you know about a hurricane and its effects? If you are like most people, and have migrated to South Florida in the last 20 years, chances are you don't know very much.

The last major storm to strike here was Hurricane Betsy in 1965, long before South Florida's population boom. This means that a lot of residents are ignorant of the devastating effects of a strong hurricane.

This fact has forecasters at the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables a little worried. "Twenty years is a long time," said Gil Clark, one of the hurricane specialists at the center. "We're overdue for a major storm, and we can really only guess what the outcome will be when we get hit."

"A lot of people were lulled by David (Hurricane David was a small storm that skirted the coast in September 1979, causing only minor damage) and they think that is what a hurricane is like. Nothing could be further from the truth."

All we can do is try and give an accurate a forecast as possible and hope that everyone takes our warnings seriously," Clark added.

Unfortunately, hurricanes are among the most difficult forms of weather to forecast and track, even with the advanced technology available to the specialists.

"Those storms float like a piece of wood on a river," Clark said. "They're very small when compared to the atmosphere they exist in and that makes precise forecasting tough."

A good example of this was Hurricane David. The

storm ripped through the Antilles and Puerto Rico, causing heavy damage and loss of life.

It rumbled toward the Florida coast, prompting warnings and evacuations. Suddenly, less than five hours from landfall, David dissipated into nothing more than a large band of thunderstorms.

Another example of the unpredictable nature of hurricanes was Hurricane Alberto in 1982. A strong storm that formed in the Florida straits, Alberto was poised to knife through the middle of the state.

Again, hurricane warnings were hoisted and residents prepared for the onslaught. But six hours from Miami, strong high level winds blew the top off the storm, making it a wide area of rain with little effect.

These false alarms also worry forecasters. "People may think we cry wolf a lot," Clark said. "But where hurricanes are concerned, they will always get more warnings than they should."

The last three years may also have contributed to a public apathy when it comes to hurricanes. "It's been very quiet out there in the tropics since 1982," said Clark. "But we're expecting a much more normal pattern to develop this year."

A normal pattern is 10 tropical storms, six of which will strengthen to hurricane force. "Hurricanes usually come in clusters," Clark added. "The longer you go without one, the more wary you must be."

Clark expressed confidence about the ability of South Floridians to respond to a hurricane alert. "I would guess that 75 to 80 percent of the population here has never been through a real hurricane. When the time comes, we think they'll all be kind of scared and very receptive to official instructions."

## Could this be the year?

by Jon O'Neill

Sunblazer Staff Writer

Hurricanes are tropical cyclones in which winds reach constant speeds of 74 mph or more. Winds blow around a relatively calm center called the eye.

The eye is the center of extreme low pressure, and winds around this center may gust to more than 200 mph.

Hurricanes begin as small cyclonic systems. Under the influence of the westward blowing tradewinds, they increase in size, speed and intensity until they become hurricanes.

These storms are driven by released heat and external forces such as upper level winds. Once cut off from the warm ocean, the storm is starved for the water and heat energy it needs. A hurricane dies when this happens, and it is also dragged apart by friction when it moves over land.

There is no way to predict how strong a hurricane will be. Specialists at the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables say that conditions have to be nearly perfect for the development and strengthening of a given storm.

Hurricanes are classified by categories according to their barometric pressure and winds speed. The classifications are as follows:

- Category I - winds 75 to 90 mph
- Category II - winds 96 to 110 mph
- Category III - winds 111 to 130 mph
- Category IV - winds 131 to 155 mph
- Category V - winds greater than 155 mph

Hurricane specialist Bob Case said that from 1900 through 1984, 49 Category I storms have hit the United States, followed by 34 Category II, 43 Category III, 13 Category IV and only two Category V.

The size of a hurricane does not determine its strength. The storm that struck the Florida Keys on September 3, 1935 was small enough to skirt Miami,

although that storm had the lowest barometric pressure ever recorded in the Western Hemisphere and winds estimated at 160 mph.

Hurricane Cleo, which struck Miami in 1964 had winds of 110 mph, but the storm was so small that while Miami had posted hurricane warnings, the city of Fort Myers was reporting partly cloudy skies and slight winds.

The pressure drop that accompanies hurricanes causes the increase in tidal activity. Forecasters said for every inch of pressure drop in a hurricane, the tide rises by 1 foot. The shallow waters of the Gulf of Mexico are most conducive to this effect. Hurricane Camille, which took 255 lives on the gulf coast in 1969, had a storm tide measured at 24 feet above normal sea level.

Forecasters said that such extremes are rare in Atlantic hurricanes, but they estimated that South Florida could experience a storm tide in excess of 15 feet.

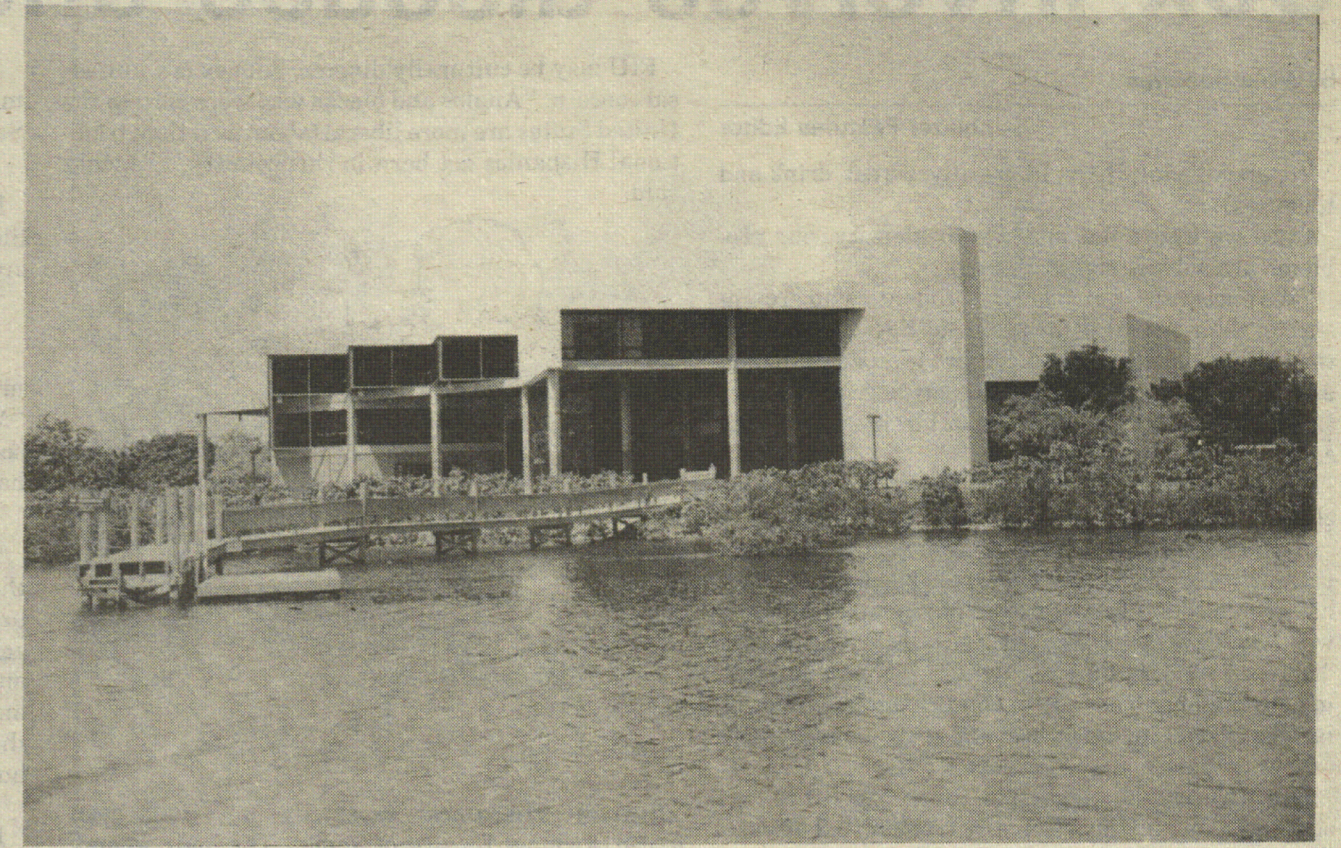
Most people are aware of the devastating effects of hurricane winds, but specialists said the greatest threat to life is from drowning. The storm surge, which is the peak of wind and wave action, and the rains that accompany a major hurricane are responsible for most hurricane deaths.

Hurricane specialists emphasized that their work is useless unless people living in a threatened area take sensible precautions and follow official instructions.

"We can only do so much," Case said. "Once the storm is here it is really up to people to take care of themselves and their property."

Case also said that if proper precautions are taken, hurricanes can be survived with a minimum of danger. If you are not sure what to do when a hurricane threatens, forecasters urge that you take the time to find out.

The National Weather Service, along with local radio and television stations, make instructional pamphlets available throughout the hurricane season.



## BVC has plans for a big storm

by Jon O'Neill

Sunblazer Staff Writer

If you've ever taken a boat ride around Haulover inlet and the Bay Vista Campus, it is likely you've noticed the tremendous amount of structures built right on the water's edge. During a major hurricane, these buildings will be most susceptible to heavy damage from wind and water.

If the strongest hurricane possible were to strike here, experts place damage estimates between 10 and \$15 billion. An typical hurricane could cause as much as \$2 billion in damage.

BVC itself could be subjected to quite a pounding from wind and water, although the campus' position in the inlet will be blocked from most of the storm's devastating effects.

Bradley Biggs, assistant vice president for administrative affairs at BVC, said the college has a complete hurricane program designed to minimize potential damage.

"We would do the common sense things anyone would do in order to protect school property," Biggs said. "The doors around the library would be sand-bagged and the windows on that building would be covered with metal shutters, and the pool would have to be partly drained to prevent it from popping out of the ground."

The major problem at BVC could be from water. During a hurricane, water can rise as much as 10 feet above the normal high tide level.

Additionally, wave action would cause another 5-foot-rise in the water level, and debris in the water

would be pushed onshore by the waves, creating what hurricane forecasters call a "battering ram effect." "Water is much more dangerous than fire," said Biggs. "Fire is localized and in most cases can be controlled. But if a hurricane strikes, it is very hard to cover all the places that water is going to go."

Some experts have said that during a major hurricane water would completely cover all of the out islands in Biscayne Bay, including Key Biscayne. Water that high may reach some second story windows on BVC, but Biggs said that protecting the first floors of the library and student center buildings would be the first priority.

"We will be as ready as we can possibly be," Biggs said. "There will be someone from the school's safety department here to keep an eye on things."

Hurricane force winds will also pose a problem for BVC. Biggs said that although the library windows will be covered, there are not enough shutters for the student center building.

"We don't have those types of dollars at this time," said Biggs. "It's something that we are currently working on."

Residents of the BVC dorms would face evacuation under a hurricane warning. "We would have to leave," said head resident Kenny Bowen. "The people in the dorms would be moved to the nearest Red Cross shelter."

