

Independent

The Sunblazer

Florida International University

Tuesday, March 22, 1988

Volume 5, Number 21

SGA elections: meet the Presidential Candidates

Photo: Rey Quintana/FIU Sunblazer



■ Candidates Tim Benjamin and Ralph Patino prepare campaign posters. SGA elections will take place March 29 and 30.

ANASTASIA GARCIA
Sunblazer Staff Writer

Pro-temp Student Government Association Senate President Tim Benjamin, SGA Senator George Twum-Barimah, SGA Senator Frank Janisch and Phi Eta Sigma honor society member Zeida Comesanas all have two things in common: they are students at Florida International University and they want to be SGA president for 1988-89.

On March 14 they began handing out buttons, filling the campus walls and hallways with posters and shaking hands as part of their campaigns.

All four candidates agree that students need to get more involved with student govern-

ment and with campus activities, but all four have different visions of how it should be done.

Benjamin, who has served on various positions in SGA since 1985, said the success of student government and the involvement of students go hand in hand. He said his goal is to portray SGA with "an energetic" tone.

"When (Ronald) Reagan began his term as president of the United States, the senate remained the same, but the president gave the country its tone," Benjamin said.

If elected, Benjamin's main goal would be to make students aware of the services student government offers.

"Marketing SGA for the upcoming year is very important," Benjamin said. "That way, students can get more in-

involved in the process and voice their opinions."

According to Benjamin, SGA has increased its services in the past few years by adding the student I.D. program and the student book exchange and by increasing lobbying on the state level for the university in efforts to try to stop tuition increases and to deal with other university issues.

Benjamin ran for SGA president last year and lost by 31 votes.

Twum-Barimah, who has served as SGA senator since 1986 and has served as chairman of the Board of Governors, said that promoting unity among students on both the North Miami and University Park campuses is one of his main goals. He feels that the attitude of FIU having two separate campuses works

against the students.

"With all students working together improvements on both campuses such as extending the cafeteria hours and increasing campus activities will happen-soon," said Twum-Barimah.

Janisch, who has served as SGA senator for 2 years, said that if elected he wants to "take pressure off the students" and make them more aware that SGA is there to serve their needs.

"I want to start a 'student grievance system' where students can file complaints about administrators, professors or student representatives and SGA will make sure that things are followed up. We'll mail a copy of the complaint to the dean and to the vice president and allow 10 days for a response. Then we'll contact the student," Janisch said.

Janisch would also like to begin a program where SGA sets up an evaluation of teachers and courses which can be made available to students during registration.

He said he sees no "gap" between both campuses but he does see a problem in the availability of activities for the students who live on campus.

"There's no gap between the campuses at all. We're one campus and that's Florida International University."

"But dorm students have nothing to do from Thursday through Sunday. We need to

increase activities for dorm students," Janisch said.

Comesanas, an honor student and member of the Young Democrats, said that if elected she plans to have SGA sponsor a \$100,000 scholarship fund for students who fill out a financial aid form and prove that they are in need.

"It's good to have dances and concerts because not everyone likes to attend lectures all the time, but more money has to be geared toward the academic fulfillment in people," Comesanas said.

She said she would also like to set up a fund for subsidizing school books for students who can't afford them.

"Increasing funding for various student organizations is also important, but there has to be a balance," Comesanas said.

Elections Commissioner Alex Fernandez said each candidate can spend three cents per student, totaling approximately \$480, for campaigning. He said all candidates have to do their own fundraising.

Fernandez added that SGA limits the amount of money spent on campaigning so the race is decided on issues and not on appearances or the number of buttons a candidate distributes.

"The limit is there because we find it important that each candidate has an equal oppor-

-continued on page 6

Inside:



FIU's Department of Theatre and Dance presents "Landscape of the Body" - see story on page 4

Correction: In the March 15 issue of the Sunblazer, the alleged campaign violations on the part of FPIRG were brought to the Supreme Court by the Florida International University Student Advocates (FIUSA) and not by the Student Government Association. The Sunblazer regrets the error.

Comptroller: Patino or Capellan?

LOURDES RIVERA
Sunblazer Staff Writer

On March 29th and 30th, the students of Florida International University will have a chance to decide who will steer their \$1.5 million in activities and service fees.

The two candidates running for comptroller in the upcoming student government elections are incumbent Ralph Patino and challenger Steve Capellan.

Both candidates are seniors and business majors. Each feels he has what it takes to do the job.

"The most important thing a comptroller can do is make sure no money is wasted. That's my goal. And because I attend both campuses and both day and evening classes, I feel I can represent the University as a whole," said Capellan, a double major in marketing and international business.

"I feel that I have done the job of stabilizing and controll-

ing SGA's money. If I didn't feel I had done a good job, I wouldn't be running," said Patino.

Capellan's experience includes being a member of the SGA Elections Committee, serving as Hall Council president for the North Miami dorms and working for an import and export company. Capellan said he was inspired to run for comptroller while working on the budget for Hall Council.

A transfer student from the University of Central Florida, Capellan said he feels being comptroller would be an invaluable experience for him. "It would help me get communications skills that will help in the business world," he said.

Patino, a former senator for the College of Business Administration and a double major in accounting and finance, was appointed comptroller by SGA President Fred Jorgenson when the position was vacated by Carlos Vera in October of 1987. He served the remainder of last year's term and is now

running for the first time.

Before he was appointed comptroller, Patino served on the SGA Finance and Appropriations Committee, the Rules and Agenda Committee and the Academic Committee. He was also the Colony Coordinator for Phi Delta Theta. But the most valuable experience for him, he says, has been his service as comptroller.

"Being comptroller has served me in a lot of ways. It has not only given me financial experience, but it has taught me interpersonal skills. It has also taught me how to be a good student leader," said Patino.

The comptroller must be an FIU student with at least a 2.50 grade point average and a sophomore standing. Candidates for the position must have been officially affiliated with SGA for at least one semester prior to the election and they must not have served for more than two terms in the same office prior to the

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The Independent FIU Sunblazer

Florida International University

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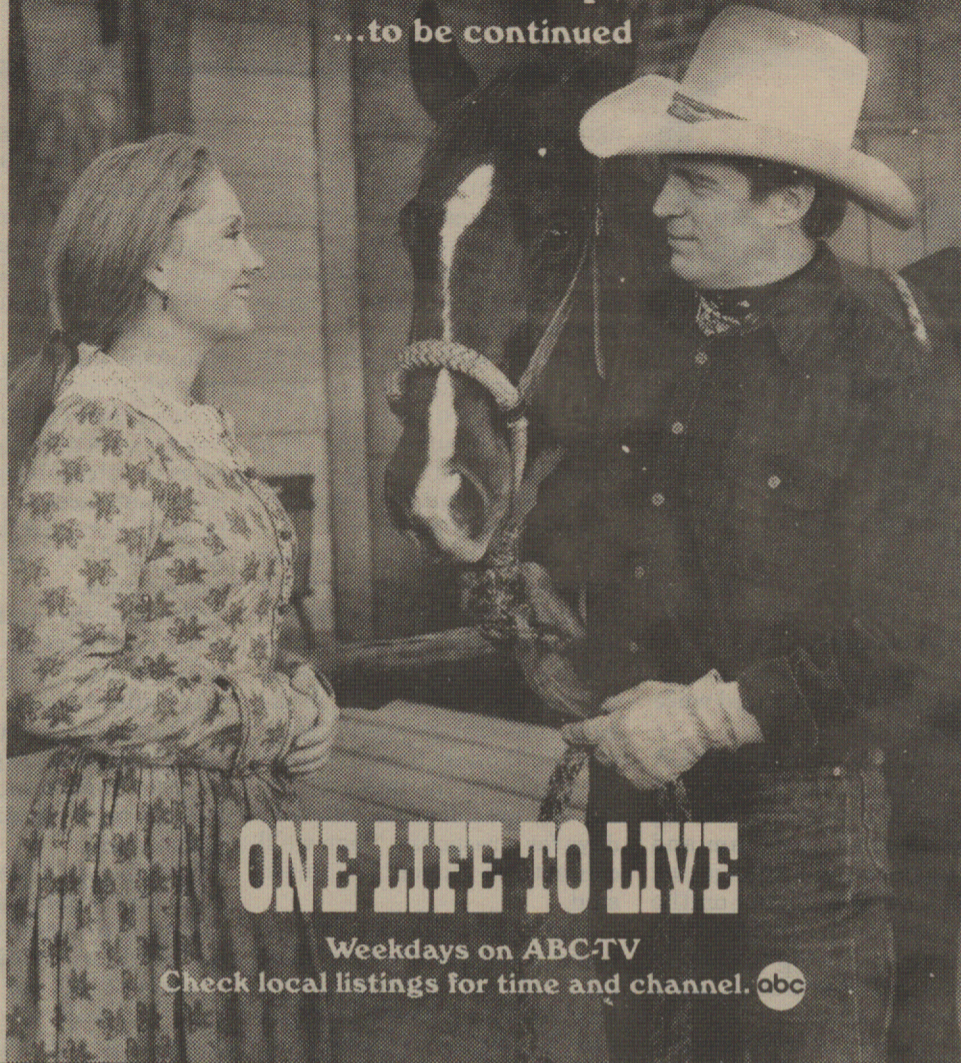
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...to be continued



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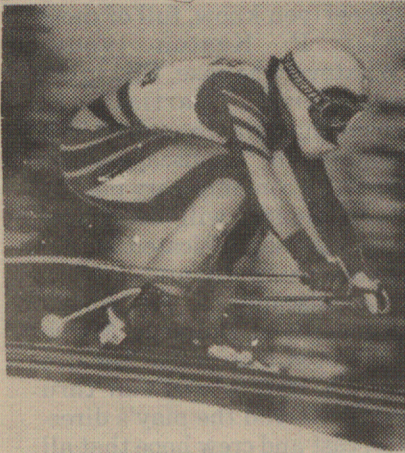
SGA Elections

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JOSE LOPEZ
Sunblazer Staff Writer

This week's question:

What do you think of the plus-minus system of grading? Since there is a B+ and a C+ shouldn't there be an A+ as well? Should all teachers be required to follow the system?



"If teachers use the B+ and C+ and want to stay with the plus-minus system, they should also use A+. If they don't want to use A+, then the system should be void."
-Diana Diaz
Industrial Technology major



"I have not had an A yet, but if one day I got one and I deserved an A+, I should get an A+."
-Joachim Barhausen
Hotel Management major



"I don't particularly care for the plus-minus system primarily since grading becomes too subjective and discretionary on the part of the instructors."
-Ralph Imondi
Psychology major



"There should definitely be a policy that is more fair in grading. If we can receive a plus grade for B and C we should be able to get an A+."
-Lauren Applebaum
Hospitality major

-continued on page 7

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"Landscape of the Body:" a very different project

CONNIE CANO
Sunblazer Features Editor

Florida International University has developed a reputation for being a rather conservative school. Perhaps this is due to the large number of older and Cuban-American students that

make up the university community; or better yet, it could be because of our business school (you know, full of those Alex P. Keaton types). Whatever the case, FIU is not considered partial to cosmopolitan thought. The reaction to "Landscape of the Body," a contemporary play by John Guare, will determine just how sophisticated an audience we really are.

"Landscape of the Body" premieres on Thursday, March 31, at the University Theatre in VH 100. It will run thru April 10, and the play's director, cast and crew hope that all performances will sell out.

The play handles such themes as lost identity, assimilation or the lack of it, death, pornography and sibling relationships. Basically, it portrays urban life with New York City as the backdrop. The subject matter is hard and the language is crude but the work deals with the cruelty of life.

Guare strives to relate all of this through the use of comedy and song in as light and realistic a manner as possible. The reality that people die and those living must go on and the randomness and stupidity of violence are but some of the messages developed throughout the play. Mary Ellen O'Brien, who understands Guare's views, emphasizes them in her directing of the play.

O'Brien, a new faculty member in the Department of Theater and Dance, is the Director of FIU's version of "Landscape of the Body". O'Brien, whose credentials include being the Artistic Director of Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre in Louisiana, co-founder of the Louisiana Shakespeare Festival, and teaching theatre history at Tulane University, describes Guare's play as "having hard truths and a powerful script without depending on sensationalism." The play is about survival in a hostile environment. Since the author did not write for shock effect, the performance will be tastefully and entertainingly staged.

The actors in "Landscape of the Body," many of whom have performed in other FIU productions, find the characters complex and challenging. Evelyn Perez is playing the part of Rosalie (this character dies right at the start but continues to narrate in the form of a ghost, flowing in and out of the shadows). She feels the work is fulfilling since FIU does not feature many contemporary productions. "It is a new experience," she said. She has had to adjust her acting style accordingly. She describes Guare's musical score as a tool the author employs to deemphasize the sordid details of death and vice, thus depicting human tenacity.

Rebekah Spence, who plays

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-Continued on page 5

Photo: Therald Todd/Department of Theatre & Dance



■ "Landscape" stars Evelyn Perez and Rebekah Spence

Rosalie's sister Betty, remarked: "It is a compassionate comedy about people overcoming life's adversities. My character was highly influenced by her sister. When she died Betty just stepped into her sister's life, suffering a loss of identity. It's hard to portray someone who changes so much." Gio Gonzalez plays Durwood Peach, Betty's mentally disturbed suitor. He believes the author "brings out the humor" of life's most dismal situations without being vulgar. "Everyone should come and see the play," he said.

Israel Garcia plays Bert, Betty's son, who dies at the end of the play. When asked about the possible controversy "Landscape" might generate he answered: "The public has a need for change. The FIU

community is just as fun-loving as students at any other college campus. I think they'll love it."

Rounding out the cast are Jerry Delmonico, Arsenio Arabitg Lumiri Khahaifa, Diana Lopez, Randall Peterson, and Jim Sweet.

For the past three months the actors have rehearsed approximately eighteen hours a week in a production that requires dancing, singing and acting skills. The group has had to work with difficult scenes and staging that would seem to necessitate some special effects, such as the lighting for the ghost scenario. However, if they can pull it off it should be a great play.

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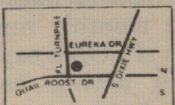
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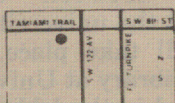
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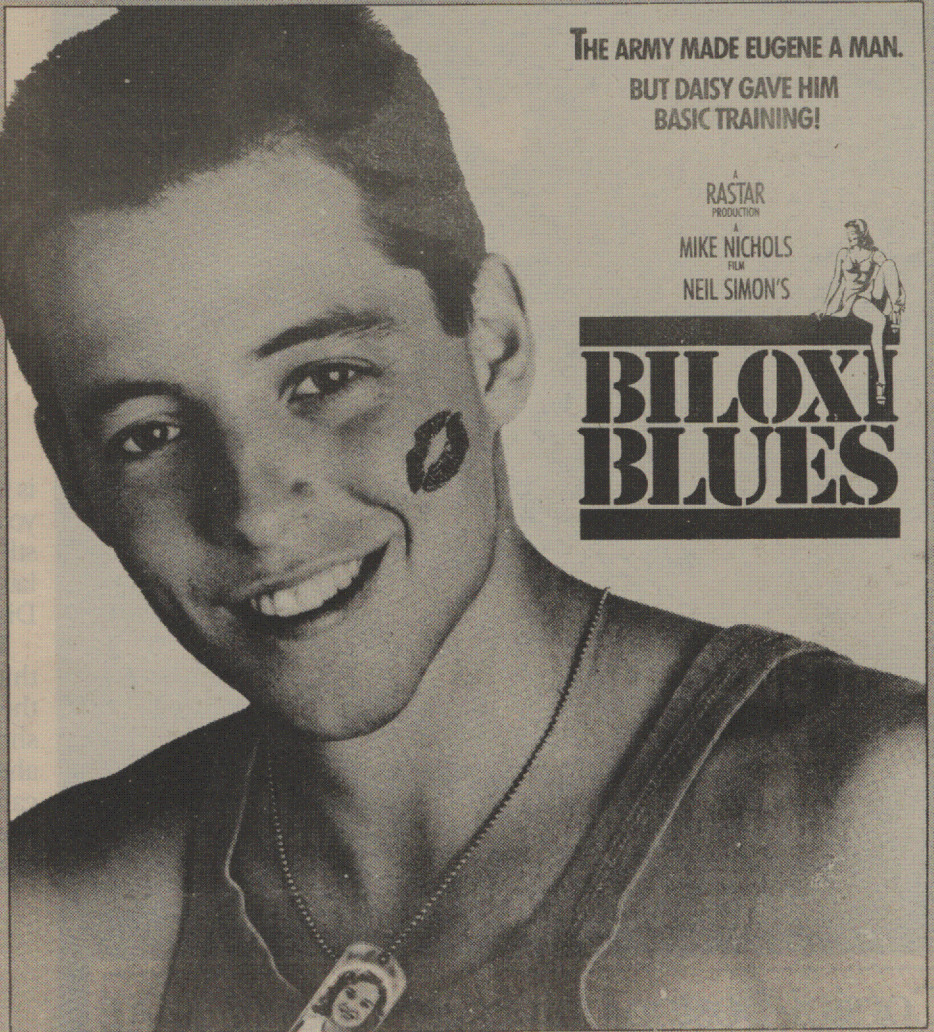
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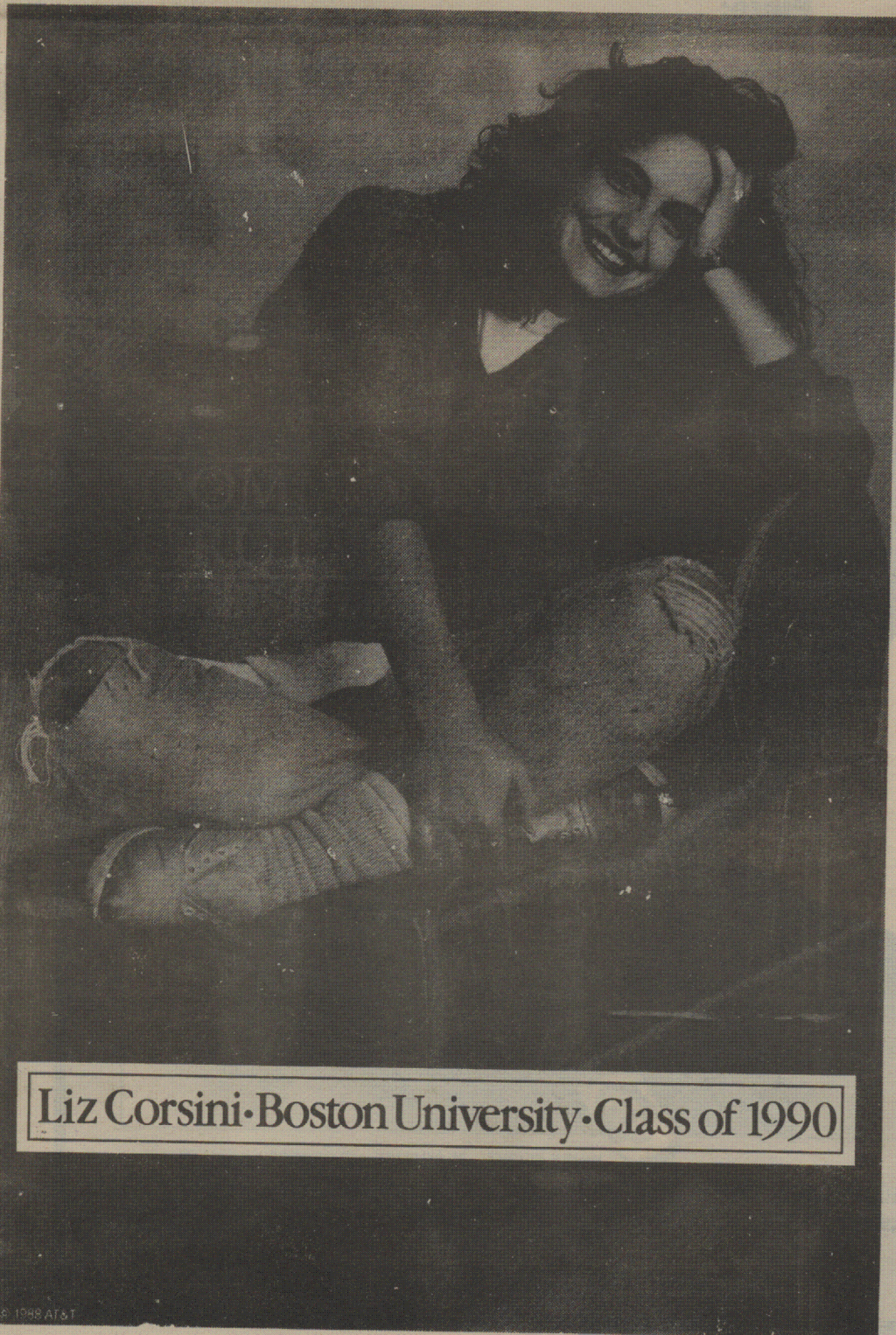
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-President, from page 1

tunity to present his/her points of view," Fernandez said.

The polls will be open on both campuses March 29 and 30 from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. Voting booths will be located in front of the library at University Park and in the lobby of the Academic One building at North Miami Campus.

According to SGA secretary Lorraine Pollack, approximately 1165 students voted in last year's election.

Fernandez said the same voter turnout is expected this year. If there is a tie, a run-off election will take place April 12 and 13.

-Comptroller, from page 1

elections, according to the SGA constitution.

Neither candidate has done much campaigning. SGA puts a \$320 cap on the amount of money that can be spent on campaigning, but neither Patino nor Capellan has come close to that figure.

"I haven't been able to campaign because my academic responsibilities take precedence," said Patino. He also said he has a series of job-related deadlines to meet before he will have time to campaign.

"I'm not going to spend that much money. I don't think a picture on a flyer is important. The name is more important," Capellan said. He has posted a few hand-made signs around campus and said he plans to "get to the people" in the next week. "Word-of-mouth is the best way," he added.

When he finally does start campaigning, Capellan said he is going to make only one promise: to do the best job he can if he is elected.

"The only thing I can promise is to be honest, have integrity and be unbiased," said Patino.

The present comptroller said he is not sure exactly what his future will hold, but he said he would love to be a senator one day. Capellan said he would like to work for a multinational corporation or the Chamber of Commerce as a liaison between corporations and the government.

The comptroller does not make the SGA budget - he manages it. According to the SGA constitution, his duties include assuring that no money is wasted and that funds are used according to the statutes of the SGA constitution; authorizing SGA expenditures together with the SGA accountant; chairing the Finance and Appropriations Committee; advising the SGA president on financial matters; submitting a monthly report on the status of SGA's expenditures; and acting as a negotiator between the students and the university.

Voting will take place in front of the library at University Park and in the lobby of Academic I at the North Miami Campus.

-Speakout, from page 3

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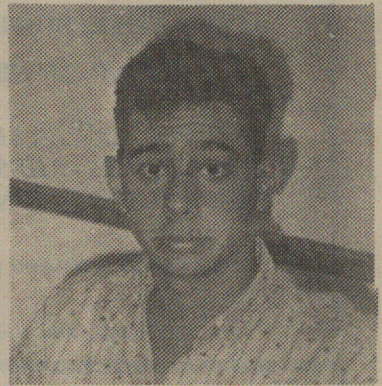
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"If one is going to follow through with the plus-minus system, follow through...A+!"

-Robin Bryajian
 Psychology major



"The plus-minus system should exist, but teachers should be persuaded to avoid using it. Students struggle for an A, not an A-."

-Javier Mariscal
 Industrial Engineering major



THE GREGORY B. WOLFE AWARD.



The Student Government Association is seeking nominations for "The Gregory B. Wolfe Awards".

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INTERVIEWS MARCH 31, 1988

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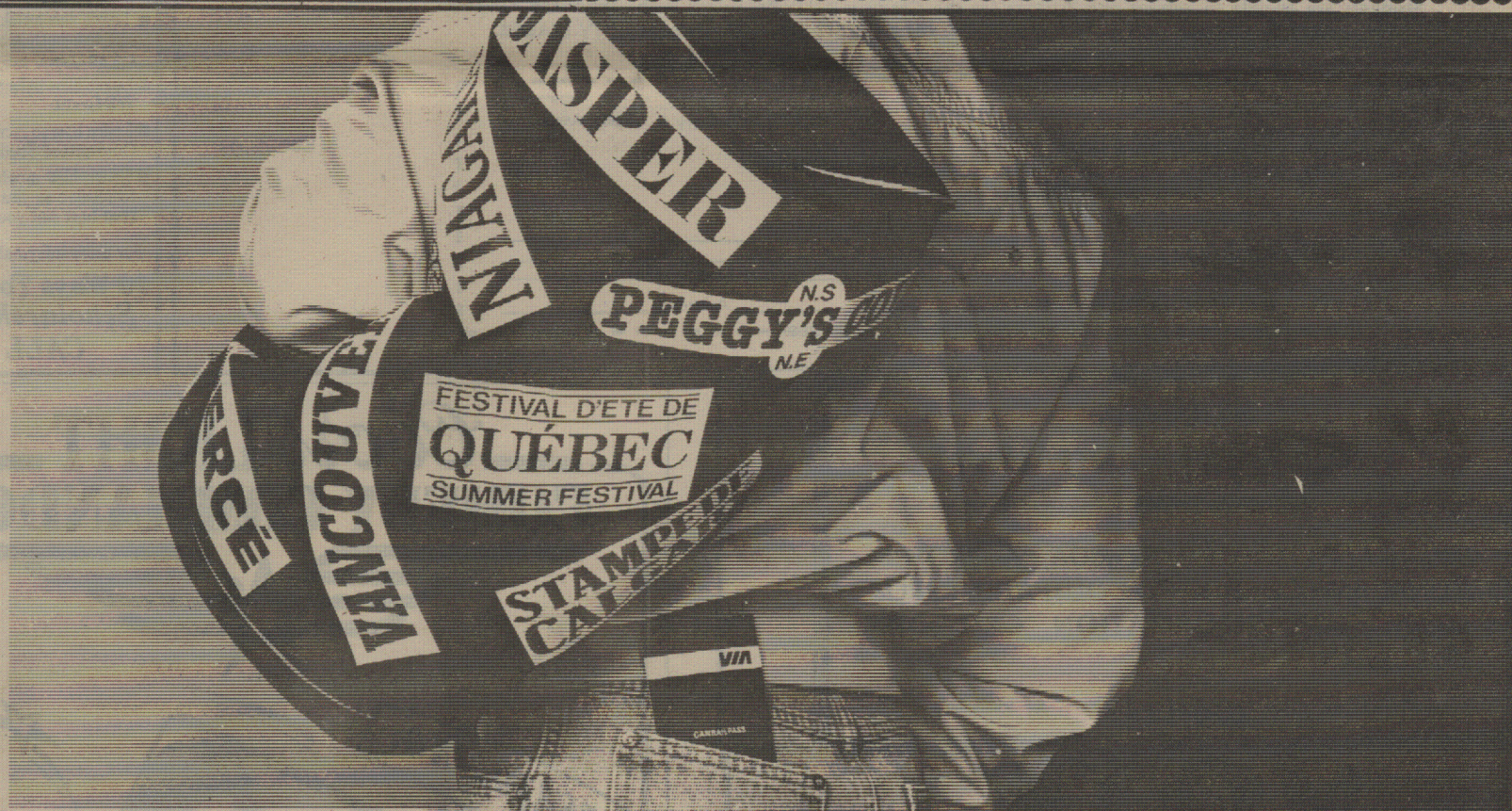
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