New bridge to benefit student pedestrians

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In attempt to make transportation not only easier to students, but to the community, a new pedestrian bridge, sidewalks and plazas will connect the City of Sweetwater with Modesto A. Maidique Campus.

Set to be built by 2018, the bridge was first proposed in 2011.

“We had submitted twice but were turned down, not because it was a bad project, but because there was limited funding,” said Kenneth Jessell, FIU senior vice president for Finance and Administration and chief financial officer.

A partnership between MMC, who completed the FIU Football Stadium Expansion, and FIGG Bridge Engineers will finalize the designs of the bridge. The bridge will link Sweetwater with the northern entrance of FIU over Southwest Eighth Street.

Improvements will also be made to the entrances of MMC and to the 109 Avenue area in Sweetwater.

The $15 million project will receive a $11.4 million U.S. Department of Transportation grant (also known as the TIGER Grant), with additional funding coming from the Florida Department of Transportation, City of Sweetwater and FIU.

However, the bridge is just one part of a three part project.

“The bridge is a big part because it is so visual, but the other parts – the Informed Travel Program and Applications and the community transit, are equally as important,” said Jessell.

Construction of the bridge will cause Eighth Street to be closed for one night. Aside from that, traffic will face minimal impact. The 300 foot long bridge will also feature panther shaped benches, security cameras and a lighting system.

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Will California pot legalization survive the presidential election?

Californians are likely to vote this fall on legalizing marijuana for recreation but whether Golden State residents can break out the bongs could depend on what happens at the top of the ballot.

The next president has the power to shut down marijuana sales in the states that have legalized it, and two of the candidates, Republicans Marco Rubio and Ben Carson, have suggested they would. While marijuana remains forbidden under federal law, President Barack Obama has allowed pot sales in states such as Colorado, Oregon and Washington that have legalized recreational marijuana under state law. Weed advocates are watching the presidential race closely and hoping the next president follows Obama’s path on pot.

Analysts see business benefit in Apple’s battle with FBI

Apple’s decision to refuse the FBI’s demand to unlock the iPhone of San Bernardino, California, shooter Syed Farook, which Apple CEO Tim Cook has portrayed as a principled stand to protest the data of all iPhone users, is also likely to be good for analysts, of the hotly competitive cellphone market sales in the states that have legalized it.

While none of the analysts questioned Cook’s sincerity in challenging a federal magistrate’s order that Apple help the FBI access encrypted data on Farook’s phone, they noted that the refusal neatly aligns with Apple’s current business strategy. “They’re basically making a big push on privacy, and it benefits them financially,” Alvaro Bedoya, executive director of the Center on Privacy and Technology at Georgetown University Law Center, said of the challenge.

Trump, Bush, Kasich offer a gentler approach in town hall chats

Donald Trump, Jeb Bush and John Kasich made final pitches to South Carolina voters Tuesday, but their points of view were a far cry from the confrontational tone of the New Hampshire debate.

Carolina campaign 48 hours before South Carolina primary -- that I know of to get to those places actually really beneficial for me since there’s no easy way – other than driving – that I know of to get to those places from campus. It also means I have a variety of places to go.”

Attempts to create an air-conditioned area near the bus stop at PG6 will be made, and the possibility of creating a convenience store, newspaper stand or food venue are also in the works.

The third part of the project consists of an ITPA system, which will cost about $2.4 million. This includes “smart transit opportunity traffic.” This system could save users time, giving them suggestions on when to get off their bus route to join an alternative one.

From FIU, the system can be used to tell those using the bus the time their bus will get there.

IPTPA started to be implemented when FIU parking decals were replaced with a system that recognizes license plates. The parking count system is also receiving some tweaking.

“The counts that we have by spaces, eventually that technology is going to become an actual benefit that you would be able to actually know where the space is, or where spaces are,” said Jessell.

“So you can get an update on your phone, that would be verbal so you’re not looking at it while you’re driving,” [that says] there is 15 spots in over in [PG 6] or there are 15 spots in Red Garage. So you now know where to go for parking,” he said.

The official groundbreaking of the project will occur next month, with construction beginning in the next three months; however, construction of the bridge probably will not occur until the end of the year since there are still issues related to soil testing, power lines as well as drawings and planning of the bridge.

Right now, only 30 percent of the drawings have been made. Getting to 100 percent takes time because drawings are under constant review by the U.S. Department of Transportation and FDOT.

“We wanted it to be from the very beginning a signature bridge, because we could easily put in a bridge, just to get across. We wanted it to be a continuation of the City of Sweetwater and FIU,” said Jessell. “I’m pretty excited about it.”

New pedestrian bridge more than just a bridge

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NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Panel discusses Cuban identities

Whether it was literature, music or visual arts, a similar sentiment was shared while comparing the modern generation of Cuban-Americans with its predecessor; the idea that the youth are now much less politically focused, less concerned with Castro, and the economic sphere and more focused on the individual and its social existence.

“They are less political. It is less about politics and more about putting family first,” said Lopez.

“The panel ended with a Q&A. When an audience member asked about the real meaning of identity, Lopez responded, ‘Identity is just a game we play in public. It is so contextual.’”

She then described an idea her mother had told her. Her Cuban mother had once told her that “Cuban-American youths are watching the presidential election carefully, hoping the next candidate to take office will move to Cuba and change the relationship between the United States and Cuba.”

“Cuban-American artist, who have grown up here, are now becoming to ‘go back’ to Cuba,” Lopez said. “A Cuban artist from Havana are coming to Miami. There is this sort of flow that is taking place,” she said.

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Media holds influence on voters

ON THE SCENE

With the primary election just around the corner, voters are tuning in to debates, local and national broadcasts and are looking to the internet to learn more about the standing presidential candidates. However, it seems to be the case that voters also favor information published on social media sites.

With technology and access to the web at the fingertips of most Americans, social media serves as a virtual gateway to the very core of election season. Most social media sites are designed to allow users to easily share links, videos, photos and memes, which seem to be among the most popular modes of communication on the internet — especially when it comes to politics.

Because memes are easy to create and to publish, they continue to be an increasingly popular trend among social media and internet users. Today, the Internet and social media are plagued with memes of all kinds. Now, memes are more politically aimed, given that voting season has already begun.

At a social media user, I cannot begin to count how many videos, memes, photos and links are circulating the internet, many of which condemn politicians from all ends of the spectrum for being corrupt, out of touch, or for appearing to be running their platforms by using derogatory language.

While everyone is entitled to their own opinions and perspectives, many simply do not comprehend the power that media has on the public.

What you watch on television, what you hear on the radio or what you see and share online has a significant influence on the public that can lead people to understand and believe or confuse and mislead others with information that may not be credible.

Exercising one’s right to vote is an important civil duty and should not be taken lightly. Many voters — especially young voters — hold the impression that their ideas and votes do not matter when in reality, they do. Making informed decisions is just as important as making the decision to vote. While social media is appearing quite convoluted and overwhelming, they’re most likely not the most accurate sources to rely on. Rather than making a blind decision, voters should do their research, which means yes — expose yourself to all ends of the spectrum.

With information constantly circulating on the web and other media platforms, voters of all ages need to do their best to be as informed as possible. When the time comes, get out there and vote! Your decision counts!

On the Scene is a commentary in the hottest pop culture topics. For further commentary, contact Gabrielle Garcia at gabrielle.garcia@fau.com

Letter to the Editor: Understanding your right to protest on campus

The October 28 edition of the Beacon included a story about FIU’s free speech policy. We are writing to explain FIU’s regulation on protests.

Universities have competing responsibilities and values when it comes to protests on campus. We cherish the right of free speech and understand the great benefit to our community when everyone can express opinions, no matter how challenging. One of our values is “Freedom of thought and expression,” regardless of the content of that thought and expression.

At the same time, there is a responsibility to preserve the continuity of university operations where students, faculty and staff may feel that their regular business when protests are occurring.

We serve a diverse student body seeking to participate in higher education. Our top priority is offering a world-class education and graduating all of our students. Two of FIU’s other values are “Excellence in intellectual, personal and operational endeavors” and “Respect—for the diversity and the dignity of the individual, respect of our other values, speak to these aims. We hope all students who desire to exercise their right to protest feel free to do so.

We are at our best as a university when we are able to harmonize these competing values. However, when these values conflict we must make choices. Our choices may not be popular. We recognize the belief that individuals or groups exercising their first amendment rights should be able to do so unfettered. We do not hold that view and our Constitution does not require this view. Likewise, respect for the dignity of the individual does not mean that speech which some or many find disrespectful is not permitted.

FIU’s student affairs administrators and our police are trained in responding to protests to ensure the interests of the FIU community and the University’s values are considered in our actions and our obligations under the law are met.

Our Student Affairs professionals are here to assist students in understanding their rights and responsibilities regarding demonstrations on our campuses. Students should contact the Dean of Student Offices at 305-498-2797. Information is available on the Student Affairs website explaining the first amendment and providing guidance regarding students’ right to protest.

Cathy Aiken, Dean of Students
Kristina Rauttuma, General Counsel
For the full letter to the editor, visit fau.com

Send us your letters

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop off our letters at office of at offices of The Beacon located in Student Union. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

Disclaimer

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of The FIU Student Editorial Board. These views are separate from the editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

Editorial Policy

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors in the Opinion section. They are submitted by readers of The Beacon.
Decoding food labels made easy

If you’re like me, you tend to go to the supermarket and spend hours reading food labels before you buy a particular food item.

It’s important to know what we are eating. However, this can be difficult if we don’t know exactly what a food label really means.

Some food labels may say very little about the product and others contain information that is irrelevant. For example, some statements made on food labels are required by law.

Knowing what a food label is telling you will help you pick the best product for yourself and others. “Raisin without added hormones” is common statement seen on pork and poultry labels. This is prohibited by law for poultry and pork to be raised with added hormones.

A meat or poultry product labeled as natural is vague and leads to different interpretations by the consumer. However, as stated by the USDA, means meat and poultry products cannot contain artificial colors, flavors, preservatives or other artificial ingredients.

It also means that the meat and poultry should be minimally processed.

“Naturally raised” is another vague term. According to the USDA, a food product with such a label must meet such criteria: the animal should not have been given any growth enhancers or antibiotics and the animal should not have consumed food containing animal by-products.

“Naturally raised” has nothing to do with animal welfare, such as environmental and conservation issues that may be occurring on the farm, or if any animal cruelty is in practice.

Poultry labeled as “fresh” signifies that the poultry was not cooled below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

This could mislead consumers who believe that fresh means the meat was never frozen, processed or preserved.

The label “free range,” as seen on poultry produced for meat and eggs, is only regulated by the USDA for poultry raised for meat. This label is not regulated for pigs, cattle or egg producing chickens.

Animal products could be labeled “free range” if the animal had some access to the outdoors each day for a certain amount of time.

This amount of time could even be as little as a few minutes each day.

Knowing what we are putting into our body is critical. You must always remember to read the label and do your research before you buy a particular product.

You might be picking up a product that is not what you expected and could seriously damage your body without the knowledge that you are even doing so.

SDA health is a weekly column written by members of the Student Dietitian Association. The column focuses on healthy eating and living.

Unfortunately, experiments disfigure him and Wade Wilson - Deadpool’s true identity - doesn’t take kindly to it. Fueled by his desire to fix his scarred state and reunite with his girlfriend, Wilson teams up with a pair of less-important X-Men, who Deadpool doesn’t skip a beat mentioning, to kill the man who did him in.

Deadpool being a hit wasn’t exactly a question. The question was what a hit the Deadpool movie would mean for the future. The superhero genre seems to be toeing the line between action and graphic content, and “Deadpool” is really the first in the superhero cinematic universe to cross it.

By far, it is not the first comic book franchise to get an R rating, but there’s a reason movies like the “Blade” series, “Watchmen” and “Red” aren’t normally marketed with the biggest-bulge suits in suits.

LifeStyle points is a weekly column covering films and pop culture by Joseph Cardenas. For suggestions and comments email joseph.cardenas@fiusm.com. For full story visit fiusm.com

Deadpool demystified

Over the years, Deadpool has become a staple Marvel character big enough to fuel a cult fanbase.

A fanbase powerful enough to push the superhero’s first ever solo-film to have the biggest opening weekend for a superhero’s first film.

Whether or not you see the appeal for the superhero genre, a $130 million figure is still impressive for the first film in any franchise. What makes it even more impressive is that the film was appropriately given an R rating.

Deadpool’s titular screen adaptation introduces us to the “Merc with a Mouth” after undergoing intense experimenting to trigger a mutant reaction. Mr. Pool exists in the X-Men filmverse, whose mutant reaction is shown as the result of experimenting.

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If you haven’t been paying attention to the news lately, there’s a Vector Borne Disease known as the Zika virus that has been going around. Although it’s been a problem in many other countries for quite some time now, there’s a sudden panic due to it making its way to the United States.

The virus is most commonly transmitted by infected mosquitoes in tropical regions of the world, but it can also be transmitted through sexual contact whether it’s vaginal, anal or oral.

Because of the rapid rate at which the virus is spreading, scientists and medical experts are trying to create a vaccine to prevent the contraction. As of right now, there is no known treatment for the virus.

As of Feb. 8 there were sixteen Zika virus cases in Florida reported by the Surgeon General. Just 10 days later, there were eight more cases reported.

According to Mariella Gabaroni, the associate director of the FIU Health Promotion Services, there are many ways to stay safe.

First things first: protect yourself from mosquitoes and areas in which they are heavy populated. Wearing long sleeved shirts and pants as well as spraying yourself with mosquito repellant containing “DEET” regularly can help.

Gabaroni suggests “If you have traveled to an area with reported Zika virus cases you should refrain from donating blood for at least four weeks.”

There are ways to stay safe from contracting the Zika virus sexually, too. Abstinence is the best way to avoid any STD and a deterrent from contracting Zika. Because our urges take precedence over rationality, there are other ways to avoid the virus. Using a condom when performing vaginal, anal and oral sex can reduce the chances of the virus being transferred from one partner to the other.

Evidence from other cases shows that the virus can stay in semen for at least two weeks after being contracted, therefore it is recommended to avoid direct contact with semen until more information is learned about the virus. Also, ask your partner about their travel history to see if they have traveled to areas that have had a Zika virus outbreak.

If you are currently pregnant and you or your partner have traveled somewhere recently that has reported Zika cases in its area, you should schedule an appointment with your doctor.

How can you tell if you are infected? Gabaroni categorizes this virus as an asymptomatic disease, in which you can have it in your system but have no knowledge due to a lack of symptoms for some time.

The World Health Organization states the symptoms that begin to become noticeable later include fever, skin rashes, muscle pain, joint pain and headaches. If you begin to experience these symptoms, seek medical attention immediately.

There are many ways to stay informed about the Zika virus. Jonathan Day, a professor of medical entomology at the University of Florida’s Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, will be giving a presentation and discussion on “What is Zika Virus” during a free webinar Feb. 23 at 2 p.m. at https://connect.fiu.edu/lssffebruary2016/.

There’s also a video on FIU’s YouTube channel titled “Zika Watch: FIU panel of experts” in which several experts in our panther community have reached out to the public informing them on what they know so far about this virus that’s sweeping the nation.

If you have a personal question you want answered, you can call the Florida Zika virus information hotline at 1-855-622-6735 or use your resources here on campus by stopping by Student Health Services or the College of Medicine.
Piled upon a mountain of bad losses and a hopeless season is some small, small hope for the FIU women’s basketball team.

The hope of player improvement lies under the direction of first-year Head Coach Marlin Chinn.

More than X’s and O’s, I think the value in a coaching staff is helping young players improve. In the NBA the San Antonio Spurs are renown for their growth of young players. From David Robinson to Tim Duncan and then to players who didn’t enter the NBA with high expectations like Tony Parker or Manu Ginobili. All the aforementioned players are probably going to be Hall-of-Fame players by any reasonable measure.

While FIU doesn’t have a Tim Duncan or a Tony Parker, they do have Kristian Hudson and a Tianah Alvarado. All the aforementioned players are probably going to be Hall-of-Fame players by any reasonable measure.

While FIU doesn’t have a Tim Duncan or a Tony Parker, they do have Kristian Hudson and a Tianah Alvarado. While admittedly not the same, it’s all we have.

These are two big pieces moving forward in FIU women’s basketball, and what is most promising is how much better they can get. Let’s take a look at senior Taylor Shade’s improvement under Chinn.

Most notable are Shade’s improvements from an efficiency standpoint. Shade is shooting 38 percent from three, which is terrific, as well 42 percent from the field. Considering she has taken 94 threes this season (almost half her total field goal attempts), her scoring is incredibly efficient.

Because 3-pointers are more difficult than any other shot and are worth more points, they should be looked at as such. So despite Shade only shooting 42 percent from the field, it’s okay because almost half of them are 3-pointers which she is shooting at a 38 percent clips.

Shade is scoring more points on fewer shots than her opponents, despite having a low field goal percentage. Shade has improved each year she has been at FIU, but it’s been most notable in her senior campaign next to Chinn.

In her junior season, Shade scored 339 points and needed 314 field goals to do so. This season, she has 345 points on 272 field goals. She has scored more points with 42 fewer shots, not to mention 71 fewer minutes and five fewer games.

Her strides as a shooter and scorer are encouraging to the future of FIU women’s basketball.

Going back to the prospect of Alvarado and Hudson, if Chinn can have them make a similar jump that Shade made in terms of shooting efficiency, then this team coupled with players that Chinn recruits could be on the road to rebuilding a program that could have been left for dead.

A 4-21 record will do that to you, and the 3-26 record from the season before is somehow worse.

While FIU women’s basketball hasn’t been a flagship program for the NCAA, it has been a rather good one.

Under former Head Coach Cindy Russo, FIU had a 22 consecutive win season and it is the home of the fifth all-time leading scorer in NCAA history, Jerica Coley.

So while the program hasn’t been University of Connecticut or Baylor University in terms of championship success, they have been a team that has competed and posted results.

It’s on Chinn to bring the program back up.

T-Time is a weekly FIU women’s basketball column. For commentary or suggestions email Giancarlo Navas at giancarlo.navas@fiusm.com.
SPORTS

The Beacon – Monday, February 22, 2016

The Panthers come close, lose in final stretch

DAVID DRUCKER
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The Panthers (12-15, 6-8 in C-USA) dropped their sixth game of their last seven contests Thursday, Feb. 18 in a 75-77 loss to the University of North Texas. Deckie Johnson scored a game-high 32 points to lead a UNT comeback and claim the upset win.

It would be difficult to tell why FIU struggled against the North Texas Mavericks. The Mavericks scored 16 of their 18 points in the final 90 seconds of the game.

The Panthers had 11 turnovers in the game, and the 15 percent shooting from long range was also the lowest of the season.

“FIU dominated the latter end of the first 20 minutes, outpacing the Mean Green 44-4 to close it out and gain a 37-35 advantage at the intermission,” Johnson said. “FIU lost its lead with 13-46 left in the game on a Mean Green dunk to put them up 49-48.

The Panthers answered with a 12-0 run, however, with six of those points coming from senior forward Davion Draper. With 6:04 left to play, FIU had a commanding 68-56 lead.

The Panthers absorbed a massive 20-7 run in the final minutes by UNT to close the lead. With FIU up 75-73 with 43 seconds left to play, senior forward Davion Draper was called for a charge and gave possession back to the Mean Green once again.

UNT’s Johnson then hit a game-winning three with 19 seconds left to down the Panthers 76-75.

Up next for FIU is their final leg of their second regionals, a year after reaching the College World Series. Mike Bianco is beginning his 16th season as the Rebels’ coach. Ole Miss twice and MSU once this season.

Ole Miss and FIU will play Saturday, Feb. 20 at 2 p.m.

Beginning line up for new baseball season

JOHN L. PITTS
Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal
TNS Staff

It’s warming up around here just in time for college baseball season to begin.

Ole Miss got started at 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19 in Oxford, opening a three-game weekend series against Florida International. Mississippi State’s first pitch against Florida International was swept out in the first round of the NCAA regionals, a year after reaching the College World Series. Mike Bianco is beginning his 16th season as the Rebels’ coach.

Florida was favored to win the SEC championship, over last year’s national runner-up Vanderbilt, in voting by league coaches released Thursday, with Texas A&M favored to win the SEC West. MSU was picked to finish fourth and Ole Miss fifth in the division.

The only player from either team on the preseason All-SEC team was Ole Miss shortstop Errol Robinson, voted to the second team.

Ole Miss and FIU will play Saturday, Feb. 20 at 1:30 p.m. and Sunday at noon.

MSU plays twice on Saturday, against South Dakota State and FAU, starting at noon, then against S.D. State at 3:30 p.m. Sunday.

Southern Miss’ The Golden Eagles, 36-18-1 last season, opened on Friday, Feb. 19 against Murray State. They will play Ole Miss twice and MSU once this season.

MEN’S BASKETBALL

When the average person thinks of professional wrestling, almost all of them think of something related to the WWE. Whether it’s The Rock’s immense stardom, John Cena’s theme song randomly playing in the middle of a video on Vine, or Randy Orton hitting an RKO out of nowhere, Vince McMahon’s World Wrestling Entertainment has a near-monopolistic hold of the wrestling industry.

It’s only natural, then, that the brand that people are familiar with is the one that everybody thinks is the best in the business. However, just because public perception says otherwise, many people who have taken the time to actually watch professional wrestling will tell you there are countless wrestling promotions around the globe that are more entertaining than WWE.

Myself included. It kind of frustrates me as somebody who has watched professional wrestling since I was a young kid that people believe WWE to be the highest quality product in the industry without ever even watching a match.

The list of alternatives are never ending, with the highest profile promotions including Total Nonstop Action wrestling, New Japan Pro Wrestling and, my personal favorite, King Of Horizon wrestling.

It’s no secret that WWE has higher ratings and more well-known stars than the aforementioned alternatives, but that doesn’t mean their matches are of a higher quality. WWE’s budget is through the roof, so they can put on a great show with firewworks and light shows, but that doesn’t hide the fact that the quality of wrestling is often times not up to par.

Even though their budget is nowhere near that of WWE, ROH consistently puts out the best product in the entire industry. Instead of focusing on scripted, PG promos and watered down storyline, WWE, ROH gives their athletes freedom to say what they want and wrestle to the best of their ability.

I recently had the opportunity to attend both a WWE show and an ROH show, and even though WWE’s budget allows them to put on an unmatchable spectacle, the ROH show was much more enjoyable. The matches were better, the crowd was a lot more invested in the show, and it was just overall a better pro wrestling atmosphere.

Another factor to consider is that WWE will often poach talent from ROH and other independent companies to beef up their roster. Many of these stars have made millions in the WWE were developed in ROH. That list includes, but is limited to, CM Punk, Daniel Bryan (a former WWE World Heavyweight Champion who recently retired due to head injuries), Seth Rollins (had a 220-day run as WWE champion before vacating the title due to injuries), and most recently “The Phenomenal One” AJ Styles, who has made a name for himself as arguably the best wrestler on the planet today.

All of these wrestlers either already became or are in the process of becoming, are just stars for WWE, but their extensive background in independent wrestling laid the foundation for them to perfect their craft. Very few wrestlers get their start in the WWE; they have to start somewhere, and while the average spectator may not realize it, the WWE wouldn’t be close to what it is today without taking established stars away from ROH and NJPW.

Even with WWE taking many of their top talents seemingly all the time, ROH still has a world class roster. ROH world champion Jay Lethal, former NFL offensive lineman Moose, “Big Mike” Elgin, the most exciting tag team on the planet known as the Young Bucks, are just a few of the incredible athletes that call ROH home and make the product as good as it is.

So while WWE has the most money and the fanciest shows, ROH (and many other promotions around the globe) often times offer a much better product. To me, seeing some of the best athletes on the planet given creative freedom without being held back by corporate demands and a PG rating is a heck of a lot more entertaining than a fancy soap opera with boring promos and spotty matches.

Jackson Spiwak is a monthly column about professional wrestling. For commentary and suggestions email Jacob Spiwak at jacob.spiwak@fiusm.com

WRESTLING

JAKE’S TAKES

SPIWAK
JACOB

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Baseball

Beginning line up for new baseball season

JOHN L. PITTS
Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal
TNS Staff

It’s warming up around here just in time for college baseball season to begin.

Ole Miss got started at 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19 in Oxford, opening a three-game weekend series against Florida International. Mississippi State’s first pitch against Florida International was swept out in the first round of the NCAA regionals, a year after reaching the College World Series. Mike Bianco is beginning his 16th season as the Rebels’ coach.

Florida was favored to win the SEC championship, over last year’s national runner-up Vanderbilt, in voting by league coaches released Thursday, with Texas A&M favored to win the SEC West. MSU was picked to finish fourth and Ole Miss fifth in the division.

The only player from either team on the preseason All-SEC team was Ole Miss shortstop Errol Robinson, voted to the second team.

Ole Miss and FIU will play Saturday, Feb. 20 at 1:30 p.m. and Sunday at noon.

MSU plays twice on Saturday, against South Dakota State and FAU, starting at noon, then against S.D. State at 3:30 p.m. Sunday.

Southern Miss: The Golden Eagles, 36-18-1 last season, opened on Friday, Feb. 19 against Murray State. They will play Ole Miss twice and MSU once this season.
Career Services at BBC will be hosting numerous events for students and alumni looking to prepare themselves for life after graduation.

Events for the remainder of February include programs focusing on strategies for procuring internships. In March, Career Services’ Career Readiness series will focus on various aspects of the career prep process. Career Readiness will teach students the skills relating to critical thinking and problem solving in the workplace, networking and branding using LinkedIn, leadership and professionalism in the office.

One particular event, the Professional Dining Etiquette Dinner, will be hosted in the WUC Ballrooms from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The purpose of this dinner is to prepare students for interviews that include a luncheon. The event includes a three course meal and covers dining etiquette such as napkin use, use of silverware and basic table manners.

Space is limited and students must register prior to attending.

Sexual orientation shouldn’t be a job factor

Cindy Brown, a development officer from Equality Florida and a widely admired figure in the LGBTQIA community of Miami-Dade County, came to FIU to address these concerns and how she is working to fight for the protection of their rights.

Her efforts began in 1992, when she organized a Miami AIDS Walk. Today, she works with Equality Florida to organize events, educate and advocate for the rights of LGBTQIA individuals.

Eighteen states have adopted a ban of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Three states have laws that may hinder the community’s chances of being hired in the workforce as well as the developments in Florida law that may hinder the community’s quality of life.

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