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VICTORIOUS!



PRADO-DENTON WIN UP PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT

By **DAMIAN GRASS**
Staff Writer

More than 3,800 FIU students voted in the Student Government Association elections April 5 and 6, to elect a new slate of council officials, which were announced on April 7.

With a waterfall of red, white and blue balloons and "Hail to the Chief" blasting through speakers, "The Pit" at University Park looked more like a U.S. presidential campaign victory party.

Alex Prado and Christine Denton stood in front of a cheering crowd as newly elected UP SGA president and vice president, respectively. The two will lead the SGA during the 2005-2006 school year.

Prado, a member of Pi Kappa Phi, was serenaded by a group of fraternity brothers shortly after the announcement ceremony.

"It feels amazing," Prado

shouted over the music. "I would have never been here if it weren't for my supporters."

Winning by only 234 votes, 1696 to 1462, over their opponents, Aurelio "PJ" Rivera and Chaz-Lit Droguett, Prado and Denton are eager to start their new jobs right away ... well just after a much awaited victory party.

"We're ready to start working, but first ... celebration!" Denton yelled along with a group of fans.

Prado and Denton are anxious to develop an off-campus meal plan with the Panthercard, establish a better relationship between the Student Athlete Advisory Council and SGA, create an all-faith room for prayer, prohibit the implementation of block tuition and protect the Florida Bright Futures scholarship program.

This platform won over many student, but Victoria Lerma,



WINNERS ANNOUNCED: Above, Alex Prado is picked up by supporters minutes after he was announced the winner. Tears ran down the faces of Aurelio Rivera and Chaz-Lit Droguett, who lost the election by 234 votes. **TOP PHOTO BY ALEX HERNANDEZ AND BOTTOM PHOTO BY JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON**

a senior and Rivera/Droguett supporter, worries that the winners will not focus on what is most needed.

"I hope (Prado) remembers that it's not all about sports," she said. "I hope he uses the money towards academic programs that really need it."

The students, however,

See **ELECTIONS**, page 2

SGA ELECTION RESULTS

ALEX PRADO
CHRISTINE DENTON
1, 696 VOTES

AURELIO "P.J." RIVERA
CHAZ-LIT DROGUETT
1, 462 VOTES

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • APRIL 11

FIU School of Music presents "New Music Ensemble": 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center Instrumental Hall
 SPC American Heritage Week begins
 Panther Rage General Meeting: 4 p.m.; GC 140

TUESDAY • APRIL 12

FIU School of Music presents "Master Choral": 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall
 SPC General Meeting: 3:30 p.m.; GC 140
 SPC Campus Entertainment presents "Karaoke Night": 8 p.m.; GC 140

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 13

FIU School of Music presents "Chamber Winds": 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall
 SPC Cinema Wednesdays presents "The films of Kevin Smith": Jersey Girl: 7 p.m. and 10 p.m., GC 140
 SGA General Meeting: 4 p.m.; GC 150.

THURSDAY • APRIL 14

FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center

FRIDAY • APRIL 15

"Undergraduate and Choreography IV Concert": New works by dance major students: All Day, VH-100 Dance Theatre
 FIU Golden Panthers Baseball hosts New Mexico State: 7 p.m.; University Park Baseball Field
 FIU School of Music presents "Opera Scenes": 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall
 FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center
 SPC Cinema Fridays and American Heritage presents "National Treasure": 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. at GC 140

SATURDAY • APRIL 16

"Undergraduate and Choreography IV Concert": New works by dance major students: All Day, VH-100 Dance Theatre
 FIU Golden Panthers Track & Field at the Gatorade Classic Meet: 9 a.m.; Coral Gables
 FIU Golden Panthers Tennis hosts USEF: 12 p.m.; University Park Tennis Courts
 FIU Golden Panthers Softball hosts a pair of double headers vs. Sun Belt Conference for UL Lafayette: 1 p.m.; University Park softball field
 FIU Golden Panthers Baseball hosts South Alabama: 1 p.m.; University Park baseball field
 FIU Theatre presents HAIR (directed by Wayne E. Robinson Jr.): 8 p.m.; Wertheim Performing Arts Center

SUNDAY • APRIL 17

FIU Golden Panthers Softball hosts a pair of double headers vs. Sun Belt Conference for UL Lafayette: 12 p.m.; University Park Softball Field
 FIU Golden Panthers Baseball hosts New Mexico State: 1 p.m.; University Park Baseball Field

- Compiled by Reuben Pereira
 beaconevents@yahoo.com

"Alfie" receives most rep at large votes

ELECTIONS, from page 1

didn't forget about the other candidates.

For UP Representatives at Large, Alfonso "Alfie" Leon won with 1,306 votes, Mari Cabrera with 1,242 votes and Omer "Bill" Buchanan III with 793 votes.

Marbely Hernandez and Arthur "AJ" Meyer each received over 700 votes to win their newly appointed roles as UP Lower Division Representatives.

"I am so excited," Hernandez said. "I can't wait to start working with teachers, students and organizations."

Armando Aragon was voted Architecture Representative with 82 percent of the votes, Nidia Cruz was voted Honors College Representative



SORORITY SUPPORT: Christine Denton was congratulated by her Alpha Xi Delta sisters after she and Prado were announced the winners. ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

with 68 percent and Judene Elesha Tulloch was voted Housing Representative with 54 percent.

While running unopposed, Cesar Quinzada received 69 votes for UP Graduate Student Repre-

sentative, Anthony Delgado with 237 votes for Arts and Sciences Representative and Carlos Velazco with 109 votes for Business Representative.

Other unopposed winners included Chereen de

Boehmler for Education Representative with 40 votes, Santiago Bermudez with 38 votes for Engineering Representative and Kimberly Castillo with 75 votes for Health and Urban Affairs Representative.

Athletic fee among highest in nation

By HARRY COLEMAN
 News Editor

Student athletic fees at FIU are 68 percent higher than the national average for Division I-A schools, according to the NCAA annual report *Revenues and Expenses of Intercollegiate Athletics*.

Under the budget, revealed on March 29, FIU students next year would pay \$10.1 million of the school's \$13.8 million athletic budget, or 73 percent.

"That is unusually high, and the magnitude concerns me," said Daniel Fulks, who compiles the NCAA annual report, in an interview with the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. "The national average is about 5 percent,"

he said.

Florida Atlantic University is facing the same issue. At FAU, student fees provide \$7.9 million of this year's \$10.87 million athletic budget, also 73 percent.

Last year, after a student vote, FIU raised the athletic fee by \$1.38, the maximum amount allowed following a student vote.

"We had to go to the students and they answered yes. As we continue to mature, it is my hope that our budget is dependent on an outside income," said Athletic Director Rick Mello. "If the students would not have agreed [on the raise], we would not be where we are today."

Students at FIU were providing the majority of athletic funds before football was added in 2002; the sport that forced the raise

in athletic fees in the last year. The football program averages a yearly cost of \$3 million, but revenues have fallen short every year.

Ticket sales provide an average of 27 percent of revenue at I-A schools, yet FIU expects to get less than 5 percent of its athletic revenue from ticket sales next year.

According to Mello, FIU generates 15 to 20 percent of its funding from ticket sales and outside funding, which include private donations.

The football program is the main reason the athletic fee went up last year according to Mello. Attendance at football games is still very low and years away from providing an income for the athletic department.

The program, which is entering its second transition season of I-A football,

failed to meet the mandatory 15,000 average last season. FIU averaged 10,095 in home attendance last season, falling short of the 15,000 mark.

"Since we are a new program, we don't have tradition to count on," Mello said. "I never told people that it was a quick fix. You can throw all the money you want, but tradition is not one of them."

Mello believes it will take a range between 20 and 25 years to create a football tradition at FIU.

"What we do today is for 25 years down the road. People have to understand that," Mello said. "Our students down the road, when they are alumni - 20 to 25 years from now, they will be amazed."

POLICEBEAT

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 27

A female student reported that she was visiting her sister's dorm room at University Park Towers. During her morning visit, an unknown persons removed her room key from her key ring. She stated that there were an extensive amount of people in the area surrounding her, yet no one could supply any information.

THURSDAY • MARCH 28

During spring break, an FIU employee stated that the Golden Panther Shuttle he drives from UPC to the CEAS building was damaged. According to him, he parked and secured the bus March 18 and discovered the damage on March 28. Officials say that an unknown person kicked the passenger side rear quarter panel and caused it to crack. The estimated total value of the damage is \$15,000. There are no suspect(s).

While a female student was not in her UP Apart-

ment room, an unknown person(s) entered it and removed her wallet which contained cash, credit cards and identification cards. The female student left the door unlocked while she went to do laundry.

SATURDAY • MARCH 30

A male student who parked his vehicle adjacent to Academic II in Biscayne Bay Campus reported that an unknown person(s) removed library books, a camping bag, a brief case and credit cards from his vehicle. A search of the area was conducted without results.

An FIU employee, who works at the Center for Engineering and Applied Sciences, reported that his cellular phone, a silver Motorola worth \$250, was stolen from Room #2237. An unknown individual(s) removed the phone from the lab, which only eight students are authorized by the lab manager to enter. There are no suspect(s).

- Compiled by Rodolfo Roman

BBC NEWS

April 11, 2005

WWW.BEACONNEWSPAPER.COM

The Beacon - 3

Over 500 students cast vote, Jean-Baptiste wins presidency

By ANA SANCHEZ
BBC Editor

It looks like the students at the Biscayne Bay Campus wanted to make a difference in this year's Student Government elections.

646 students voted, opposed to less than 100 students who voted last year.

Natki sha Jean-Baptiste was elected as the new president. She defeated Alina Balean by 172 votes.

Lemar Linton was elected as Jean-Baptiste's vice president; at BBC candidates for president and vice president do not run as one ticket, as they do at University Park Campus.

Last year, the BBC presidential candidate

ran unopposed. Some say the reason students voted this year was the candidates improved interaction with students and promotion campaigns.

"[We had a] bigger turnout this year. We did a better job at getting word out with flyers. The [voting] date was more visible," said Rafael Zapata, assistant director for Campus Life.



JEAN-BAPTISTE

Jean-Baptiste won with a 63.31 voting percentage over Balean.

Linton won with 418 votes, twice as many votes as his opponent, Casey McClendon.

"Our opponents put up a good campaign and we were surprised by the number of students that voted this year," said Linton.

Candidates held meetings with their supporters, presented their platform and interacted with students around campus to listen to their needs.

"From campaigning, I know that students here want more classes, better cafeteria food choices and extended cafeteria working hours," Linton said. "Students in housing are currently at a disadvantage because of this."

The first plan on Jean-Baptiste and Linton's agenda is to cut the number of positions in SGA to ensure a strong and stable board.

"I don't think all of [the positions] are relevant to BBC; for instance, we have a smaller population here," Linton said. "We don't need three reps. at large, and two can do the job for the population we have here."

SGA at BBC has to work in conjunction with the SGA at University Park to discuss issues concerning both campuses.

Linton has already begun talking to the new UP SGA President Alex Prado and Vice President Christine Denton about changes at BBC.

"We are very close friends - Alex, Christine and I. We were all peer advisors," Linton said.

Amanda Clegg won the representative at large position unopposed. Camilo Silva won as lower division representative.

After many attempts to contact Jean-Baptiste she would only state that she was "excited and ready for changes."

Jean-Baptiste was not willing to participate in an interview with *The Beacon* regarding her victory.

Pines Center students celebrate with cruise

By MICHAEL HAINES
Contributing Writer

This year's annual spring event sponsored by the Broward-Pines Student Government

Association brought together FIU students, alumni, employees and their guests on a Vegas-style casino cruise April 2.

The cruise departed

from the Broward County Courthouse on a trip along the New River in Ft. Lauderdale.

The casino opened its doors as the cruise left port. Games included

fake gambling such as craps, blackjack, Texas hold 'em poker and roulette. Broward County recently voted to allow slots in its pari-mutuel facilities, but there were none on this cruise.

Everyone onboard received a voucher for \$5,000 worth of chips. People with the most chips were awarded first, second and third place prizes.

Those who were not interested in gambling were entertained by the views of the houses along the New River and the Intracoastal Waterway.

The people in attendance savored an array of appetizers including coconut shrimp and Beef Wellington. For dinner, guests were served teriyaki chicken, tri-color tortellini in a tomato basil sauce, sides of medley of rice and green beans and a salad.

Food was displayed and served everywhere on board.

"We definitely weren't going to go hungry," said Karen Jensen, of the wide variety and amounts of foods on the cruise.

Tickets for Muvico



ROLL THOSE DICE!: The Student Government Association sponsored a one-day event for students from the Broward-Pines Center. Guests on board the cruise ship had a wide range of fake gambling games and a savory assortment of gourmet foods.

MICHAEL HAINES/THE BEACON

THIS WEEK AT BBC

MONDAY • APRIL 11

SPC Belly Dancing Class: 6 p.m.; WUC 155

TUESDAY • APRIL 12

SPC Ballroom Dancing: 6 p.m.; WUC 155
Biscayne Bay Film Society Series: 7 p.m.; Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre
Black Student Association Meeting: 7:30 p.m.; WUC Ballroom - Side A
Kemal Gekic in Concert: Selections of Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, And Liszt: 7 p.m.; Mary Ann Wolfe Theater

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 13

Amnesty International - Veterans for Peace lecture: 1 p.m.; WUC 155
SGA General Meeting: 3:30 p.m.; WUC 159
White Orchard Theatre Performance: 6 p.m.; Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre
Biscayne Bay Campus Lunch Club Lecture Series presents "Overcoming Time Poverty": Guest Speaker - Dr. Bill Quain: 12:30 p.m.; HM 129

THURSDAY • APRIL 14

Student Alumni Association Banquet: 12 p.m.; WUC 155
Catholic Student Association Weekly Mass: 12:30 p.m.; WUC 157
SPC Ballroom Dancing: 6 p.m.; WUC 155
Black Student Association Meeting: 6 p.m.; WUC 159
White Orchard Theatre Performance: 6 p.m.; Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre

FRIDAY • APRIL 15

SOC General Meeting: 4 p.m.; WUC 159
FIU Role-Players Meeting: 6 p.m.; WUC 159
White Orchard Theatre Performance: 6:30 p.m.; Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre
School of Hospitality & Tourism Management presents "Friday Luncheons": 11:45 a.m.; HM 129
Book Review Luncheon Series reviews "Cross Current" by Christine Kling: 12 p.m.

- Compiled by Reuben Pereira
beaconevents@yahoo.com

Theaters and Flamingo Gardens, calculators and airboat rides were raffled.

For Janet Fisher, guest of an FIU student, preferred a chocolate mousse layer cake over a prize she won.

"I've got to go downstairs and eat my dessert," she said, instead of checking the contents of the gift pack she won in the raffle.

The announcement of the top three gamblers capped off the evening.

Guest Merrick Kalan took the grand prize of a two-night stay at a Marriott hotel along with his incredible \$163,000 in winnings which came from playing roulette most of the night.

Ivy Siegel, a campus life employee, helped arrange

the event. According to Siegel, the cruise guests reflected the students of the Broward-Pines Center campus, a slightly older group with a median age of 30.

"We attract an older, working student body," said Siegel, of the Pines Center, which offers mostly morning and evening classes.

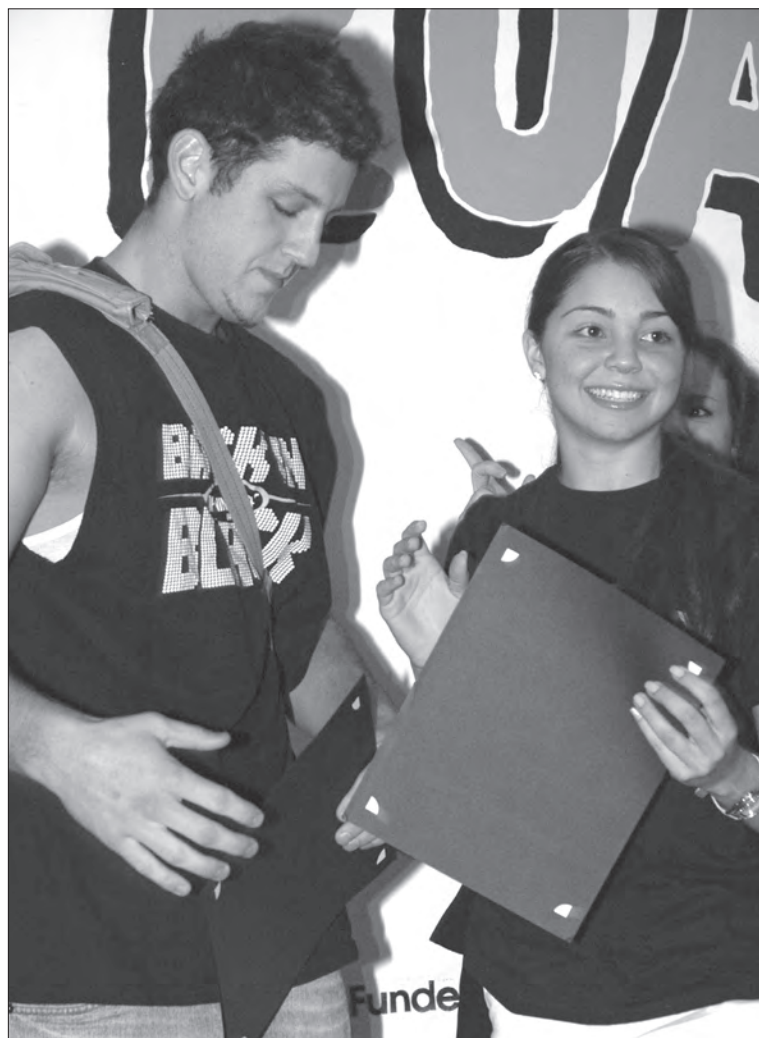
The Broward Pines Center is located on 17195 Sheridan St in Pembroke Pines.

The center targets working adult students, who take courses in the evenings and on Saturdays.

Approximately 2000 students are enrolled per semester. The campus offers undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.

CELEBRATION

2005 POST ELECTION PHOTOS



IT'S ALL OVER: SGA candidates and students celebrated on April 7 at the University Park Graham Center "Pit" after the election results were announced. (Above left) Alex Prado and Christine Denton supporters pat Prado on the back after being newly elected UP SGA president. (Top right) Prado and Denton anxiously await the election results. (Center right) Arthur "AJ" Meyer and Marbely Hernandez were newly announced the UP SGA lower division representatives. (Bottom) Nidia Cruz huddles for joy with supporters after winning Honors College representative.

ALL PHOTOS BY ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON



THE BEACON



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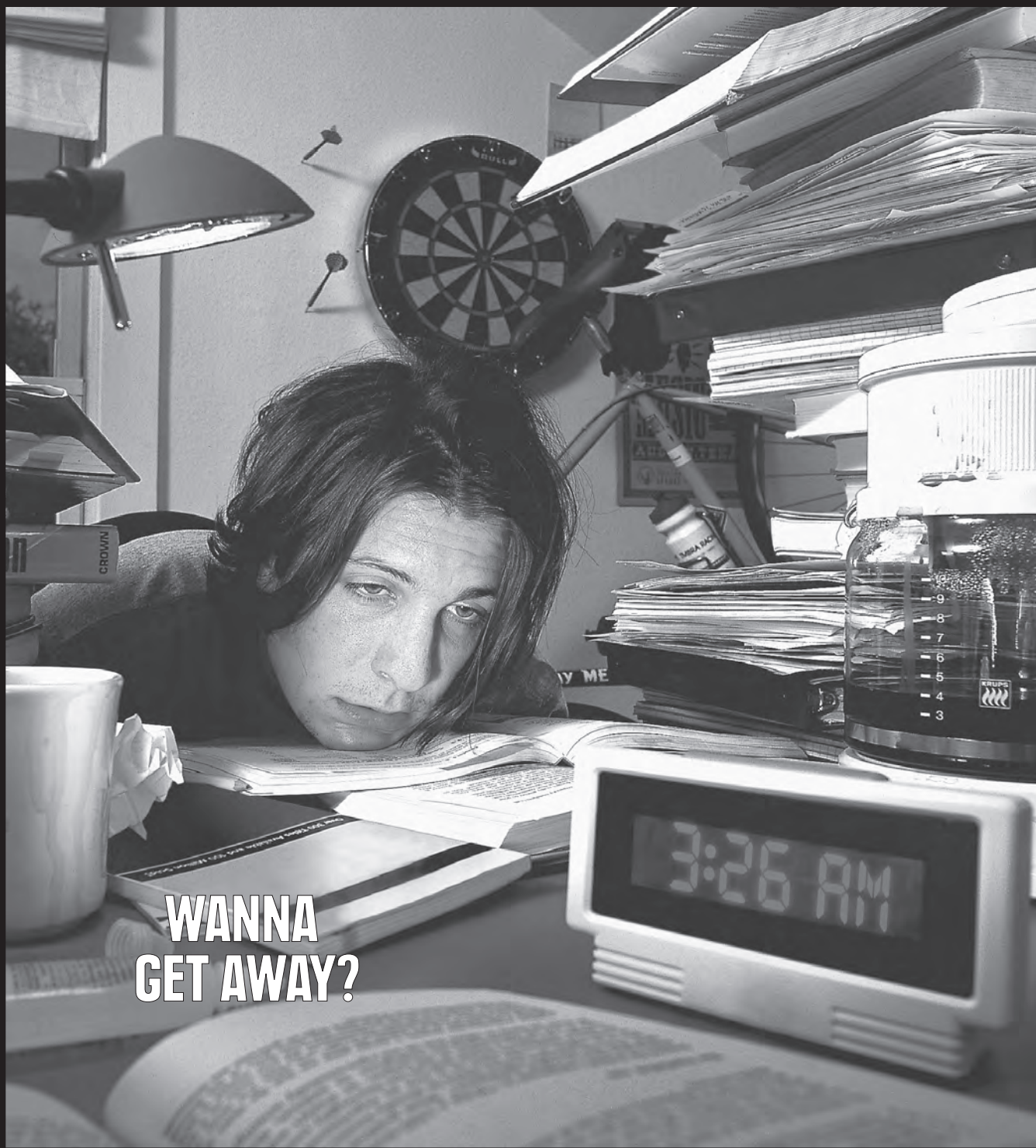
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Ft. Lauderdale
(22 miles to downtown Miami)

Harlingen/South Padre Island

Las Vegas

Los Angeles (LAX)

New Orleans

Oakland
(18 miles to downtown San Francisco)

Philadelphia

Phoenix

Providence
(A better way to Boston)

Reno/Tahoe

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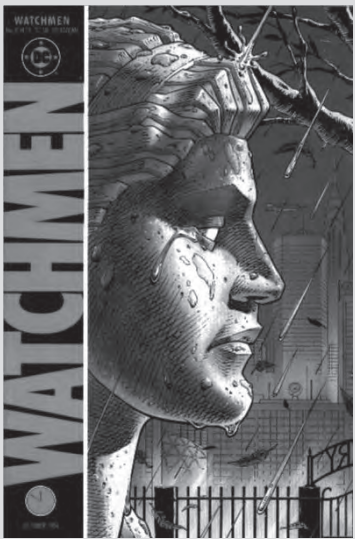
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OPINION

Alejandra Diaz Editor In Chief • John Lovell Managing Editor • Jessica Iser Opinion Editor

COMIC BOOKS: THE RETURN

ALAN MOORE'S WATCHMEN



COURTESY GRAPHIC

An ex-superhero called the Comedian is murdered. He is thrown out of a window from his high-rise apartment and falls to his death.

The police are clueless, and it is up to the psychopathic, vigilante-superhero, Rorschach, to find the murderer.

But, the conspiracy that leads to the Comedian's murder extends further than he ever imagined.

Is Rorschach in over his head?

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

Though I've loved to read since I was a kid, comic books in particular have always held a special place in my heart. Some of my best childhood memories feature me sitting beside my father on Buenos Aires buses on our way to piano class, with copies of "The Flash," "Uncanny X-Men" or the latest "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" cradled hungrily between my hands.

Growing up, I was the butt of jokes by other kids and adults who would label comics as "baby stuff," "books for the immature" (as an English teacher of mine once put it) and "plain garbage;" the argument was that anything with pictures and word bubbles could not capture the reality of everyday life.

It was to my surprise then that, walking through the University Park Bookstore a few weeks ago, I came across a table display marked "Graphic Novels" (a modern term for adult-oriented comic books), lined with some of the volumes I've loved so much for the past few years.

However, after the happy surprise and shock subsided, questions began to present themselves: What were comic books doing on display in a university bookstore? Nearby I could see a display of Maya Angelou's works, a collection of world classics and a poetry section. So why place those "immature" comic books smack in the middle of such a selection?

While thinking about this question for the last few weeks, I've been amazed to notice that unlike the reactions I received years ago, comic books are now being seen in a new light.

For the 2004 Miami-Dade College Book Festival, the annual print Mecca held at the school's downtown Wolfson Campus, the event's coordinating council chose none other than graphic novels as last year's theme.

Not only did they bring such acclaimed comic authors as Art Spiegelman and Marjane Satrapi to give lectures to packed audiences, but they also displayed the works of some of the most celebrated cartoonists in modern comic book history at the

campus's art museum.

So why the sudden interest in comic books?

People are discovering a sense of storytelling, emotions and even poetry that have been evident to me since I began reading this under-appreciated art form. Modern comic book and graphic novel writers introduce themes into their work that could easily be compared to Greek dramas and Victorian prose.

Satrapi and Spiegelman have introduced autobiographical sincerity to their pieces. The first was through "Persepolis," a chronicle of Satrapi's childhood in chaotic Iran during the revolutions of the 1980s. The second was through "Maus," a poignant account of Spiegelman's father's ordeals in German concentration camps, which became the only comic book to ever win a Pulitzer Prize.

In the '80s and early '90s, the three most popular writers of comic book fiction (Alan Moore, Frank Miller and Neil Gaiman) brought a true-life style to the form that shook the concepts of what a comic should be.

Moore's most famous contribution, "Watchmen," portrayed an alternate universe where superheroes seemed to cause more harm than good and were banned from saving the day (a theme borrowed by last

year's hit movie "The Incredibles") against the backdrop of an imminent nuclear showdown between Russia and the United States.

Miller's, "The Dark Knight Returns," reinvented the image of one of America's most famous heroes, Batman. Miller portrayed the caped crusader as an aging and violent vigilante in a world overrun by crime and insanity.

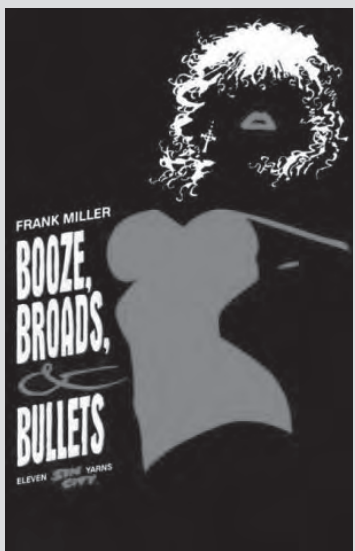
However, the series I cherish the most and consider to have elevated modern comic books to the status of literature is Neil Gaiman's "The Sandman."

Throughout its seven-year run, Gaiman packed his masterpiece about the King of Dreams and his dysfunctional family with enough literary, mythical, historical and religious references to fill a library of commentary. I found poetry encased in word bubbles, an epic story of love and death and sacrifice wrapped around an inker's pen.

A comic book is art about life the same way that books and movies are. I'm happy the form is making a comeback and reaching a new, wider audience.

Maybe now people will see the beauty I saw many years ago while I sat on those torn Buenos Aires bus seats on my way to piano class.

FRANK MILLER'S SIN CITY



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Gangsters, crooked cops, mobsters and hookers all come center stage in this ultra-violent comic book.

Author and illustrator Frank Miller employs a very unique style – pure black and white with no shades of grey.

His unique art brings the gritty underbelly of the crime-ridden Basin City to life with unbelievable style.

Recently adapted to a major motion picture, "Sin City" is achieving an unbelievable level of popularity.

NEIL GAIMAN'S SANDMAN



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Morpheus, the Lord of Dreams, is more than just a god, he is one of the Endless. The Endless are a family of supernatural beings who embody the fundamental aspects of the universe.

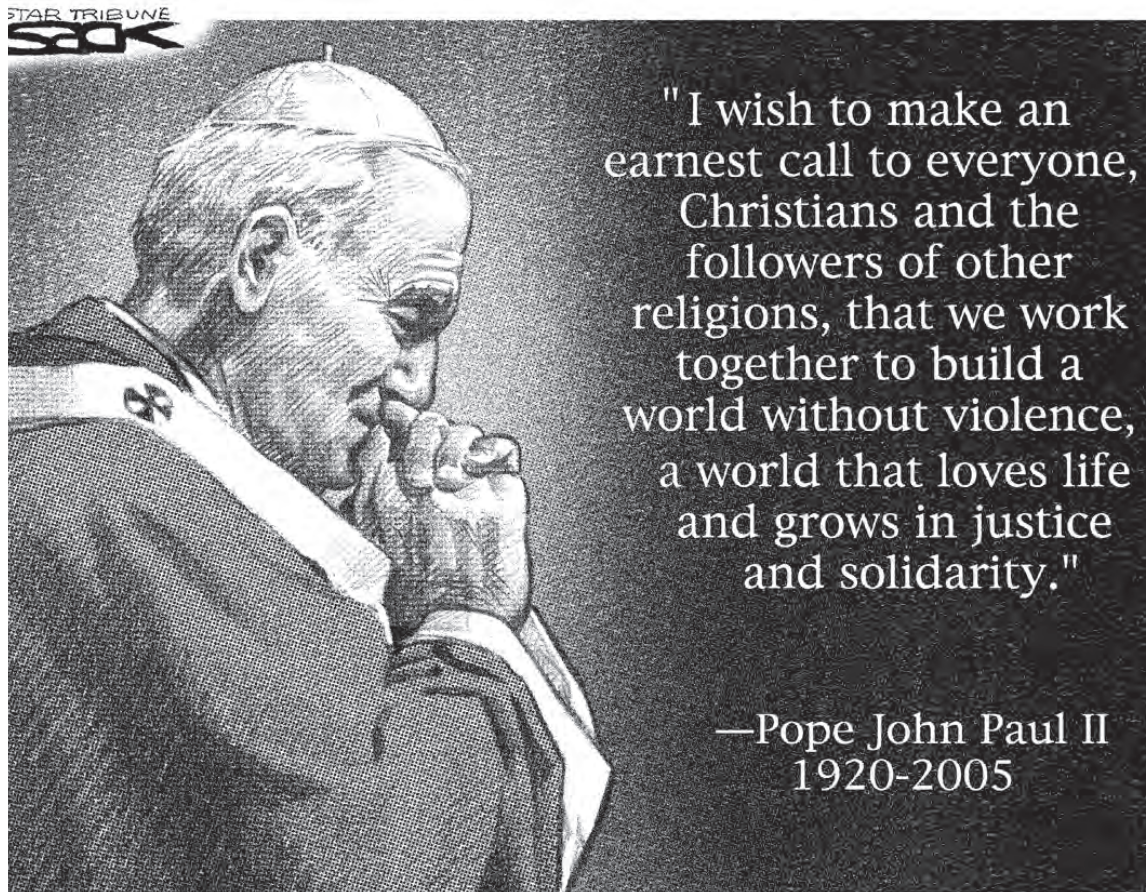
Neil Gaiman's "Sandman" is a collection of stories about Morpheus and his realm, the Dreaming.

With allusions to literature, mythology and history, Gaiman's "Sandman" reaches a level of sophistication that leaves other comics in the dust.

Summaries by Luis Nin



GRAPHIC BY LUIS NIN



"I wish to make an earnest call to everyone, Christians and the followers of other religions, that we work together to build a world without violence, a world that loves life and grows in justice and solidarity."

—Pope John Paul II
1920-2005

Death penalty, necessary justice for criminals found guilty

By **DARA BRAMSON**
Staff Writer

It may be the most ominous walk in the world. A mere 20 yards from a stark death row cell to the death chamber – arguably the loneliest and most despairing juncture in a human life.

Now, the moments preceding this annihilation of a life are bizarre, at best.

The accused is offered a last meal of his choice: lobster, steak, pheasant and truffles? He is kindly given some solace while talking to a spiritual advisor or religious leader of his faith.

Finally, he is offered an opportunity to unite with friends and loved ones.

Now, the convict solemnly takes his final walk down the bare hallway leading to the place where he knows, with an almost inescapable degree of certainty, he will take his last breath.

This is the place he will die.

How can a supposedly civilized society extract its justice from a system of vengeance like this? It's simple.

These people, convicted beyond a reasonable doubt, will die in a way that neither you nor I are ever likely to be so lucky, or entitled to experience.

Assorted methods are used across the country to carry out executions.

At Raiford, Florida's execution site, convicts enter the room and are strapped to a gurney.

After being asked if they have any last words and the final order from an official is given, they are injected with a painkiller and anesthesia to render them unconscious and ensure they feel absolutely no pain.

Statistics tell me that not a single executed convict has ever committed another crime. That is proof enough for me.

They drift off into a peaceful, painless slumber. A fatal mix of drugs then begins its journey into their veins to stop the heart and force the cessation of life.

It is quiet, peaceful, serene and absolutely painless. The offender's exodus from the world is a luxury.

A luxury that their victims – who may have begged for their lives, who may have been tortured or abused – never had.

There are those bleeding hearts who will tell you that the death penalty has never served as a deterrent to crime.

Statistics tell me that not a single executed convict has ever committed another crime. That is proof enough for me.

"The death penalty should not only be kept in place, but also enforced more quickly. Those sentenced to the death penalty that spend years, if not decades, on death row are spending taxpayers money to stay in almost luxurious prisons," said sophomore Lindsey Donaldson.

With the current state of criminology, DNA and forensic science, it is a virtual certainty that the convicted are, in reality, the perpetrators.

Of the prisoners exonerated in the last five years, the majority were convicted prior to the 1990s.

This fact proves that while there still may be a margin for error, it is dwindling with time and remarkable technological breakthroughs.

On Feb. 26, an article in

The Boston Globe stated that a group of lawmakers in Springfield are aiming to terminate Illinois' moratorium on death penalty executions.

Rather than adhere to the reasonable-doubt clause, they hope to abide instead by "guilt beyond any doubt" when formulating a conclusion during the penalty phase in a capitol case.

The lawmakers believe this will minimize the risk of putting the wrong person to death, because it will eliminate any chance of error, only sentencing those who have been proven guilty beyond any doubt to death.

In other words – those criminals with blood on their hands.

"The death penalty should be used in extreme cases only, like when a person has brutally killed people. But in reality, I don't think I'm for it. I think the worst punishment in life is to spend it in prison, thinking about the crime you've committed day in and day out," said junior Alethea Perez.

I truly hurt for that one man or woman wrongly accused and convicted. But, not nearly as much as I hurt for the victims and families of the Ted Bundys, John Wayne Gacys, Jeffrey Dahmers and Charles Mansons of the world.

As a result of our insistence that the rights of the accused weigh more than the rights of the victims, these men could be stalking you and your children right now.

So, which innocents have greater rights?

EDITORIAL

Upcoming election of Pope John Paul II's successor should be a difficult decision

As cardinals (members of the Roman Catholic Church's governing body) gather this week in Rome to elect a new pope following John Paul II's death on April 2, they will have to keep in mind that their successor's role in international affairs will be monitored not only by the world's one billion plus Catholics, but also by people of differing creeds and religious affiliations.

This is the result of Pope John Paul II's 26-year dedication to involvement in world politics and the special attention he gave the plight of third-world countries and authoritarian nations.

Rumors have spread that the cardinals may elect an African or South American pope to reflect Catholicism's rise in those parts of the globe, though many have been clamoring for a return to an Italian-born pontiff.

Whatever the ethnicity or nationality of the new pope, it is certain that the cardinals should be on the lookout for a man well-versed in current affairs and able to understand the major role he will play in his church, as well as outside.

Whereas John Paul II was criticized for his conservative leanings, often censoring or prohibiting the works of theologians who disagreed with him, the new pope should be aware of the massive availability of information, and be able to defend his own religion's views while introducing a forum for communication that could be beneficial to the church's ideological growth.

If anything, the new pope will definitely have a tough act to follow.

As the public face of Catholicism to "the city and the world," as the Catholic catechism puts it, John Paul II's successor will have to be able to handle the role of being the most powerful man on earth and having the spiritual humility such a position requires.

– Compiled by C. Joel Marino,
Senior Staff Writer

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER



Morning commuters: Michigan commuters got a pleasant surprise this week when an electronic highway sign told drivers on Interstate 75 that the speed limit was 100 mph and for them to "go go go." Not surprisingly, commuters got to work with time to spare.

LOSER



Stuffy nose: After a long day of hiking, a Hong Kong woman decided to wash her face in a nearby stream. Little did she know, a leech crawled up her nostril while she was washing up. It remained there for a month until she finally realized there was something up there other than snot.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How do you feel about the SGA election results?

- I agree with the SGA election results. The elected candidate's platforms and the changes they promise to bring to FIU seem reasonable.
- I don't agree with the results. I feel the other candidates were overlooked by the student body.
- What's SGA?
- I don't really care about the results. I voted for whomever gave me free food.
- Wow. The elections were this week?

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

Age of Aquarius

By **ALICIA BUSTAMANTE**
and **LUIS NIN**
Beacon Staff

The spirit of the '60s came alive as "Hair: The Musical" debuted at the Wertheim Center of the Performing Arts on Apr. 7.

As the last production of the University Park Theatre and Dance department's season, it was apparent that a lot of time and effort was placed in making the "love-rock musical" authentic and effectively lighthearted while thought provoking. This was accomplished most of the time.

"Hair" takes place during the Vietnam War and follows a group of hippies as they get high, make love and party. Claude (Aaron Millis), a young man from Oklahoma, has just moved into New York; he befriends a group of hippies and soon finds himself in the middle of the 1960's peace movement. But when Claude receives a draft letter in the mail, he knows that it's only a matter of time before the government sends him to Vietnam.

Unfortunately, audio problems made the plot difficult to follow, especially in the first half of the play.

While the chemistry felt solid, the miscommunication between the cast and the musical ensemble accompanying it led to some of the lowest points in the musical. Even in the title song, it took nearly an entire verse for the actors and musicians to get in sync. More audio malfunctions plagued the play. Accompaniment was either too loud or too soft; one actor's voice blaring or a soloist's voice barely audible.

The choreography of the musical numbers was also ineffective. While in theory it was elaborate and playful, its execution it was unintentionally chaotic. All the frantic energy of the opening acts only added to the confusion. However, many of these problems can be attributed to the fact that it was the opening night performance.

While performances were uneven at best, there were some wonderful moments in which the cast showed its strength as a unit. This was shown with the strong opening number "Age of Aquarius," "Let the Sunshine" and its somber reprise at the end of the show.

There were also standout personal performances from Millis as a confused and scared draft-dodger; Jonathan Gonzalez and Carlos "Casper" Machado as sexually charged comic relief. Sentell McDonald also provided some of the better and more soulful vocals.

The excellent costumes and stage design perfectly reflected the fashion and the feel of the era. Bell bottoms, headbands, halter tops and bare feet were in no short supply. The stage looked like a sort of mock playground. A tire swing hung off to the side of the stage, while a carousel spun in the middle. The actors effectively used the playground-like stage to convey the playful innocence of youth.

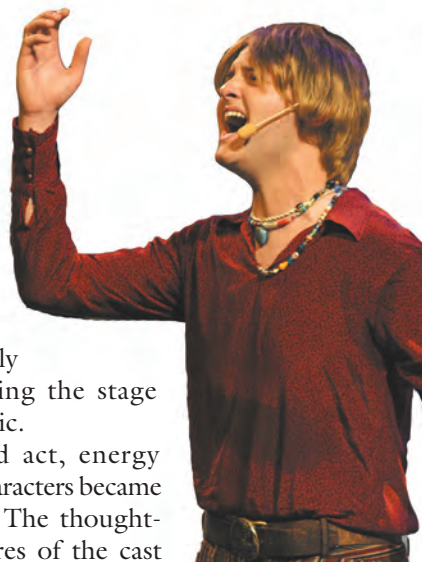
As the cast sang, "Let the Sunshine," the lights turned unbelievably bright and blinded the audience. The amazing lighting was particularly effective at making the stage incredibly dynamic.

In the second act, energy resurfaced and characters became more believable. The thoughtful yet blank stares of the cast in "Where Do I Go?" truly expressed a sense of longing for organization within chaos – a sentiment that many college students feel – making "Hair" a good choice of material for a college theatre department.

Ultimately, the powerful ending essentially showed the true talent of the cast and their dedication to the production. Not to mention "Let the Sunshine" is a hell of a catchy song.



ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON



GOOD MORNING STARSHINE: The opening night of "Hair: The Musical" was April 7 at Wertheim Performing Arts Center. The show featured Aaron Millis, Roger Benavides and Sarah Brohee as its main characters. The show will run until Apr 17 and show time is 8 p.m.
JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON



By **ANA SANCHEZ**
BBC Editor

With her sculpture, Yomarie Silva exhibits what she found on her search for perfect beauty. And what did she find? Nature.

In her photography, Isabel Moros-Rigau uses natural light to display the relationship that is most important to her – family.

These artists are among the 2005 graduates who received a Master of Fine Arts at FIU.

As part of the graduate program, the students must display a portfolio of their work in the Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum. Silva and Moros-Rigau had the opportunity to do so on April 1 at the reception of the annual MFA Spring Exhibition.

Before the reception, the students discussed their work during the Wednesday After Hours, a program in which the museum stays open an extra three hours after closing.

The MFA graduates gave a brief description of their work and then answered questions from peers and professors. Art history Professor Manuel Torres reflected on the progress his two students have made.

“They both have demonstrated real persistence and have pursued their own direction without letting anything distract them,” said Torres.

Organic leaves are a central part of Silva’s aluminum sculptures, because she believes that perfection is already in nature. One of her other pieces that followed the nature theme, displayed jellyfish tentacles painted on pillars with what looked like a copper fish.

During her demonstration, Silva was critical of her work and, explained that she lacked simplicity.

“We need to understand that the work is never finished. It does us no good to be complacent,” said Silva.

Moros-Rigau photographs under available natural light. Her subjects include her children – Kasper and Odyssea – and her nephew, Sebastian. She said in her description of her work, that self is “reflected in a relationship with the object of her photo.”

One of the photos show her daughter’s scraped knee. Another shows the children in a car with Kasper in a baby seat grabbing his foot with Odyssea sitting next to him. The photos are presented in black-framed squares.

“This is not like traditional family photographs,” said Moros-Rigau.

Along with the photos, she had a video that showed the children being themselves – hitting keys on a piano.

Geoffrey Olsen, associate professor for Art and Art History, most admires Moros-Rigau’s work for its realism and lack of artifice.

“Her agenda is to go against conventional family photographs. In that sense she is a realist. She shows [in

MFA 2005

Yomarie Silva and Isabel Moros-Rigau showcase their master works at FIU



EXEMPLARY EXHIBIT: Graduate students Yomarie Silva and Isabel Moros-Rigau displayed their artwork in the 2005 MFA Art Exhibit. Original art pieces included simple family photography and different sculptures. Themes of the works ranged from nature to underwater imagery painted on pillars. **ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON**

her photographs] her kids are not on their best behavior,” he said.

On opening night, Olsen congratulated the artists for their hard work.

Ana B. Galano, Silva’s personal friend, came to the reception. She was part of the first group to graduate from the MFA program in 2001.

“Yomarie has gone through a sophisticated, mature filter, and this is the end result; she’s focused,” said Galano.

To celebrate, family members and peers congratulated the artists, had some wine and took pictures with Silva and Moros-Rigau.

Silva reflected on her MFA degree and on her future by saying, “This

is our terminal degree and it is very important. What matters is what happens from here on. School is a safe place. I have to think about how I’m going to push myself forward to achieve what I have in mind – ideally of course.”

Moros-Rigau is appreciative of her years of study and conscious of FIU’s influence on her art.

“You want to feel you’re beyond the academic world and that you can survive beyond it. The best thing about art is actually doing it, but you have to realize that there is a lot out of your control and that you won’t be living a luxurious life, but certainly a happy one expressing yourself,” said Moros-Rigau.

LIFE!

5

SOME FAVORITE THINGS
BY SAMANTHA QUINON –
COPY MANAGER

1. STEPHIN MERRITT

As the frontman for several successful lo-fi indie pop bands, including The Magnetic Fields, The 6ths, The Gothic Archies and The Future Bible Heroes, Merritt is the golden boy of bands that start with “the.” His witty lyrics and distinct monotone never fail to put me in a good mood.

2. DAVID SEDARIS

You don’t have the most screwed up family/boyfriend/job ever. David Sedaris does. Sedaris has it worse than you do, and in his collections of autobiographical stories, he’ll tell you exactly why – in hilarious detail.

3. THE BOONDOCKS

Aaron McGruder’s weekly comic strip, which focuses on a group of African American kids growing up in white suburbia, is constantly pulled from papers for satirizing controversial subjects such as terrorism and drugs – proof it’s the only funny strip left.



THE BOONDOCKS COURTESY PHOTO

4. COLD STONE CREAMERY

This place makes the best ice cream! It’s crazy combinations of toppings and flavors, like Our Strawberry Blonde and Candy Land, make my mouth smile and my tummy dance.

5. “THE LAST KISS” (“L’ULTIMO BACIO”)

This Italian film weaves together the stories of couples trying to navigate love and fidelity. The acting is wonderfully honest, and it has one of the best, most believable endings I’ve seen in a long time.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ulysses S. Grant, president number 18, was arrested for speeding while driving a horse and buggy in Washington, DC. He had to pay a fine of \$20.00 and walk back to the White House.

– <http://www2.lhric.org/pocantico/presidents/know.htm>



the BEAT goes on...

Percussion concert stands out at Spring Music Festival

By **ELENA BELLON**
Staff Writer

FIU's School of Music Spring Music Festival is an event that deserves praise and merit from all.

Throughout the semester, a variety of events have taken place that portrayed different musicians performing different styles of music.

The musical genre you encounter will depend on the evening in which you attend.

Events include ensembles ranging from the FIU Big Band, Concert Choir, Wind Ensemble Compelling, harmonious and majestic, the performances delivered fall nothing short of purely impressive.

One of those performances was the Percussion Ensemble Concert, coordinated by Michael Launius and taking place in April 5.

The whole evening was comprised of five separate, yet equally engaging numbers.

The first was entitled "Celebration and Choral," composed by Neil DePonte.

This piece was fun, fast and set the mood for a lively and enjoyable night.

"Percussion Quartet," by Lukas Foss, was the second piece performed. It differed from the first in that it started off a little slower but soon picked up pace.

As soon as the listener thought the whole song was going to be slow, tempo picked up pace and the rest of the song went

flying by.

Following "Percussion Quartet," was "Between the Lines," a piece by Lynn Glassock which was more intricate and dramatic than the rest.

The sounds seemed to be more complex, yielding emotions a little deeper than those prompted by the first two numbers.

The reactions of the audience seemed unreal when they realized how much feeling the musicians possessed.

After a short intermission, piece number four, Josh Gottry's "Shifting Waves," was performed by both current students and alumni members.

This offered the chance for both current and former students to do what they love on stage and as a result, made for a fantastic piece of perfectly timed music.

Piece number five seemed to be the more animated of the pieces. "Transmaticisms," by Phillip J. Mikula, had twists, ups and downs and one could not pinpoint the direction the music was to take at any given point. The conclusion of this piece ended the evening on a perfect note, containing bits and pieces of every prior song.

The talent witnessed on stage Tuesday evening was striking and relentless. Students included Michelle Calvo, Zachary Eldridge, Teresa Flores, Ashley Vorsteg, Jennifer Perez and Raul Perez. Alumni members included Brandon Cruz, Felipe Diaz, Dennis Llinas and Adam Martinez.

It is undeniable that each musician possessed outstanding talent and passion for musicianship. Watching them perform with acute concentration and stamina, begged the question: "How did they do that?"

The listener could easily sense that timing was everything throughout the ensemble.

Never lagging behind or skipping a beat, the players were quite alert and precise.

It was obvious they knew their instruments well and anticipated every move and note necessary. To watch them perform was truly fascinating.

One does not need to be musically inclined or very learned in the area to know that Tuesday evening's performance was music at its best.

More performances showcasing the remaining ensembles will be taking place from now until June 5 in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.



DRUM ROLL PLEASE: The FIU's School of Music annual Spring Music Festival is currently underway and will continue throughout the rest of the Spring semester. One of the festival's events was the Percussion Ensemble Concert, coordinated by Michael Launius. The concert featured current percussion students, as well as alumni members.

ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

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EOE

Art museum director retires after 25 years

By GIOVANI BENITEZ
Staff Writer

She embraces brush strokes and sculptures, and for 25 years, her love of artwork and students has revealed a passion to teach, listen and serve.

Upon retirement, nothing will change. Dahlia Morgan's quarter-century legacy as director for FIU's Frost Art Museum ended when she retired in late March.

Under Morgan's leadership, the museum was home to nearly 200 exhibitions and hosted countless lectures by artists and museum directors like Pierre Rosenberg of France's Louvre Museum and Philippe de Montebello of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

But the passion to attract such speakers hasn't always been there. In fact, Morgan remembers the days and nights she couldn't even understand art.

"I realized as a young

person that I really didn't know what I was looking at," said Morgan, as she remembered some of the first pieces of art she tried to analyze.

"I didn't understand what I was seeing. At least I knew enough to know I was pretty ignorant."



MORGAN

That self-proclaimed ignorance took Morgan around the world, traveling to places like Europe where art and history blend.

"It just enhanced and enriched my education and my empathy and my understanding of the world. I'm very passionate about it," she said.

The university is equally passionate about her. In a memorandum to the university community, Provost and Executive Vice President Mark Rosenberg shared his personal remarks.

"FIU's robust art programs owe much to Dahlia Morgan, who single-handedly transformed a modest student

gallery into a world-class university art museum," Rosenberg wrote. "Dahlia has set the highest standard for helping us to build FIU."

Mercy Advocat, development and membership coordinator for the Frost Art Museum, agrees.

"My first impression was that she was such an entrepreneur. She created something out of nothing. She listened to our membership. By listening, she delivered," said Advocat, who worked with Morgan for 12 years.

It all started in the late 1970s, when FIU had an enrollment of less than 5,000 and two buildings made up the entire campus.

An adjunct professor at the time, Morgan was asked to take over the art museum, which was then called the Visual Arts Gallery.

With a budget of a mere \$2,000, Morgan immediately began planning a critics' lecture series. She personally made 500 phone calls inviting people to the first lecture.

That persistence and

determination made her a local celebrity in the art scene, and the response was immediate.

"From there, I was very fortunate because I got to know people ... Finally, those people came to me and said they thought we should start a support group for the museum. I made it my frenzy," Morgan said.

Years later, local newspapers took an interest in Morgan's life and career. In September 2003, *The Miami Herald* praised Morgan for the way she spoke to crowds, calling her "an academic with the attitude of a generous friend," and saying she "could just as easily be welcoming visitors into her living room to share a bowl of her favorite strawberry fruit salad."

"I think it's because I feel very directly to the art ... and I may have a gift to be able to communicate what the art is about to the general public in a manner that they can easily understand," Morgan said.

"There is a direct line between the object and the person. Sometimes

you just need an intermediary, and that's how I see myself. In order to understand the art, you must understand what the intention of the artist was, and that's where I come in."

Morgan's largest accomplishment is currently under construction: a 45,000 square foot museum being built across from the Wertheim Performing Arts Center. Morgan's fund raising techniques helped her raise over \$12 million for its development; she said the new four-story museum will be a historic addition to the campus.

"Every great university has a museum, and we had all the ingredients, because I was here long enough to understand the community and to have received so much community support. I convinced [the administration] that if we attempted a fund raising campaign for a major university museum, that we would be successful, and I was correct," Morgan said.

Her presence will always be felt in the new structure, as Morgan

said the members lounge will be in her name. On display: a list of all the visitors who were part of the original museum's nationally acclaimed lecture series.

Even though Morgan has decided to retire, she looks back at her years as director of the museum and remembers exactly why she took the job in the first place.

"Our student body is incredible. Kids from all over the world – so smart, so interesting, so wanting to learn that it made me a better professor and a better director and made it possible to fundraise, because the people could see that, and they wanted a great museum," Morgan said.

While her official tenure has ended, Morgan said she plans to stay in South Florida and continue to help the university in the development of the new Frost Art Museum, which is expected to open in early 2006.

In the meantime, the university has appointed Assistant Director Stacey de la Grana as acting director of the museum.

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Local band Legion hypes up crowd at Art Temple

By PAOLA ECHEGARAY
Contributing Writer

The Art Temple in Miami Beach is a gutted Jewish temple showcasing local musical talent.

Once serving the community as a place of worship, the temple now attracts a local young crowd with musical talent and artistic ability.

Charles Vasquez is responsible for gathering the talent, scouting local bands. "We're trying to build a good reputation. I go to see each of the bands play in their own homes before they come here," said Vasquez.

When I arrived at The Art Temple, the band performing was too forceful with their instruments and each musician seemed to be overpowering the other. It might have been the poor acoustics or their style, but whatever it was, I needed a break.

On my way out I bumped into Alex Garcia, the lead guitarist for Legion who had set up an interview the band.

I was introduced to FIU student Yahoteh Kokayi, an Everglades Hall

resident, who plays drums for Legion.

Kokayi said studying jazz performance influences the band's music even though the band mostly plays rock. Garry Rodriguez, who plays bass for Legion, has roots in jazz and plays plenty of *salsa* and *merengue*, said that Incubus mostly influences him.

Legion lead singer Leandro Onofrio who plays the piano and guitar described the band as a mix of Pearl Jam, Led Zeppelin, Nirvana and a bit of Creed - an influence the band downplays ("Miniscule, really," Onofrio assured me).

Legion plays powerful and emotional rock, not just through their instruments, but through their body language and facial expressions. It's hard not to because most of Legion's songs are social commentary about life in general, usually a passionate subject.

"I'm not a professional writer," said Onofrio. "I write randomly about random things. There are times when I can pour out eight songs and other times when I'm completely dry."

Rafael Moya, a Legion fan, said the

band's sound was "controlled."

"You could tell it was music and actual singing and not just shouting," said Moya. "There was range control."

After hearing such praise, I was afraid I was getting my hopes up too high, especially after hearing the band before Legion play. The difference in caliber was obvious from the first note.

Unlike the band before them, Legion played as one. It's not enough to say they played in unison because that's too obvious, but they were harmonious and complemented each other. No one was trying to overpower the other.

Unfortunately, you couldn't hear Onofrio very well, but you could make out his vocal range and control. Onofrio didn't compete with the instruments, but let himself be carried by the music.

The fact that they played well didn't blow me away; it was the passion with which they did so. It wasn't until the second song titled "Used To This" that I, along with the rest of the audience, was thoroughly impressed.

I surveyed the room and saw everyone staring intently at the band. Onofrio belted out long and soulful vocals that were difficult to hear, but with such emotion you could not help but be moved by what you could make out.

Garcia led smoothly into his solos, which he played with patience and control. He wasn't overpowered and did not try to overpower the band.

Rodriguez played the bass as an extension of his body. He twisted and writhed with the music and truly seemed to be enjoying it.

When I asked Vasquez what led him to ask Legion to perform at The Art Temple, he answered, "They were extremely professional in their set up and their songs are catchy. They're ready for radio."

Though catchy isn't the most beloved of adjectives to describe a rock band, it does describe one aspect of Legion's songs that grab and keep your attention.

So catch Legion at a venue near you before they make it to radio, and we're left with uncontrolled punk bands.

Chilli Pepper perfects solo voice on new record

By CARLOS JORDI
Staff Writer

Living under the influence of drugs has forced Red Hot Chili Peppers' guitarist, John Frusciante, to live a life of sorrow and reclusion.

After recording the album *Blood Sugar Sex Magic* in the early '90s, Frusciante quit the Chili Peppers and took up a shameful addiction to heroin. In the gloom of his addiction, Frusciante recorded his first two solo albums, *Niandra Lades & Usually Just A T Shirt* and *Smile From The Empty Streets That Hold You*.

Although the albums exhibited his soulful musical style, his depression and addiction were also evident. His musical potential was being held back by the use of drugs. These self-destructive habits, which were deteriorating his mind and body, nearly drove him to early death in the late 1990s.

Sick of the habit and the life he was leading, Frusciante kicked heroin and rejoined the Chili Peppers in 1998. The reunited Chili peppers recorded *Californication* and Frusciante was once again playing the music he loved.

After leaving behind the drugs that consumed him, Frusciante made up for

lost time by recording several albums at a relatively quick pace.

Within the last six months, Frusciante has had six consecutive album releases. His dedication has helped him create eclectic albums filled with originality. *The Will To Death*, *The DC EP*, *Automatic Writing*, *Inside Of Emptiness*, *A Sphere In The Heart Of Silence* and *Curtains* showcase six different sides of Frusciante.

Curtains, his latest release, is an acoustic masterpiece. The album is the perfect culmination of the last six months, instilled with fear, hope and love.

The songs are inspiring and, through references to his drug induced past, portray the afterlife as something that will free him.

The album, which is best classified as folk, presents Frusciante delving deep into a genre he is relatively unfamiliar with and emerging with eleven songs that paint pictures of his emotions and feelings. His guitar playing follows its usual path. Simple chord progressions and soulful licks allow the listener to feel what he is playing. Frusciante's guitar becomes a vessel that allows the listener to travel through his soul. Raw emotion is felt with every note played on the fret board of his guitar.



FRUSCIANTE FIRED UP: "Curtains," John Frusciante's latest release, features acoustic tracks varying from his work with The Red Hot Chili Peppers. The album is included in a series of records that Frusciante released in a short interval of time. COURTESY PHOTO

It is through albums like *Curtains* that Frusciante proves his musical affluence. The desire and love he holds toward his music is obvious and audible throughout the album. The feeling he incorporates into his art creates a magical intensity.

Although *Curtains* is the perfect ending to six months of consecutive

releases, there is no doubt that Frusciante will continue to release powerful music.

MUSIC

★★★★★
John Frusciante
Curtains

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BANKE, from page 1

gone up to see a launch at three or four in the morning," Banke said. "I'd drive back, pull on to campus at 9:15 a.m., park in the dorms and head to my 9:30 a.m. class. Those are some of the best memories of my life, those late night road trips."

Banke has seen 19 successful shuttle launches and been to over 40 attempts, so he's seen his fair share of miscues.

After a witnessing a failed launch at Kennedy Space Center in May of 2002, Banke was invited to go to a restaurant at Port Canaveral with other members of the press. He considered them his "buddies" even though they were over twice his age.

At the restaurant he was introduced to Rick Husband, future commander of STS-107, Space Shuttle Columbia, and talked to him for over two hours, picking his brain on different topics regarding space missions.

But tragedy struck on Feb. 1, 2003 when Columbia broke up during re-entry over Texas

en route to landing at Kennedy Space Center, after a successful 16-day mission, killing all seven crew members on board.

"He was the coolest, nicest man in the world," Banke said. "It was tough, man, when that bird failed on the way home. It's different. I knew a guy that's up there."

Even more touching, Banke received an e-mail from Husband, while Husband was in space.

"I sent him an e-mail two

weeks before [the Columbia] launch saying 'good luck' and stuff," Banke said. "Sure enough, four days into the [mission] I got an e-mail back from him saying, 'Can't write long, but I got your e-mail and just wanted to say thanks. We're up here having a great time.' And I was like, wow that [e-mail] is from space."

Baseball, however, is still Banke's first love, but it sometimes prevents him from pursuing his other interests.

"It takes up so much time,"

Banke said. "If I don't do [the things I want to do] in the precious time I have in the summer, it's not gonna get done until the next summer. [They] just get pushed back, and sometimes different things just come up, like summer baseball or the money's not there."

Ask around the clubhouse, and anyone can tell you a story about Banke.

"He's one of the best teammates I've ever had. We have the same major, so when I came

to FIU, he helped me out with what classes to pick and helped me study," said senior pitcher David Asher.

"I admire Jon. I think he leads by example ... He's got a very dry sense on humor that keeps [the team] amused," said junior relief pitcher Frank Gonzalez.

Is there anything Banke doesn't do well?

"I don't paint," Banke said. "But I am learning to play the guitar, even though I'm struggling with it a bit."



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Athletes should receive monthly stipend

OREKHOV, from page 16

on to the athletes. But, they continuously make that claim. On "Outside the Lines," an ESPN program, the NCAA President Myles Brand explained that only 12 or so athletic programs are able to break even, when it comes to revenue. He also mentioned that the NCAA's annual revenue is not as great as often perceived.

It sounds comical, especially when you hear that CBS and NCAA have just agreed on a \$6 billion, an 11-year contract that will expand the network's exclusive right to televise the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, according to CNN.

That is approximately \$545 million that NCAA will earn per year.

Plus, all the revenue that is made from the football bowl games and television contracts cannot be ignored.

We're not talking about making these student-athletes millionaires, but giving them a reasonable monthly stipend of around \$500, which would help them survive college life.

This is a very difficult subject and it can be argued either way. The simplified version of the NCAA's main argument against wages for student athletes is that the athletes are getting a free education and that playing sports in college is not a profession or a business.

College sports are only entertainment for the viewers and fans. It is not as fun as the outsiders perceive it to be, just like in professional sports.

NCAA athletes devote all their energy to this business. Anyone who knows first hand about college athletics knows that it is a tough job and not just a game.

Education enough pay for student-athletes

GONZALEZ, from page 16

degree in three years.

Even though Williams can barely walk, he has his degree, and that stays with him for the rest of his life.

By paying college athletes, the point is being completely missed.

The purpose of giving them scholarships is so they can attend a university and study.

A very small percentage of college athletes actually make it pro. We need to keep the players' minds on their books, not money.

You can argue that professional sports have been tarnished in some way during recent years.

The influx of high school basketball players jumping to the NBA has become preposterous.

Pro scouts are looking at kids in middle school to someday get them on their team.

When those kids go to high school, do you think they're going to worry about how well they do on their SATs?

They're going to get an easy ride through high school, jump straight to the pros and be another statistic for uneducated Americans (and you wonder where the stereotypes come from).

This money enterprise in sports keeps growing, and we need to put a stop to it before it gets out of control (if it already hasn't).

Student-athletes are given more than enough to make it through.

They don't need to be given a salary. We would completely ruin all that collegiate athletics stands for and ruin the minds of our next generation.

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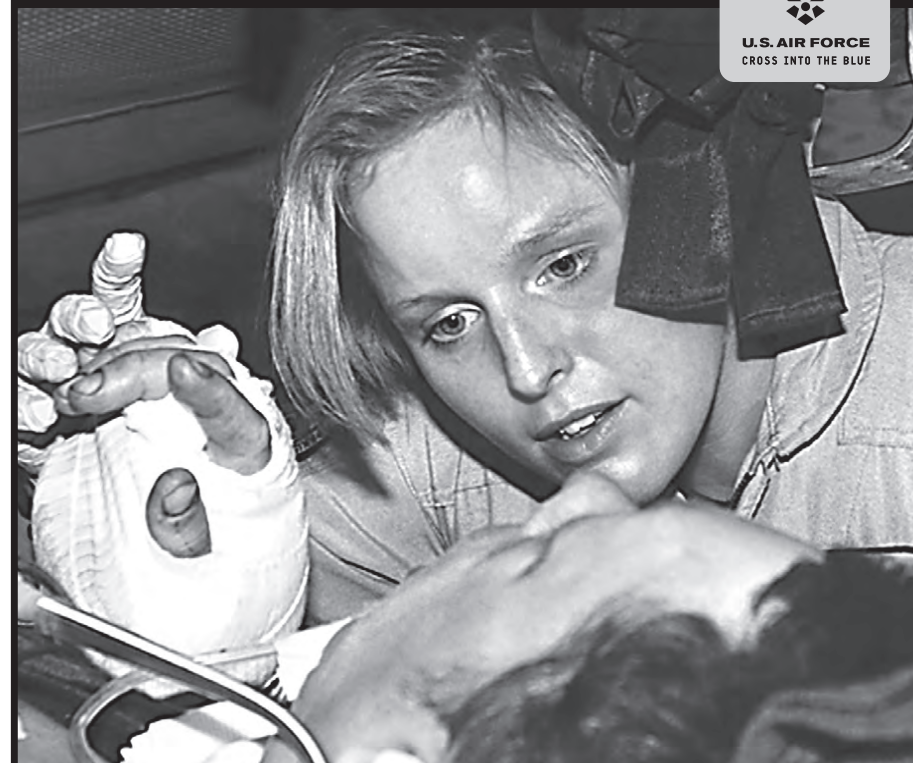
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UNFAIR?: NCAA president Myles Brand upholds tough standards. COURTESY PHOTO

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Versatile third baseman adapts to new setting

By **ALDEN GONZALEZ**
Staff Writer

With the month of March concluded, the FIU baseball team is off to one of its best starts in recent years.

The baseball program holds a 22-11 record and is geared toward a successful second half, thanks in large part to the productive play of newcomer Nick Cadena. After playing for Arizona State University under current assistant coach Chris Hollick, Cadena has had to deal with many new obstacles during his move to Miami.

Growing up in Phoenix, Cadena has openly accepted the challenges of a new city, new teammates and most of all, new positions.

This season Cadena has made the switch to third base and recently, catcher (a position he claims he hasn't played more than 20 innings his whole life).

It has been Cadena's flexibility and acceptance of new challenges that has made this season successful.

The Beacon recently sat down with FIU's third baseman to chat about baseball, life and everything surrounding them.

Q: What is something about your game that has always come naturally to you?

Definitely my competitiveness. I am a very hard worker, and I've always had that drive to want to succeed. It has really led to my success.

Q: What has been the toughest challenge for you thus far?

Basically running different positions. I was originally a shortstop, and then I got moved to right field and then third base. Now just recently with the injury to [Cody] Jacobs, I've had to [play catcher].

Q: What was it about FIU that made you decide to attend?

I know that they struggled last year and I could see that they really wanted to win. [Chris] Hollick had some very

good things to say about the program, and I was really intrigued.

Q: Of all the positions you've played, which is your favorite?

Right now I like third base. I'm getting much better at it. The thing about me is that I like challenges. Whenever something new comes up, I'm excited, and I want to do it. This whole [playing catcher] thing is new to me, but it was a challenge, and I was excited to take it on.

Q: Which teammate have you learned the most from since coming here?

Probably [junior first baseman] Mike Lopez. Like me, he's a real hard worker, and he's just a competitor. [He and I] would do anything to win.

Q: What is one thing Coach Danny Price has taught you?

Just enjoying the game again. Back at home I really wasn't having fun anymore, but Price taught me how to enjoy the game again. I am extremely thankful to all the coaches for bringing me here and giving me this opportunity.

Q: The biggest reason for this year's team's success is ...

Leadership and drive. The good thing about us is that it's not just one guy stepping up and being the leader. It's a total group effort and everybody has contributed. Danny Price also instills a lot of drive in us. He just gets us all on the same page.

Q: Who is your favorite baseball player?

Pete Rose. That guy gave a hundred percent everyday. He's what a baseball player should be.

Q: Whom do you most admire and why?

My mom and dad. They've gone through a lot and gave up a lot of things for me to be where I am. I also like the way they raised me.

Q: Who do you think is winning the World Series?

The [Boston] Red Sox.



SERVING LOVE: The women's tennis team beat FAU 7-0 April 3 in Boca Raton. Sophomore Paula Zabala (pictured) has earned Sun Belt Conference Women's Tennis Player of the Week twice this season. **ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON**



SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR: Nick Cadena is second on the team with a .357 batting average. He is also tied for second in stolen bases with 11. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

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Should NCAA athletes receive salaries?

COMMENTARY



By **NIKOLAY OREKHOV**
Assistant Sports Editor

Any time the topic of the NCAA comes up, it often deals with the issue of college boosters, illegal privileges and whether or not the college athletes should get paid.

If college athletes were paid, then many problems and illegal wrong doings would decrease substantially.

Let's make it clear right away. These students put forth maximum time and effort into the athletic programs, yet they are not rewarded. And someone will try to justify that as fair.

Give me a break. That is absolutely ridiculous! These student-athletes deserve much better. Yes, they get free education and that's good. But, while in school, they must also have the financial resources to be able to feed and clothe themselves and still have a chance to have some fun.

Now, to some this may sound a bit too dramatic and difficult to believe. It's not.

Former college athletes have told many stories about how difficult it was for them to make ends meet while in college.

One story that stands out the most, for me, is that of former UCLA standout line-backer Donnie Edwards, who currently plays for the San Diego Chargers.

While at UCLA, he was an All-American football player who was suspended for a game because he accepted a gift.

The gift wasn't a car with shiny rims on it, or an all expense paid trip out of town or any other perk that college athletes

receive, which you may have heard of on the news.

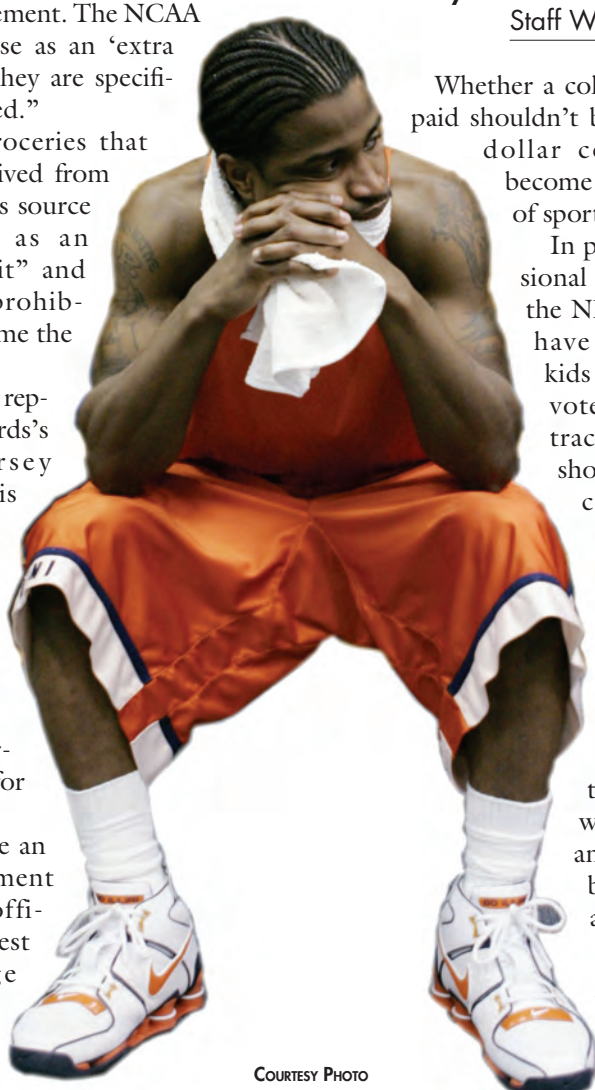
The gift was a couple of bags filled with groceries waiting at the doorstep of his room. It may sound silly, but he was suspended for one game. The incident was even investigated by the NCAA.

The current NCAA rules and regulations read: "DO NOT provide a student-athlete or friend any benefit or special arrangement. The NCAA considers these as an 'extra benefit' and they are specifically prohibited."

So, the groceries that Edwards received from an anonymous source were ruled as an "extra benefit" and specifically prohibited. Thus, came the punishment.

Meanwhile, replicas of Edwards's college jersey (with only his number) were hanging on racks in sporting good stores throughout California, which generated revenue for the NCAA.

It would be an absurd statement for NCAA officials to suggest that college athletics do not generate enough revenue to pass



COURTESY PHOTO

See **OREKHOV**, page 14

COMMENTARY



By **ALDEN GONZALEZ**
Staff Writer

Whether a college athlete gets paid shouldn't be an issue. This dollar commodity has become ugly in the world of sports.

In past years, professional associations like the NBA and the NFL have been granting kids who can barely vote lucrative contracts, seven-figure shoe deals and more commercialism than a prepubescent boy can handle.

The sports enterprise has grown to such monstrous proportions that there is just no way to stop the amount of money being thrown around.

The only halt put on the worldwide expenditures of sports has been at

the collegiate level - the only level of sports that is not dominated by money or "collective-bargaining."

College basketball's March Madness has become more popular than the NBA playoffs, because people like watching athletes play for the true joy of the game.

The ambiance of college sports simply wouldn't be the same if there were a dollar sign in front of it. It would no longer have that edge of playing for the love of the game.

I'll admit that the NCAA rules are strict, but that's the way it has to be. Today's sports world is so competitive that loopholes are constantly being searched to gain an edge on competition.

A plan has to be flawless so it doesn't get torn apart, and I believe that's the current NCAA plan.

The sports world should give a message for athletes to stay in school. We want athletes to get their degrees and then go pro, not completely skip college and go into a professional sport barely knowing algebra.

Nobody knows what can happen once they jump to the professional level.

In 2001, Duke University standout point guard Jay Williams got into a motorcycle accident and broke both of his legs.

It is doubtful whether he will ever be able to play basketball again.

After the accident, the Chicago Bulls (the team he was playing for at the time) bought out the remainder of Williams's contract, and he was left with not enough to live on for the rest of his life.

But you know what? Jay Williams went to school, was one of the greatest point guards at his school, was a first round draft pick and still finished his sociology

See **GONZALEZ**, page 14

Pitcher epitomizes modern-day Renaissance man

By **XAVIER VILLARMARZO**
Sports Editor

Most people say a Renaissance man no longer exists. Nowadays, more emphasis is put on being trained in one specific field, craft or subject instead of taking on various interests.

But when you see number 38 for the Golden Panthers take the mound, you realize that sometimes most people are wrong.

Jon Banke is not only a starting pitcher for the baseball team, the big lefty is also involved in other aspects of FIU.

Since coming to FIU in Fall 2003 as a transfer student from Liberty University in Virginia, Banke has contributed to quite a few organizations on campus.

He was a part of the Village Council for student housing, did the news and helped with promotions for WRGP Golden Panther Radio, was a staff writer for *The Beacon* and is currently the vice-president for the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

"I try to learn a little about everything," said Banke. "Just 'cause I figure, the more you know, the more you can

help out and stay around."

Banke doesn't limit his learning to FIU campus life. He is majoring in criminal justice and is also a fisherman, a free-diver and a skydiver. While in high school, Banke almost completed the course to get his pilot's license.

But says his biggest passion is space flight - a passion that began in the seventh grade.

"Through high school, that was the biggest aspect of my life," Banke said. "I was probably more into that than I was into baseball."

Until his freshman year of college, he wrote about space shuttle launchings for several different human space flight websites.

"I know a lot of people in [NASA]," Banke said. "I know some astronauts at Kennedy Space Center and some at Johnson Space Center [in Houston]."

Banke still loves the space program and would do just about anything to go see a launch.

"I've left the dorms in the middle of the night, had class the next day, but I've

See **BANKE**, page 13



SOUTHPAW: Lefty Jon Banke's interests go far beyond playing baseball. He likes fishing, free-diving, NASA and is also trying to learn guitar. **DANNY KAMBEI/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**