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EXPANDED MENU

Changes coming to University Park dining



OLD AND NEW: At the Subway food venue in the Graham Center (left), students wait long lines to be served. Behind the white walls at the Graham Center Atrium (bottom), the future Subway food venue is being constructed. The tiles have already been placed in. LEONCIO ALVAREZ (LEFT) AND EDDIE ZENG (BOTTOM)/THE BEACON



BY GEOFFREY ANDERSON JR.
Staff Writer

“Burger King: Coming Soon” reads the sign placed in front of the now-defunct Smoothie Time at University Park campus Graham Center. Similar signs announcing new campus food locations have recently appeared all over campus and are making students wonder when the new dining locales will open.

“The signs all say that these new restaurants are coming soon, but there haven’t been any exact dates announced,” said sophomore Benjamin Mancia. I had heard that there would be more restaurants when the GC Atrium opened, but students are still waiting.”

The delays in bringing about new dining venues have been due to contract details regarding Aramark Innovative Dining Solutions, FIU’s current food

services operator.

“Development was initially put off because the original Aramark contract was going to expire. The account went out to bid,” said Jeff Nadlman, resident district manager of food services.

The account was bade on by Aramark, Sodexho and Chartwells food services corporations. Aramark was awarded a new 10-year deal with a two year renewal option. The paperwork was finalized Jan. 17.

“Both parties negotiated in good faith and legal counsel took the time to review everything. It doesn’t happen overnight. It took seven months to negotiate the individual points of the deal,” Nadlman said.

According to Nadlman, an expanded Subway will be the first of several new restaurants opening. Although a Subway is already located in the GC main

food court, the restaurant is being relocated to the Atrium in order to provide more room for lines. The newly relocated eatery will be bigger and divided into two separate portions, both containing individual points of sale. While no specific opening dates are available on the new dining places, the expanded Subway is expected to open in late March.

“It’s a dual Subway,” Nadlman said. “By having two parts with separate points of sale, less time is spent waiting in line. The primary concern is the waiting time. During peak periods, we can operate both bays and during slower periods, one can be used.”

Besides the expanded Subway, the Atrium will also house Bene Pizza and Pasta.

The Italian eatery is a larger version of the restaurant that already appears in the Breezeway

Café. This larger variation will have more space for equipment, allowing for an expanded menu and shorter wait times.

Einstein Bros. Bagels is another chain opening in the Atrium this year. With a variety of bagels and sandwiches available, the soon-to-open eatery will have a diverse menu that students, like sophomore Ben Temeyer, find enjoyable.

“Einstein Bros Bagels is definitely a good idea for FIU. Being able to grab one of those delicious bagels with cream cheese before heading to class will be awesome,” Temeyer said.

Other students shared similar sentiments about the development of the Atrium’s food court.

“It’s about time that the Atrium is used for something besides studying. There has been nothing there since it opened. With a new food court, GC should be livelier and better than ever,” said senior Henry Wolfinger.

Although the GC Atrium has three new incoming restaurants, the GC Main Food Court will also be seeing several changes in the coming months. Burger King is currently undergoing design and has occupied Smoothie Time’s original location.

“Burger King is in its design phase. You’ll be seeing a wall in front of it as soon as construction starts,” Nadlman said.

So what happened to Smoothie Time?

“The owner [of the Smoothie Time] was willing to give up the space to the University for a Burger King,” noted Nadlman. Among other changes in the GC Main Food Court are the

additions of Café Bustelo and Miso Noodle and Sushi Bar and the expansion of Pollo Tropical. Café Bustelo is scheduled to replace Java City and Miso Noodle and Sushi Bar will take over Subway’s old location. To determine the dining habits of students, focus groups and web-based surveys are done every semester.

“Based on our findings, Café Bustelo is what students are looking for,” said Nadlman. “As for Miso, the place will have a sushi chef providing fresh sushi daily to students.”

Aside from dining renovations in GC, both the Green Library and the new Recreation Center are receiving dining additions as well. A fully-licensed Starbucks is on track to replace the current Java City in the library’s first floor.

“Right now, we’re looking at square footage to see if there is enough space for the Starbucks,” Nadlman said.

Camille’s Sidewalk Café, set to open last month in the Recreation Center, now faces an uncertain opening date.

When the restaurant does open, however, students will be treated to a wide variety of wraps, sandwiches and smoothies. As for Gracie’s Grill and the new Lakeview Hall, there are contractual options for dining expansions, but nothing has been finalized.

“There is a expansion option for Gracie’s Grill. There are also options for housing, but that is a university-wide decision,” Nadlman said.

President Maidique reveals retirement contract plans

BY ANA SANCHEZ
News Editor

President Modesto A. Maidique revealed to *The Miami Herald* that in consultation with his attorney, he is shopping around for a retirement plan, proposing a sum of \$250,000 in his new contract.

The proposal is yet to be reviewed by the Board of

Trustees.

Speaking through the office of Media Relations, President Maidique did not directly respond to the questions posed by *The Beacon*, however these were his responses:

“No, I have no plans to leave FIU and I do not expect this will be my last contract,” Maidique said.

President Maidique, along with his attorney, researched contracts

from other universities such as the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of Central Florida and Florida Atlantic University.

According to *The Miami Herald*, the proposed contract includes a year-long sabbatical, then, a return to FIU as a professor at his present salary which would make him the highest-paid, full-time professor by more than \$100,000.

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“Every major” represented at Career Fair

BY RINA LANKRY
Contributing Writer

Students from all majors marched up the stairs to the Wolfe University Center’s ballroom in search of career information and professional success.

The Office of Career Services at the Biscayne Bay Campus organized this year’s Career and Internship Fair Feb. 8. Students had an opportunity to speak with recruiters from 53 notable companies who were in attendance from a range of fields.

The companies which attracted the most attention were Telemundo, MTV Latin America, WSVN 7, The Disney College Program and government agencies such as the FBI and the State Department.

All of the companies eagerly greeted BBC’s diverse student population.

However, at the entrance to the fair, some students hesitated to enter because they were not dressed in business attire.

Dafney Claudia Reich, associate director of the Career Services department at BBC, said that this year employers were not too preoccupied about the dress code.

“Employers want to see quality and people dressed to impress,” Reich said. “It helps the students, but freshmen [and] sophomore students, who may or may not be looking for a job right now, want to see what a fair is like. If they come in jeans or shorts, [we] let them go in and see if maybe next time they will do that.”

The participating companies were pleased with the strong turnout.

Rolando Contreras, staffing officer for Miami-Dade Public Schools, received a big response for substitute teaching from students – many who weren’t education majors.

“It doesn’t matter what major your major is. You can be a teacher. You can teach math, you can teach science. Subject area tests qualify you to teach,” Contreras said.

This was new information for Heather Callam, a junior majoring in psychology. She came to the fair without a resume and was looking for a paid internship or job. After hearing that, she collected information on substitute teaching.

Last year, Costa Cruise Line hired Sandy Boukobza, an international student who is majoring in hospitality and management. Boukobza attended the fair this year out of curiosity.

“I think it’s excellent that the school brings the jobs to us,” Boukobza said. “Until you get your degree, you’re not sure and you’re still asking a lot of questions. It’s an opportunity for us as young people to [see how] the real world works. Even if it’s not for me, you become interested.”

Boukobza met with recruiters from Disney and is thinking about joining them in Orlando for six months. Telemundo and MTV’s internship programs were specifically targeted for mass communication majors, while companies like Carnival Cruise Lines and the Delano/Shore Club were recruiting hospitality management majors.

WSVN 7 and Telemundo accepted resumes for entry-level positions – even non-Spanish speakers were considered – but most students were directed to the company’s website to apply online for any available work and internship opportunities.

However, other organizations were interested in students with undecided majors and were offering paid job opportunities in different departments of their companies.

The Disney College Program and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency offered co-op opportunities for students to work full time one semester and go to school during another semester.

Government jobs seemed to attract many students. The FBI and State Department desks were bustling all day.

“We have something for every major.



CAREER CALL: Victor Rota (top right), executive team leader for Target, offered professional advice to Felipe Gonzalez and Valentin Termilien (top left), both finance majors. Laquisha George (left), Human Resources assistant for Levy Restaurant, introduced accounting major Rosavelle Henry, to the finance aspect of restaurants. **BETSY MARTINEZ/THE BEACON**

Foreign Service is in any field or any level from GED to PhD, as long as you pass the examination,” said Mark Boulware, who has been a diplomat for the U.S. Department of State for over 30 years.

His wife, Nora, was also recruiting. “It’s a huge variety. We have scientists, doctors, lawyers and engineers, she said. You can be a diplomat and represent the United States overseas.

Callam said that this was the most success-

ful Career Fair since she has been at FIU.

“I’ve been coming to the fair every year but this year, I felt that the reps were really interested in giving the students jobs. I was just coming to get free stuff, but FIU did a good job,” said Callam.

Students who weren’t able to attend the fair can get the list of companies who were represented and their contact information on the Career Services website at <http://career.fiu.edu>

Companies solicit necessary volunteer help

BY FERNANDO ANZOATEGUI
Contributing Writer

Booths were set up throughout the Wolfe University Center, poster boards describing several volunteer-work organizations were displayed at each table and hip-hop music was playing in the background.

That was the scene at the 2006 Biscayne Bay Campus’s Volunteer Fair, which took place Feb. 7.

The coordinator for the event was Yselande Pierre, also director for the Center of Leadership and Services.

Patty Temino, assistant director for the Center of Leadership, helped Pierre throughout the event.

The event took place to promote volunteer work for non-profit organizations trying to make a difference in both Miami-Dade and Broward County by giving back to the



George W. Bush, President of the U.S.

I call upon the people of the United State to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and to observe this month with appropriate activities and programs.

community.

Such organizations included Big Brother, Big Sister, North Miami Foundation for Senior Citizens’ Services, Miami Children’s Museum, All Aboard Tutoring Program and Alternative Spring Break, among others.

Considering that the population in South Florida sometimes displays an egoistic image and students can get caught up in their school work and personal lives, this was an event where the elderly and handicap – those who need help the most – were remembered.

Adam Effertz, a representative from Big Brother and Big Sister, was present and hoped

to get students involved.

“Our mission is to provide mentors for all children that need or want one in all of Dade County, through a professional-supported one [on] one relationship with the child,” Effertz said.

According to the Big Brother, Big Sister website, this program has even received national attention from President George W. Bush.

“I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities and to observe this month with appropriate activities and programs,” Bush said,

according to the site.

Another organization present was the North Miami Foundation for Senior Citizens’ Services, which is a private non-profit organization who’s mission is to allow senior citizens to remain independent in their own home for as long as possible.

“We do this through the provision of Social Services such as Meals on Wheels, transportation and volunteers to help them with any problems they might have,” said Sandi E. Dioli Kumm, spokesperson for the North Miami Foundation for Senior Citizens.

The All-Aboard Tutoring program was also present and

so was Carmen Ahmed, a representative for the All-Aboard Tutoring/Mentoring program.

“The All-Aboard Tutoring/Mentoring program is an early intervention educational program designed to improve the academic performance of at-risk children in order to prevent failure in kindergarten and first grade,” Ahmen said.

This volunteer group requires participants to attend a weekly hour-long session with a young child.

The meetings must total 24 hours in an entire school year.

This year’s Volunteer Fair did not attract many students, however, sophomore Liz Cervantes was looking to volunteer.

“I saw it when I was walking [through Panther Square] and I’m interested in community service because I used to be a tutor,” Cervantes said.

OPINION

Harry Coleman Editor in Chief • Leoncio Alvarez Managing Editor • Christopher Necuze Opinion Editor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Muslims' anger over derogatory cartoons depicting prophet justified

I was reading the article, "Muslim Communities Overreacts to Danish Comic Strip," regarding the Danish comic strip and how the Muslim community overreacted to that. As Muslims we have certain beliefs regarding all religions. The Muslim community would have been disgusted just as much if these cartoons represented other religious figures from other religions.

The disturbing part of the matter is that people today look over all Muslims as terrorists and Islam as a religion is the source. The reason that people felt offended by these cartoons is that the cartoons pictured Islam as a terrorist religion by emphasizing Prophet Mohammed as a terrorist.

How would other religions feel if that was the case to their religious figures? I do not want to justify the burning of the consulates and fatal demonstrations, which is mostly done by some uneducated people, because this is the minority percentage of the whole Islamic world. In addition, it is wrong to face this problem in such a way.

However, free speech

should not be exercised in such a racist way, showing that a group of people are all terrorist based on religion; whereas, in fact, other issues like the Holocaust were mentioned once by one of the leaders and the matter escalated all the way to the United Nations.

So it is racist to mention that, but such cartoons are not! How would people feel if these cartoons targeted Christian or Jewish religious figures? Wouldn't they feel the same? Again, that does not justify what was done over the matter. I think the Muslim world lost a lot of its ground on a just case by having some irresponsible acts by some unofficial parties.

Furthermore, I think the writer exaggerated by foreseeing a war on countries by terrorist groups like Hezbollah, which is a group fighting for their invaded land in Lebanon. I think that if someone wants to exercise this right, real terrorists should be targeted not religious figures.

-Abdullah J. Zakariya
Graduate student
Electrical Engineering
major

Although the writer of the article, presents an interesting point when he says that "terrorists have indeed become too influential," I have to ask myself where is he getting his information, it's almost like he's mishearing it through some kind of broken grapevine.

The writer begins with an adorable oratory, going on about how he could manage to extend himself to fathom the logic behind Muslims and terrorists (clearly one and the same in this article) wanting to voice their "twisted" defenses over blatant insults to one of their holiest religious figures.

The writer of the article claims to be bewildered at Muslim fanatics around the world starting up "a deadly fuss in protest of nothing else – but comic strips."

I would hate to bewilder the writer more, but I have to inform him that it's not just the evil Muslim fanatics who are protesting the Danish comic strips depicting Prophet Muhammad. To an uninformed person, it seems silly to get upset over political cartoons in a

daily newspaper, but it is forbidden, in the Muslim faith, to depict any of the Holy Prophets or God in a picture, drawing, painting, sketching and yes, even a simple little comic strip published in a national newspaper.

Is it really so bewildering to be offended and to actually protest about it? How is that petty bullying? The comic strips are not as simple as a drawing a picture at his desk and concealing the Prophet Muhammad's face.

There is a cartoon of Prophet Muhammad with devil horns, one depicting the Prophet and a lit bomb on his head and even one with the Prophet at the gates of heaven greeting suicide bombers with "stop, stop, we've run out of virgins."

You promote freedom of speech, but you have to keep in mind that there is also the freedom to react, the freedom to boycott and the freedom to protest.

-Rusol Yasin
junior
Pre-Med major

THE BEACON | Editorial

New dining services are welcomed despite delays



VERONICA FERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

Apparently, the Graham Center Atrium has a purpose other than to provide a quiet retreat from the noise and chicken smell that is in the GC main food court.

FIU is planning to add a variety of food services to the area this year, including an expanded Subway restaurant (relocated from the GC main food court), Bene Pizza and Pasta and an Einstein Bros. Bagels. In the food court that exists now we'll get a sushi restaurant called Miko, and, perhaps most exciting to students, a Burger King where a Smoothie Time once stood.

In addition to giving the Atrium a purpose other than pleasing the aesthetic sensibilities of FIU students, the addition of these locales

will fix the food court's two big faults: long lines and lack of variety. With two locations where students can go to buy food, lunchtime will certainly seem less crowded and will take a much shorter time.

The addition of a fresh sushi restaurant will no doubt be an improvement over the six bland-looking rolls offered in the Pantherstop. The expansion also allows students to have a healthier meal, a stark contrast to the Burger King that will open around the corner.

Although these changes will be a welcomed addition to GC, no date has been set for when they will take place. This has been an ongoing problem for dining services at FIU. Last March, the

University shared a similar plan for the Atrium, but it never came to fruition. In fact, the University seems to have been unsure of what to do with the Atrium since it was built. Ideas have ranged from spaces for DJs and bands to podiums for speeches. Mostly, it has served as a dance hall for the Salsa Kings and a quiet place to study when break dancers are not around blasting their music.

The initial excitement students may have felt at these promises were dulled by the long wait. Now that the plans have been approved, it looks as though the changes will add variety and life to GC. It is a shame, however, that students have had to wait so long for these changes.

Keeping love a couple's game

BY CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Opinion Editor

As a photo technician for the company CVS, I am blessed (note sarcasm) to work near the tabloid section of the store. This is the part of the store with an allure that attracts almost everyone.

Tabloids are nothing but a guilty pleasure that, no matter how vocal you are about the literature being nothing more than no good rubbish, you can't seem to keep yourself from reading the headlines on the covers or just outright picking up the whole publication.

The relationship of Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson was probably one of the most documented and publicized relationships of the recent past. Tabloid after tabloid – not to mention their own TV show, "Newlyweds: Nick and Jessica" – scrutinized every aspect of the

This isolation gave me and my partner the opportunity to create a relationship apart from the juvenile, immature dramas which ruled the high school social scene.

young couple's life together. It was only a matter of time before all of this attention would take its toll on the stability of their relationship.

Lachey and Simpson announced their divorce after months of supposed scandals, affairs, alien abductions – the whole works. The tabloids really outdid themselves this time and it's a shame, too, because even I, Mr. Skeptic himself, had them pegged as the real thing.

You don't have to be an internationally known super couple, nor must you have your personal life published among the pages of *OK!* and *Us Weekly* to suffer from the very same maladies which ruined the newlows and countless other couples.

Relationships that bask in the public eye, whether it be the eyes of a million or a few, have to deal with unnecessary pressure that those who keep their relationships discreet don't have to worry about.

This lesson was taught to me by my own personal experiences. Most, if not all, of my past relationships have been with women who did not attend my school. Though this isolated my significant other from my main base of friends, it also kept my relationship removed from the rumor mill that was high school.

This isolation gave me and my partner the opportunity to create a relationship apart from

See LOVE, page 5

Phone jammers excessive in theaters

BY CHRISTINE LIRIANO
Contributing Writer

Across the nation, the ringing of cell phones interrupts everything from concerts to plays, to weddings and funerals. They even ring in class while your professor is talking about how elements form bonds with each other, while you're trying to have a romantic evening at dinner with your sweetheart and while you're in the library trying to cram for an exam you have in an hour.

Nice requests, cell phone-free zones and even nasty looks can't seem to stop the ringing and the constant blabbering of cell-phone users.

If the phrase 'cell-phone jammer' seems unfamiliar to you, you may be hearing more of it within the next few months. Cell phone jammers are devices which block incoming and outgoing cellular signals.

Movie theater owners are trying to legalize these devices around the globe in order to assure movie goers a pleasant experience. Many have been petitioning the FCC to allow 'cell-phone jammers' to be legally used in theaters. Although it may seem like a good idea to block signals, much controversy lurks around it.

To me, blocking cell phone signals is not only crazy, but it's

For some movie theater owners, this petition to the FCC is the only way to ensure a ring-free and enjoyable movie-going experience.

an invasion of privacy. If they really want to make sure no one answers their cell phones during movie time, they should find a way that enforces it without clashing with our constitutional rights.

For some movie theater owners, this petition to the FCC is the only way to ensure a ring-free and enjoyable movie-going experience.

It shouldn't have to come to this. Responsible individuals should be able to handle their cell phones. I find no problem switching my phone on silent or vibrate to enjoy a movie. If it rings, I don't answer it, or if it vibrates and I want to answer it, I leave the theater. Unfortunately, we obviously can't rely on the rest of the world to do this, so people like me will have to suffer if these jammer devices are legalized.

If this petition to the FCC actually goes through, it'd be hard to completely enjoy my movie knowing that there might be an emergency at home and someone is trying to reach me.

If I were a parent and wanted to leave my children with the babysitter to go to the theaters,

I would want to be able to be reached at all times in case of an emergency. I don't think parents would approve of not being able to reach their children while they are out with some friends. Being able to make a phone call in a theater could be a matter of life and death in some cases.

One movie theater manager in South Florida, who wished to remain anonymous, stated "I think these signal jammers are a smart idea and, although they are deemed to be illegal, I can assure you that many movie theatres do use these devices already without letting anyone know they do."

A lot of change can be expected if the FCC grants permission for these 'cell-phone jammers' to be legal in movie theaters. Sooner or later, more and more places will be blocking signals. If more and more places the jammers, what's the point of owning a cell phone if you're not able to use it when you really need to? Hopefully, the gravity of this situation will make movie goers silence their cell phones upon entering a theater before any drastic measures have to be taken.

Issues of the heart require privacy

From LOVE, page 4

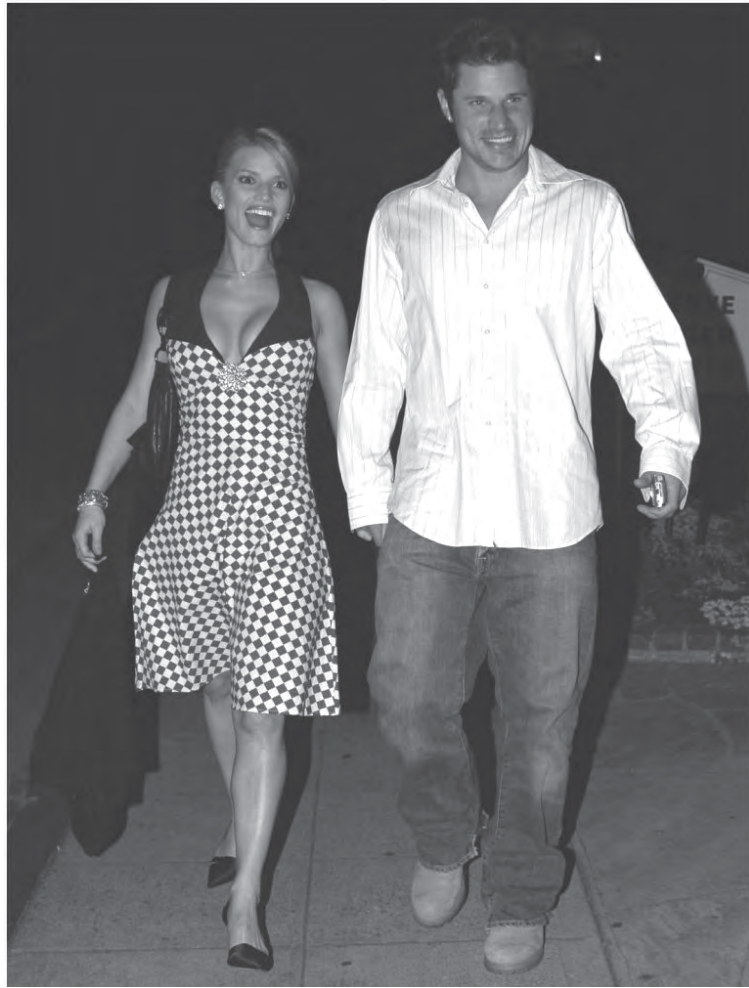
the juvenile, immature dramas that ruled the high school social scene. We were detached from the analysis of our peers, giving our relationship immunity from gossip – not to mention providing us with a never-ending source for conversation and talking points, seeing as how we both had our own separate lives.

This is where Lachey and Simpson and numerous other couples got it wrong. Though sharing the same base of friends may at first seem like a virtue, it can eventually prove to be a crutch, if not a demon, that destroys the relationship should the couple fail to have their own relationship aside from those they have with their peers.

I am not against double-dates or anything like that, if that's what you're thinking. All I am suggesting is that two people in a relationship should have just that: a relationship.

You can hang out together with your friends, just make sure that there is that 'alone time' where you can focus on each other – how you may want to interpret focus is totally up to you.

I encourage couples to seek a middle ground, as the other extreme can be equally disastrous. You must try to be at least acquainted with your partner's friends, as a failure to do so can eventually lead to jealousy,



FORMER COUPLE: Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey opened their hearts and home to America in MTV's hit TV show "Newlyweds: Nick and Jessica." They are no longer together. COURTESY PHOTO

which, needless to say, can be the kiss of death for any relationship, romantic or otherwise.

Romantic relationships can, at times, become too social, putting the relationship itself in jeopardy. Whether the relationship contains a star-stud-

ded cast or just regular people, over-exposure is a problem that eats away at any foundation. Lovers, this Valentine's Day protect what you have because it is yours and no one else's – and that's advice from someone who knows first-hand.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should the evangelicals be allowed to give possibly incendiary sermons on campus?

- Yes – It is their First Amendment right.

55%

- No – What they were saying was hurtful and derogatory.

6%

- No – The First Amendment only goes so far. Their rhetoric was meant to anger and could have incited a riot.

34%

- Yes – They had the courage to say what's right in an unwelcoming crowd.

5%

Total participants: 61
Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER



Teenage boys: A new government analysis shows that teenage girls are trying drugs and alcohol at higher rates than boys are. The study is believed to be biased, however, because it took into account the mickeys administered to the girls by the boys.

LOSER



Koranic toiletry: In Germany a man identified only as Manfred Van H. printed sheets of toilet paper with the sentence "Koran, the Holy Qur'aen" and sent them to mosques and different business locales. The man proposed to build a "memorial to all victims of Islamic terror" with the money from the toilet paper sales. If you really wanted to make money off that toilet paper, you should have sent it to Danish newspapers.

QUOTATIONATION

"FYI from FEMA."

– **An e-mail from the agency**, detailing the extent of the damage soon after the breaking of the levees in New Orleans. The e-mail and other documents show that news of the damage reached the White House much sooner than they might have led on.

"The mayor never was a Republican, he always was a liberal Democrat."

– **Thomas V. Ognibene**, New York City Council Republican leader, on Mayor Michael Bloomberg's political shift after his reelection. Many have noticed that he is leaning more to the left.

"Any weakness ... will result in a negative effect – not only for Israel, but also for the Palestinian people and for the international community."

– **Tzipi Livini**, Israeli Foreign Minister, on Russia's decision to invite Palestinian election winner Hamas to Moscow for talks. Israel has protested strongly to the decision.

"I heard that there would be more restaurants when the Graham Center Atrium opened, but students are still waiting."

– **Benjamin Mancia**, a sophomore, on dining services around the University Park.

Valentine's Day

Amor, love, *amour* – in every language it sounds passionate and heartfelt. Valentine's Day is constantly vilified and it's all a big misunderstanding. I constantly hear, "It's commercialized!" or "It's a depressing dumb holiday!" from people who don't know any better.

It all depends on how you look at Valentine's Day. If a person lacks a certain trust in love, then perhaps it's understandable, but anyone who recognizes the beauty in a holiday that celebrates what everyone yearns for in life should not turn his or her back on it.

Many people complain about being alone on Valentine's Day and spit on the very idea of Feb. 14 coming around. But let's face it – all you hypocrites out there – you may hate Valentine's Day this year, but when you meet that special someone, won't this holiday be the one you look forward to the most?

Love does not fall out of the sky, but I truly believe that everyone has a special someone out there and you just need to wait patiently for that person to come around. Mine came last year and for the first time in my life, this holiday will finally mean something to me.

Valentine's Day does not have to be commercially hyped. A big red heart filled with chocolates may be cheesy and not exactly what a girl may find romantic. If you are not a gift giving person, love can be shown through action, not materialism. A red

rose or kiss is enough to show one cares.

There is no need for jealousy to strike when you see that adorable couple having dinner in a cozy little restaurant while you stand outside in the cold. Why torture yourself like that? Find yourself a group of friends and make a night of it. Valentine's Day does not just have to be for lovers, friends can also enjoy each other's company and appreciate the kind of love they share for one another.

The huge misconception of Valentine's Day being strictly for couples needs to be changed. Society makes it seem as if being single is like having a disease, but it's not. It's perfectly OK if you have yet to find someone who intrigues you. I have gone through countless Valentines with no one to spend it with, but I never turned bitter to the charm of the holiday.

I understand many people argue that there should not be one specific day in the year set aside to express your love to someone – that it should be year-round. However, in that case, stop celebrating birthdays and anniversaries – it's the same concept. Just because there is one specific day dedicated to love does not mean a person cannot share their feelings year-round.

In the end, all I know is that Valentine's Day should spark care and affection rather than controversy. People need to simplify the complicated and enjoy some of the small things life has to offer.

The most ridiculous and pathetic of all holidays, by far, is Valentine's Day. As known to the cynics, it's a holiday perpetuated by greeting card companies in order to sell you crap you don't need for people you probably won't be dating come next year. Not to mention it's another reminder to the unpopular, unloved and unhygienic that they are still alone. It's high time that people forget this consumer-driven holiday existed and use the allotted money in a more noble way – to pay off late fees from your Christmas bills.

To explain the worthlessness of the holiday, let's consider the source. A bunch of confusing myths describe the origin of Valentine's Day, consisting of saints putting themselves up as martyrs and getting slaughtered. Talk about wearing your heart on your sleeve. What that has to do with doilies and glitter, you got me.

Speaking of which, Valentine's Day often reminds us of painful memories. Who among us doesn't remember making pointless cards out of construction paper for little Suzy, the most popular girl in class, only for her to walk right by your desk? Meanwhile, Gretchen the gargoyle has left you six cards, each of which contain the words "I love you" spelled out in her eyelashes.

Feb. 14 also gives the opportunity for genders to interact in classic stereotypical roles. It's another opportunity for men to look stupid and for women to act crazy.

For instance, the man will get the woman

some danc-ing gorilla that sings "Love Me Tender," which, in his mind, is the most hilarious thing since the Budweiser Super Bowl commercials. Then, upon receiving it, the stunned woman will shout, "You don't know me at all!" and retire to the bathroom, where she'll cry for 20 minutes. During this time, the man will drive to his local CVS, buy roses and some Russell Stover's chocolates to which the woman will give up her upset role with an "aww babe," and forgive. Check with your friends, this happens every year.

Speaking of Russell Stover, screw that guy. Every time you buy one of his delicious boxes of candy, one of his beer-guzzling, inbred grandchildren goes to college. Is that the kind of responsibility you want on your hands? I didn't think so.

OK, I'll give you that one – I don't really know the habits of Stover's grandchildren, but it still brings up a good point: Valentine's Day is just an excuse to spend money. If you have to spend \$200 at some fondue restaurant that you don't even like just to get from sex to love making, then you're with the wrong person.

In all sincerity, people who are in love shouldn't need just one day to express it. True love exists in the everyday eye-gazing, meaningful conversation and knowing your partner truly 'gets' you. If you can find this, you can celebrate that martyr's slaughter every day of the year.

No Way



BY ALICIA BUSTAMANTE
Assistant Life! Editor

Of Course



BY MICHELLE SANTISTEBAN
Life! Editor

Is it Worth It?

Boyfriends from hell get profiled, revealed

BY MICHELLE SANTISTEBAN
Life! Editor

If you thought you had a boyfriend worse than any other, you might want to read Justin Racz's "50 Boyfriends Worse Than Yours" and find yourself realizing you might be harboring a treasure.

Racz's compilation of profiles of 50 horrible boyfriends is a true enjoyment for anyone who has had an awful experience with a significant other. From the *Star Wars* fanatics to the guy in the closet, this book is sure to bring some laughs.

As the third book of the "Worse Than Yours" series – including "50 Jobs Worse Than Yours" and "50 Relatives Worse

Than Yours" – "50 Boyfriends Worse Than Yours" appears that it will be the most successful. Racz was able to capture the worst boyfriends possible.

Each profile contains the guy's benefits, drawbacks, looks and more. As you read page after page, each seems to be getting worse and worse.

One particular boyfriend who takes the cake is "Mr. Better-looking than you." He's handsome as can be and has all your friends jealous of you, yet he lacks a certain something all the ladies need – a complex we feel only we can fix.

Other fun profiles include that of a "Mr. Miami Beach," who is old enough to be your great grandfather, and "Hypo-

chondriac Al" who will never let you be the only one who's sick.

However, the book was short one "worse boyfriend." I would really have liked to read about a sports fanatic. All those guys out there who love sports more than their women have got to go.

The rest was pretty much covered. It's almost as if Racz had gone and dated each one of these horrible guys himself, for he profiled each one to a tee.

In the end, "50 Boyfriends Worse Than Yours" is full of wit and will leave you loving and appreciating your boyfriend more than you ever thought you did. If not, Racz has left Worse Boyfriend number 51 empty so you can fill out.



YIKES: "Worst Kisser Ever" is boyfriend number six and he needs to be taught to stop giving nasty tongue baths. **COURTESY PHOTO**

Valentine treat for your sweet

BY HARRY COLEMAN
Editor in Chief

Due to my extensive time at Café Charlotte – a restaurant located on 15th Street and Washington Avenue in South Beach – many of my friends ask me to give them a recipe of an easy dish to make that will impress their significant other.

One particular dish I love and doesn’t take much skill to prepare is the Argentine-style skirt steak. When cooked well and accompanied by a rich *chimichurri* sauce, the skirt steak (which is also called *entraña* or *churrasco*) is an excellent dish to cook for someone special on Valentine’s Day.

Because the dish is a steak, a mixed green salad goes well as a side. Meat with any kind of starch does not mix well, so I would avoid French fries or baked potatoes.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHIMICHURRI

- 6 tablespoons of fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons of fresh garlic
- 4 oz of olive oil
- 1 oz of white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon of oregano
- 1 teaspoon of hot pepper flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon of Kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon of crushed pepper

HOW TO PREPARE SKIRT STEAK

Buy two skirt steaks that have a length of approximately 10 inches.



MOUTH WATERING: A romantic dinner accompanied with a nice glass of wine will make your Valentine’s day memorable. **PAOLA COLEMAN/SPECIAL TO BEACON**

Lay them over a barbecue grill and sprinkle Kosher salt on top. Leave it on the grill until the blood begins to show on the topside. Once the blood begins to drip, flip over and cook to your desired taste. For a juicy tender steak, I recommend the steak be cooked medium or medium well.

HOW TO PREPARE CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

Chop the parsley and garlic into very small pieces. Once you do, mix all the ingredients in a bowl and let it settle

for a couple of hours before use. Add more salt if desired.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS DISH

After you have let the *chimichurri* settle and cooked the skirt steak, serve the steak folded at the tip and place the sauce on the side. Mix some green salad with diced tomatoes, balsamic vinegar, Greek Vinaigrette sauce, lemon and salt and you are ready to go. Enjoy the dish and let your significant other admire your skills.

— SPRING BREAK DESTINATIONS —

COSTA RICA

Small country packs big punch

Look for this spring break series in the Life! section every Monday issue through March 6.

BY SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

As spring break grows increasingly closer, many students may be realizing that the typical week in Cancun, or some such conventional location, is not quite what they are seeking.

As college students, we often look to be individualists and unique, so why not allow those qualities to carry over into our selection of a vacation spot? Although its attractions do make it a popular country, this untraditional spot is a great place to go.

Since spring break is a time to rest from the ordinary and explore the different, Costa Rica has the advantage of being called a truly original choice.

So what makes Costa Rica different? For starters, on the practical side, it is relatively economical. Debbie’s Caribbean Resort Reviews claims that airfare ranges from \$350-\$550 and that daily expense can be as low as \$25. Boots n All Travel goes so far as to say that a trip there can come to “half the cost of an identical trip to Cancun.”

Secondly, although locals of many other vacation areas may be hospitable people, the *ticos* of Costa Rica are especially known for being friendly



San Jose



El Teatro Nacional is one of the many cultural attractions in Costa Rica’s capital city.

and welcoming to foreigners.

As if that weren’t enough to make Costa Rica stand out among its competitors, within its 20,000 square miles of land are located nine volcanoes – a topographical feature not found simply anywhere. Hiking atop several of these volcanoes is only one

of the reasons Costa Rica can offer you an adventurous and exciting trip.

Other reasons would be surfing, snorkeling, scuba diving and kayaking, all available at Puerto Viejo de Talamanca, located on the coast of the

See COSTA, page 9

LIFE! 5

FIVE QUESTIONS OF INTEREST



NAME:
PHILLIP CHURCH

CURRENT
POSITION:
HEAD OF PERFORMANCE,
THEATRE DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY PARK

1. WHY DID YOU GET OUT OF BED THIS MORNING?

My two teenage boys and all the hope and possibility that they contain. Anyone would get up in the morning for them; a sense of needing to make a difference in the world to one person or a hundred people and to get others to make a difference so we all multiply the differences by many times more.

2. WHAT’S THE ONE THING THAT MAKES YOUR JOB AS A THEATRE PROFESSOR WORTHWHILE? WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE GETTING SOMETHING BACK?

The fact that theatre has no boundaries of discovery or exploration. One can lead young theatre students in any direction, all the directions that are studied independently in universities and colleges and they all lead toward the theatre experience.

At some point, a character will be in a film called *A Beautiful Mind* or *Apollo 13*. There isn’t a subject on earth that we should not be able to lead theatre students toward. That’s what they mean when they say art imitates life.

3. WHAT TV ACTOR OR PERSONALITY MAKES YOU CHANGE THE CHANNEL IMMEDIATELY?

Can’t answer that question. I don’t spend time switching on the television to programs or personalities that make me want to switch it to other channels. I just don’t have that kind of time. Basically, I watch only programs and people to which I would want to stay tuned.

4. IF YOU COULD BE SOMEONE ELSE FOR A DAY (FROM ANY TIME OR PLACE), WHO WOULD IT BE?

Laura Bush, so I could wield the kind of influence over President George Bush necessary to undo all the mistakes and damage that have been perpetrated!

5. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NEW TREND OF SEEING POLITICALLY AND/OR SOCIALLY ACTIVE CELEBRITIES?

To my mind, the greatest thing that has happened this decade is to see the gradual increase of people of influence, especially those with influence over young people step up and make a difference with their wealth and position, such as Bono, Bill and Melinda Gates, Angelina Jolie, Sean Penn and Robin Williams.

These are only a few celebrities who have brought about an unprecedented awareness concerning world issues such as hunger, AIDS, global warming, animal cruelty, war atrocities, ethnic discrimination and the desperate need for education in the third world.

- Compiled by Amanda Healy

Horror film destined to fail

BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

I wish I could say *Final Destination 3* (talk about a paradox) isn't your typical horror movie with over-the-top death sequences, a helpless heroine, an unstoppable killer and naked teenagers.

If you go into this movie actually expecting a quality film experience, then you obviously need a lesson in Hollywood 101.

The best compliment I can give this third installment in the franchise is that it offers a fun time regardless of the fact that the film is a mockery of one's mental capacity.

Final Destination 3 continues the same, tired and overused formula of its predecessors, i.e. a cliché ridden plot punctuated with death sequences of such extreme brutality that they are at once as shocking, as well as hilarious.

It's a testimony of how far we've come as a society. As the film opens, we know that we're about to witness the disaster parallel to the car accident and the air crash in the first two films.

The weapon of choice this time around: a roller coaster. I think it's safe to say that you might not feel like riding a roller coaster for some time to come.

Like the first two films, a character (preferably a hapless young girl) receives a premonition of a disaster and proceeds to watch her vision materialize. Wendy (Mary Elizabeth Winstead), a high school senior, is with a group of friends at a local carnival when she receives a vision of the roller coaster crashing and refuses to get on it.

Obviously, her vision comes true and we are treated to a sequence where teens are violently split in half, quartered, beheaded, splattered etc.

Later on, Wendy and her friend, Kevin (Ryan Merriman), learn that those who had survived the plane crash at the beginning of the first film died anyway, in the same order they were meant to die. Putting two and two together, Wendy realizes the same fate is in store for them.

Do Wendy's photos from the carnival predict the manner in which each will be killed off? It is surprisingly so.

For the next 100 minutes, each survivor is dispatched in some of the most excruciating,



SCARED TO DIE: *Final Destination 3* proves disappointing, since many horror flick clichés were used. **COURTESY PHOTO**

not to mention creative, deaths to ever grace the silver screen. There's an unfortunate drive-thru order of minced brains, a deliciously crispy tanning salon incident and more. The grim reaper must have pulled an all-nighter coming up with these ideas. Suddenly that rollercoaster ride looks a lot friendlier.

The only reason most people watch these films are for the deaths. Director James Wong knows this and that's what he planed to deliver. It's not the question of whom or why, but how a character dies. The audience just has to suspend disbelief, ignore the plot holes the size of Arnold Schwarzenegger's Hummer and check our brains at the door. How often do you find yourself trapped at a drive-thru, helplessly watching and waiting as an empty truck speeds down the highway toward you with the driver running behind it?

The biggest problem with *Final Destination 3* is that we know

who will die, the order in which they will die and even the way they die. It takes out some of the impact of the deaths and it reduces the film to a series of unfortunate events wrapped in flimsy gift wrap. The moment we see something even remotely resembling an image in one of Wendy's photographs, we begin plotting a character's death.

Bottom line: *Final Destination 3* is not a quality film going experience. Then again, I think you would know that. If you're interested in high school kids losing their heads and other parts of their anatomy, you'll enjoy yourself. One thing's for certain: The film makes the grim reaper proud.

FINAL DESTINATION 3



2 out of 4 stars

Starring: Mary E. Winstead
and Ryan Merriman
Director: James Wong

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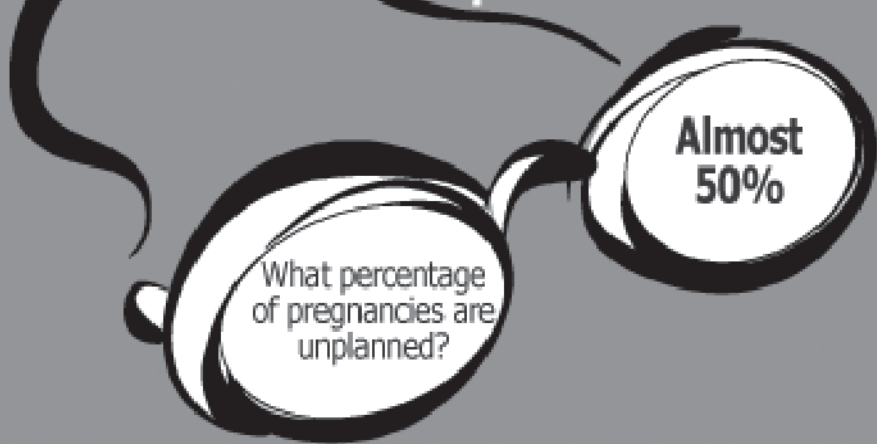
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“Garden of Central America” worth experience

From COSTA, page 7

Caribbean Sea. And, yet, in the midst of so much adventure, students can calm anxious parents by assuring them of Costa Rica’s title as one of the safest nations in Latin America.

San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica, is known as

the heart of the country’s culture and the source of the best nightlife offered. Visitors can get a taste of its cultural richness by noting its beautiful Spanish-style architecture and by checking out its Teatro Nacional – a historical site displaying ballets, operas, plays and art shows.

When it comes to lodging in the capital, hotels near the central park are convenient. This includes Hotel Hostel, which is considered to be student-friendly for many backpackers.

Playa Tamarindo is another colorful and highly attractive area. Numerous

sophisticated ethnic restaurants give it an air of class. Arco Iris is the place to stay in Playa Tamarindo if your style is more on the *avant-garde* side, while the Hotel Capitán Suizo offers a more luxurious ambiance.


Costa Rica is often called the “Garden of Central America” and well in keep-

ing with this nickname is the Monteverde Cloud Forest. This 25,000-acre forest is located right in the middle of the country and contains 2,500 plant species and over 600 animal species, making it well worth a visit for all nature lovers.

All these attractions

come together to make Costa Rica a worthwhile place for taking the time to experience.


This March, consider breaking the worn-out, spring break vacations mold and explore new options instead by treating yourself to a taste of *tico* culture.



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Forced turnovers help men’s basketball edge UALR Trojans

BY ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA
Staff Writer

The men’s basketball team got things started on the right foot as they used stiffling defense to win their first game during the Arkansas road trip.

The Golden Panthers (6-15, 3-6) never trailed as they held on to beat Arkansas-Little Rock (12-10, 5-5) 58-55, Feb. 9 at the Jack Stephens Center.

I v a n Almonte, for the second straight game came short of a double-double, managing to lead the visitors in scoring with 11 points and

seven rebounds. Johwen Villegas added nine points off three makes from behind the arc and Alan Guyton added eight points in 24 minutes of play.

The Trojans were held to 40 percent

shooting and gave the ball away 27 times. Despite out-shooting FIU from three-point range with six makes and out-rebounding their visitors 28-15, their offense was startled from the beginning as they managed to score just 14 points in the first half.

Elijah Muldrow led the way for the hosts with 21 points while De’Andre Eggins and Zack Wright added 11 and 10, respectively.

UALR leader Rashad Jones-Jennings was held in check with only five points and eight rebounds; he came into the game third in the country in rebounds per game at 12.2.

The Golden Panthers led 23-14 at the half and never trailed in their second road


victory of the season.

The Trojans scored just two points in the first eight minutes of play and finished the half having made just 22 percent of their shots.



TOUGH D: The Golden Panthers held Arkansas-Little Rock to 40 percent shooting for the game and 22 percent shooting for the first half.

CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON



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SPORTS FANATICS

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Maier will reach medal stand in winter games

MAIER, from page 12

he won it in '99, '00 and '01 and his wins in the Giant Slalom in '98, '00 and '01 also came with no surprise as he dominated the sport from top to bottom.

Those performances, especially in 2000 and 2001, solidified his place among the best ever.

And if it wasn't for a senior citizen, he would have kept his dominant streak and would have been the talk of the town in Park City during the 2002 Salt Lake City games.

While riding his motorcycle home from practice one night, he was hit by a 73 year-old driver who was making an illegal u-turn. It almost cost him his leg and for some time it looked as though he would never ski again.

It took him over a year, consequently missing the Salt Lake City games, but he was back and proved it with a bang.

The Austrian team put him into their provisional squad for the World

Championships in 2003 and the move paid off: he won the Super-G.

So why is it that no one is talking about him now? It could be that the U.S. media focuses solely on their local products.

However, these games are across the pond and very close to Austrian territory.

These cold-blooded madmen and madwomen from the Alps will take your breath away as you watch, on tape delay.

If you hadn't heard of the skiing equivalent of an old timer, you will have once the games end Feb. 26.

Plan on seeing plenty of Maier as he tries to reach the place that was wick- edly taken away from

him five years ago: the top of the medal's stand.

Maier will, after all, be immortalized next to the Italian, Tomba, as the best ever, even though, unlike Tomba, he will be traveling at nearly 80 mph on his skis.



MEDIA JUNKIE: U.S. skier Bode Miller is getting press coverage that should be going to other athletes. **KRT CAMPUS PHOTO**

Cross-town rival Miami defeats women's tennis

BY JOSHUA REY
Staff Writer

Playing tennis in a hurricane is nearly impossible. And as the 26th-ranked FIU tennis team found out Feb. 10, playing against the Hurricanes can be just as difficult. The University of Miami, ranked No. 9 in the country, defeated the Golden Panthers 7-0.

"It's our second match of the season and they're pretty good," said sophomore Marijana Cutuk. "Hopefully next semester we can play them in March or something, so that we can get into the flow."

FIU won its season debut Feb. 5, shutting out the Jacksonville Dolphins 7-0. But with two injured starters, the Golden Panthers could not keep the momentum going against Miami.

Senior Courtney Jonson held her own against UM's Audrey Banada, the 40th-ranked player in the country. Yelling "Come on!" like her countryman Lleyton Hewitt, the Australian mixed up the pace on her passing shots to break Banada's serve for a 4-4 first set tie before losing 6-4, 6-2.

"I came in with a game plan and it was going pretty well... but when the tight points came she was a bit tough out there for me," said Jonson.

Fellow senior Bruna Discordia showed off her self-proclaimed "Croatian backhand" against Caren Seenauth

at No. 6 singles.

Punishing the ball down the line from well behind the baseline, Discordia went for her shots but came up short, losing 6-3, 6-3.

"We definitely had some good energy in the singles," said Coach Ronni Bernstein. "As far as fighting and effort, I have no problems with the match."

Cutuk and Shilla D'Armas pushed their opponents to second-set tiebreakers in defeat. Down 1-6, 4-5, Cutuk constructed a brilliant point with two heavy backhands leading to an overhead and a forehand volley winner. She broke UM's Monika Dancevic and had a set point at 6-5, but could not extend the match to a third set.

"I kinda changed the rhythm a little bit more in the second set," Cutuk said. "I was playing to her backhand more because it was her weaker side."

D'Armas, FIU's No. 2 player, battled UM's Melissa Applebaum, whom she defeated during the pre-season. On a crucial break point late in the second set, D'Armas played aggressively but caught a tough break when Applebaum's forehand nipped the tape and dribbled over for a winner. Applebaum won 6-4, 7-6 (7-2).

The Golden Panthers return to the courts Feb. 17 and 19 with home matches against Central Florida and North Carolina State, respectively.

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SPORTS

12 – February 13, 2006

THE BEACON

www.beaconnewspaper.com

Skier looking to prove he is greatest of all time

COMMENTARY



BY ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA
Staff Writer

Alpine skiing is by far the hardest of all the events taking place in during the Winter Olympics in Turin this month. For any of those who disagree with me, travel to a downhill course and try to ski it.

A solid sheet of ice at an angle that would make a geometry teacher cringe is all that awaits you; if you go down it, you get a pat on the back from me. You are braver (and maybe dumber) than most.

An alpine skier who many are over-looking and who may walk away with three medals is Hermann “The Herminator” Maier, possibly one of the greatest skiers in a while, and yes, I am comparing him to greats Marc Giradelli, Alberto Tomba and Ingemar Stenmark.

One headline maker – for anyone that wasn’t on this sports planet over the last couple of weeks – was young American alpine skier Bode Miller, who became the new bad boy/media junkie in the weeks that led up to the first winter series in Europe since Albertville.

Undoubtedly, not too many people missed his comments on skiing drunk and proclaiming himself one of the best ever in an interview by *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Interestingly enough, in a day and age in which society – thanks in large part to the media – lives for moments like Miller’s, so we forget other stories

which impact the games more than any other.

That is, of course, until we tune in to NBC’s nightly primetime coverage.

I, for one, am not a big fan of their coverage. The fact that I can log onto a website and check who won the medals earlier in the day almost takes the fun out of watching it on tape delay.

Another thing we see a lot of, thanks to NBC’s Bob Costas, are all the sappy stories of how these athletes were shuttled to practice at 4:30 a.m. over distances that covered more than 100 miles, etc.

By the fifth story, I almost want to strangle Costas when he dishes the stories off to one of his fellow journalists. There is only so much that I can take, and to be honest, I would much rather watch actual sports coverage.

However, I, being the hypocrite that I am, will share a feel good story that has yet to grasp much attention.

In Europe, especially in Austria, Maier’s reputation supercedes that of a superstar. At his prime, he was the man.

At 25, he was unstoppable and came one mistake short of leaving Nagano with three gold medals.

His 51 career World Cup wins rank second most all-time. He won gold in two of three events in Nagano, the Super-G and Giant Slalom, but crashed in the big one, like seven of the 20 men he was racing against – the downhill.

That, and what was to come in 2001, kept him

from being the undisputable best ever.

Though his legacy began in Nagano eight years ago, he

now finds himself in a different spot at age 34. A position with little attention.

After Japan, Maier set the frigid world of skiing ablaze.

His best event was always the Super-G, but that didn’t stop him from taking his ice-cold blood to the other two events.

He won the World Cup in Super-G in ’98, ’99, ’00, and ’01.

The Downhill was his foe, but he won it in ’99, ’00 and ’01 and his wins in the

See MAIER,
page 11



KRT CAMPUS PHOTO

Guys remember stats and skin, not hearts and flowers

COMMENTARY



BY XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Sports Editor

[Note: This article originally ran in the Feb. 14, 2005 issue of *The Beacon*.]

How do sports tie in with Valentine’s Day? Well, it is no coincidence that Valentine’s Day is right in the middle of February. With the NFL season two weeks past and MLB spring training about a month away,

this is the slowest sports month of the year.

Now, I know what you’re thinking: “That idiot forgot about the NBA and NHL!”

Of course I didn’t, but who watches the NBA anyway? Honestly, can you name two people you know who would drop whatever they’re doing because the New York Knicks are playing the Houston Rockets?

And as for the NHL, can you even name six teams for me? I didn’t think so either.

When I asked my friend, Miguel, how sports and Valentine’s Day are connected, it led to this exchange:

Miguel: Why would you ask such a random question?

Me: Because Valentine’s Day is in 5 days.

Miguel: Oh [fecal matter]! Now, if I were to ask Miguel

how many passing yards Dan Marino had in his career, he’d answer 61,361 before I even finished the question. This is a dilemma that has bugged women for ages (or since the beginning of televised sporting events).

So when greeting card companies invented Valentine’s Day, they chose Feb. 14 with the hope that men’s minds would not be polluted by arbitrary sports statistics.

All they did was lump Valentine’s Day together with birthdays and anniversaries as things guys are most likely to forget about their significant other.

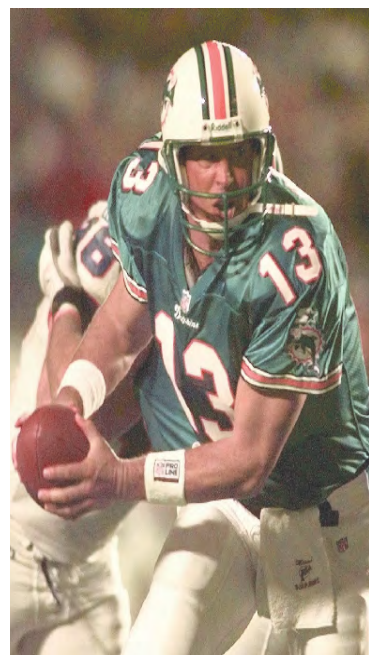
But why is it that guys can remember that Barry Bonds’s MLB debut was on May 30, 1986, but can’t remember their anniversary, even if it falls on the exact same day?

For one thing, neither Dan

Marino nor Barry Bonds have ever made a man stand outside a Victoria’s Secret holding shopping bags. They also have never asked a man if their new pants make them look fat. Nor have they ever gotten upset because you didn’t notice their new hair style.

The funny thing is that women don’t really care men forget those dates, even though it doesn’t seem like it. They know that the man must make up for it, which means that a plain gold bracelet becomes a diamond tennis bracelet.

The gift-giving, however, should go both ways, and if by some highly unlikely chance you girls forget Valentine’s Day, have no fear. We men are simple. Just cook for us in the nude. On second thought, screw the cooking.



DAN THE MAN: Dan Marino will never ask a man if his new pants make him look fat.

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