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IT'S OFFICIAL



CELEBRATION: Alfonso 'Alfie' Leon is carried by his fraternity members after being announced the new University Park Student Government Association president April 6.
CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

UP – Presidential ticket uncontested

BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

Alfonso "Alfie" Leon and Providence Okoye, who ran unopposed, were officially voted in as University Park Student Government Association president and vice president, receiving 1,539 votes, in a year that marked a significant decrease in voter turnout compared to previous elections.

More than 200 students, many of them campaigners, gathered at the Graham Center 'Pit' in support of the candidates. Leon, a member of the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity, was mobbed and serenaded by a large group of fraternity members after the results before being carried away to the lake facing the University Park Apartments, into which he was thrown as part of an annual tradition bestowed on the newly elected SGA president.

"I plan to get working as soon as possible. Right now, it feels fantastic," Leon said. "I'm going to be spending some quality time with my girlfriend, my friends and my [fraternity] brothers. She's been helping me with this for the past three years and I really want to thank them for what they did. They made me proud today."

Leon and Okoye plan to lower extra fees applied to online courses, increase on-campus safety, improve facilities and funding for engineering and graduate students, work for a cost-effective insurance solution for international students as well as provide grocery carts for housing students.

See UP, page 2

SGA Election Results

UP Presidential Ticket

Alfonso Leon & Providence Okoye	100%
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UP Representative-at-Large (three out of four selected)

Arthur "AJ" Meyer	26.29%
Marbely Hernandez	25.79%
Jennifer Ruiz	21.71%

UP Lower Division Representative (two out of three selected)

Paige LaPointe	36.23%
Tomas Martinelli	32.85%

BBC President

Camilo A. Silva	40.96%
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BBC Vice President

Pamela St. Fleur	37.52%
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BBC Representative at Large (three out of three)

Katiana Saintable	42.06%
Gabriel Labrador Jr.	31.22%
Fabrice Octave	26.72%

Visit www.beaconnewspaper.com to view full election results.

BBC – Close race, high vote turnout

BY C. JOEL MARINO
Content Editor

Camilo Silva was announced the new Student Government Association president for the Biscayne Bay Campus on April 6, receiving 308 of the 752 votes cast in one of BBC's largest voter turnouts.

According to Vicky Owles, the assistant director of Campus Life, the reason for the mass turnout is simple: there were people running.

"It may sound like a joke, but having so many candidates was a good incentive for the students. It gave them variety," Owles said.

Silva ran against current SGA president Lamar Linton and Zach Trautenberg, comptroller for SGA BBC. Silva's unofficial running mate, Pamela St. Fleur, beat out two other candidates for the vice president position.

Owles said that the increase in candidates for the president and vice president slots is a new phenomenon at BBC.

"We marketed the positions through flyers, banners and word-of-mouth, but the high interest we received was still surprising and exciting," Owles said.

As recent as 2002, contenders for almost all BBC government positions ran unopposed, including the president, with the two candidates for lower division representatives tying in at six votes per candidate.

See BBC, page 3

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS**MONDAY • APRIL 10**

Women's Center Mentoring Program Celebration: 5:30 p.m., WUC 245 (BBC)

Haitian Student's Association Movie Night: 8 p.m., Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre (BBC)

Tri Sigma presents Twister Tournament: 12 p.m., GC Pit (UP)

Alpha Phi Alpha - "A Century of Leadership" Documentary: 6 p.m., University Park Towers West Wing Lounge (UP)

TUESDAY • APRIL 11

Campus Bible Fellowship Bible Study: 11 a.m., WUC 157 (BBC)

Biscayne Bay Society Film Series: 6 p.m., Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre (BBC)

MTVU Campus Invasion Tour 06 featuring Motion City Soundtrack: 7 p.m., Pharmed Arena (Tickets: \$5 (Students; Free tickets in advance), \$10 (Non-FIU students))

New Music Ensemble: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Concert Hall (PAC 170) (UP)

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 12

SPC and Women's Center present Take Back the Night: 7 p.m., WUC Panther Square (BBC)

Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Concert Hall (PAC 170) (UP)

SPC Campus Entertainment presents Poker Night: 6 p.m., Everglades Hall Lounge (UP)

THURSDAY • APRIL 13

Panther Power and HSO Party: 9 p.m., WUC Ballrooms B (BBC)

The Worst of All Possible Worlds - A lecture on dystopian literature and film presented by George Pearson and Eduardo Fojo: 2 p.m., BBC Library Room 150 (BBC)

Women Coming Together: 12 p.m., Women's Center (GC 2200) (UP)

FIU Theatre presents Balm in Gilead: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center (UP)

FRIDAY • APRIL 14

FIU Theatre presents Balm in Gilead: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center (UP)

SPC Films and Delta Lambda Phi present Brokeback Mountain (Heath Ledger, Jake Gyllenhaal): 7 p.m., 10 p.m., GC 140 (UP)

- Compiled by Reuben Pereira

Representatives win tight race

From UP, page 1

Additionally, Leon plans to have clubs and organizations accountable for the money they are allocated by SGA.

The lack of competition in the presidential race had shifted most of the attention to the UP representative-at-large race where five candidates were running for three openings.

Since voters were allowed to vote thrice in the category for their top three picks, the number of votes was highest in this category.

Out of the 3187 votes cast, Arthur "AJ" Meyer received 838 votes (26.29 percent); Marbely Hernandez received 822 votes (25.79 percent) and Jennifer Ruiz was third with 692 votes (21.71 percent).

In the lower division representative race where two candidates are elected, Paige LaPointe received the most votes with 643 votes (36.23 percent).

Tomas Martinelli edged out Wolfgang Acevedo by 34 votes to get the second lower division representative spot.

Acevedo, an SGA intern,

was clearly disappointed with the results but hoped the newly elected candidates would follow through with their objectives.

"I obviously feel hurt because overall, I do think I was the best candidate running for the position," Acevedo said. "I do think these things happen for a reason. I didn't win because I didn't campaign as hard as I should have. I do think being Greek plays a role in results but not a huge role."

Jose Torres was voted UP Health and Urban Affairs representative, narrowly beating Bidlose "Bibi" Olivier by 20 votes to 16.

The UP Business representative and UP Housing representative positions were won by default by Aviva Rose-Avila and Ebe Mezzanotte because their opponents Michael Jadoo and Emanuel Washington were disqualified on grounds of exceeding their campaign budgets and campaigning in no-campaign zones.

Candidates largely ran unopposed in other categories including Honors College representative and



CHEERS: Jennifer Ruiz surrounded by sorority sisters, celebrated her victory as University Park representative-at-large position April 6. **CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON**

UP Arts and Sciences representative which were won by Rocio Perez and Charlene Collazo respectively.

Also running unopposed were Ralph Del-

gado, Shawna McNair and Marcia Garcia who were voted in as UP Education representative, UP Graduate student representative, and UP Law School representative, respectively.

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Silva, St. Fleur win presidential elections

Voter turnout one of campus' highest

From BBC, page 1

Furthermore, this election avoided many scandals that have plagued candidate relations in the past, such as the 2003 controversy surrounding Nicaise Parillon's succession of her husband Adrian Carter as SGA president.

"We are more than pleased with this year's turnout, a sign that points to the growth we're seeing at BBC," said Cathy Akens, assistant vice president of student affairs. "The quality of all the candidates was exceptional and I'm sure that made a difference."

Akens said the biggest strength of this year's elections was the respect the candidates had for each other, helping turn it into "a friendly event."

Beside the smooth campaigns, Akens also attributed the high voter participation to an extra voting station on the first floor of the library and the involvement of residential students at Bay Vista housing, which may prompt administrators to place a station at this locale in the future.

"There were many factors that contributed to this year's

success and I can only hope that they will continue to make a difference next year as more students become interested in the campaign process," she said.

For now, the winners will begin to map out their strategy for next year, Silva saying that his first goal will be to establish more campus events and recognition for students with exceptional grades or talents.

"I'm excited and extremely happy to have won and can't wait to begin working for the students that elected me, an honor that still leaves me surprised," Silva said.

Other candidates like Trautenberg have promised they will continue to be involved with SGA in whatever position they can find.

The highest voter turnout for the campus had been 769 students in 2003.

Votes from both BBC and the Broward Pines Center (which the winners will also represent) totaled 762 in this year's election. Roughly 8,000 students attend class at BBC.

Representative-at-large winners included Katiana "Kathy" Saintable, Gabriel Labrador Jr. and Fabrice Octave.



VICTORIOUS: Camilo Silva and Pamela St. Fleur were announced president and vice president winners for the Biscayne Bay Campus' Student Government Association at noon on April 6 in Panther Square. Silva said he is happy to have won and eager to begin his tenure as SGA president for BBC, which will begin at the end of the Spring semester. **MARISA FIALHO/THE BEACON**



Chabad to organize first seder dinner for students

BY RINA LANKRY
Contributing Writer

Matzah, red wine and a variety of traditional Jewish dishes will be some of the items decorating the table at the Chabad House on the night of April 12, when the Jewish holiday of Passover begins. This eight-day holiday will start off the celebration with the first Passover seder for FIU students.

"It's not your average seder. It's going to be interactive and entertaining," said Rabbi Levi Friedman of FIU's Chabad House, the organization for Jewish students at FIU that will be hosting the Seder.

Chabad's seder is for students of all Jewish backgrounds, even those who have never experienced a seder before. For Jews outside of Israel, the Passover seder takes place the first two nights of the eight-day holiday. So on the night of April 13, students will have another chance to experience the second seder.

Outside of Passover, Chabad is active at both University Park and Biscayne Bay Campus year round, providing Jewish programming for FIU students. Chabad is a worldwide Jewish organization with a presence at over 80 campuses nationally. Chabad is an acronym for the Hebrew

words of Chochmah, Binah and Da'at, which mean wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

Passover commemorates the exodus of the Jews from Egypt after 210 years of slavery. Jews celebrate this event with a festive meal and ceremony called the seder, during which they recite the Haggadah, the narrative of this historical episode.

"The message of Passover is one that we can all relate to today," Friedman said. "It's a message of liberation from oppression and freedom from all those things that hold us down and keep us from being able to express ourselves and maximize our potential."

Chabad is located near UP. Students are recommended to reserve their free seat on the Chabad website in order to be guaranteed a spot for the seders. They also offer kosher meals for Passover for all eight days, by reservation.

"The festival of Passover is a Biblical commandment to observe Passover and one of the commandments involved is to eat matzah, which is unleavened bread; in addition, there is a prohibition on eating any leavened product [Chametz]," Friedman said. "So in the days leading up to Passover, we clean our house and rid ourselves of all the leavened products

in the house and replace it with kosher foods."

"Chabad believes that belief in God and being Jewish isn't enough to follow blindly, it's something we have to understand and appreciate," Friedman said. "Through the study and understanding of Judaism and what God wants from us we come to a deeper appreciation of who we are and what it is that we're doing."

Their mission is to provide a home away from home for all the Jewish students at FIU, according to Friedman.

Chabad offers classes such as Kabbalah, which teaches Jewish mysticism, at UP on Wednesdays from 9-10 p.m. at the 2nd floor of the Green Library. They explore subjects such as love, good and evil, soul and God and the meaning of life.

Chabad is most popular on campus for its weekly *shabbat*, which are the Friday night *sabbath*; dinners, held at Friedman's house. Once a month they have a themed *shabbat* in February for example, they had a Panther Pride *shabbat*.

Jonathan Berney, a sophomore met Friedman when he was tabling. He grew up with a Jewish education and was looking for a Jewish environment at the University.

"It was a cool experience," Berney

said. "No matter what your level with connection for Judaism is, I think it's important to have a group that you can fit in with."

Junior Sarah Steinfeld, has been going to Chabad for Shabbat since her first week at FIU.

"I wanted to engage in conversation where people knew what I was talking about. I knew that Chabad had something different to offer," she said. "It's very family-oriented and so non-judgmental. Everyone who comes into their house feels so comfortable."

Jewish students who attend Shabbat dinner at the Chabad house can expect a young family sitting around a huge table with plenty of food and singing. The week's Parsha is read and that gets the conversation started. Students can also ask the rabbi questions about life or anything or other concerns during the dinner.

"Our doors are always open," Friedman said. "Don't be embarrassed, afraid, or worried about coming. We're here to give them an opportunity to connect to other [Jewish] people their age. Total pleasure, zero pressure."

For additional information, contact Friedman at (305) 226-5533 or via e-mail at rabbi@chabadfiu.com.

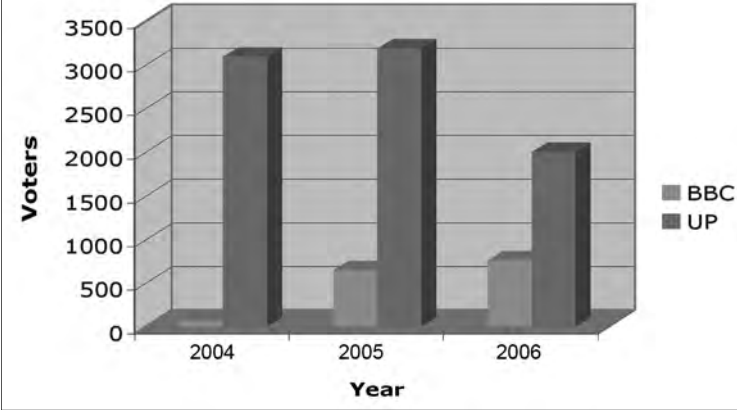
OPINION

Harry Coleman Editor in Chief • Christopher Necuze Opinion Editor

THE BEACON | Editorial

SGA must address low voter turnout

Voter Turnout (04-06)



Student Government Association elections are over. The votes have been tallied, the winners announced. *The Beacon* would like to congratulate all of the winners of this year's election and hope that their tenures prove fruitful for both the FIU students they will be representing and to themselves.

That said, this year's elections have shown some trends in voter turnout that have plagued FIU for years. The good news is that the turnout at the Biscayne Bay Campus elections increased by more than 100 votes compared to last year. The bad news, however, is that turnout at University Park was down by more than 1,100 votes, at press time.

A lower turnout at UP is understandable as the candidates in the major race, the UP presidential ticket, were running unopposed.

This is usually the race that brings most voters to the polls in the first place. It is interesting to note that only about 6 percent of UP students, a population roughly 30,000 strong, voted in the elections this year, while more than 11 percent of BBC students cast a vote.

Overall, University wide voter turnout was a paltry 6 percent, down from an already measly 10 percent last year. As was aforementioned, the lower voter turnout can be attributed to the rather stale competition in the major race – but a 6 percent turnout is appalling in any election.

There are several things we feel SGA could have done, and perhaps should do in future years, to increase voter turnout. An idea that has been thrown around for a while is Internet voting. By using their Panther IDs, students would be able to vote from their own computers. The use of the Panther IDs would ensure that no student is able to cast their vote more than once.

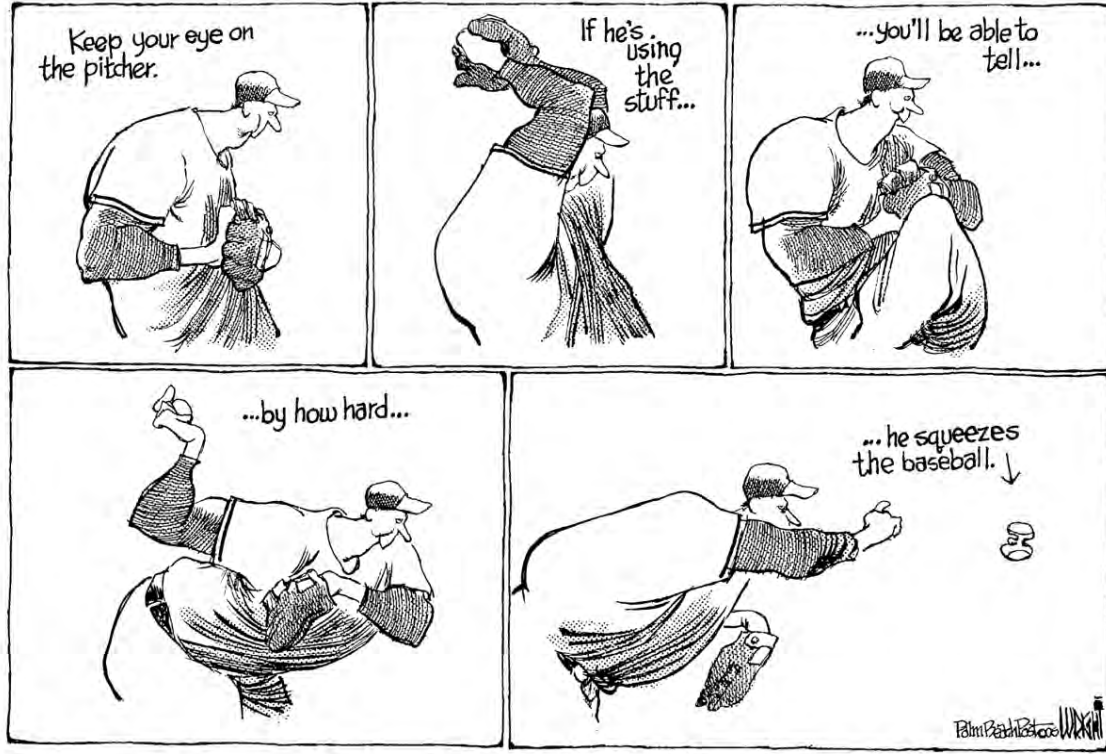
Besides implementing an online voting system, SGA should also work toward widening their campaign timeline. It felt as though elections snuck up on students this year as candidates were only announced two weeks before elections.

Due to this short time span, the contenders may not have had the time they needed to properly inform students about their platforms. A few weeks of extra campaigning may have made all the difference in how well students knew the names of those wanting to represent them.

Furthermore, SGA should plan more debates to inform students about the issues at hand and plan them in very public places such as the GC Pit. An informed voter is usually a more consistent voter.

Low voter turnouts is a trend that SGA has been facing for several years, though, so it will be up to the association itself to analyze student needs and eventually figure out what can be done to get a higher number of voter involvement.

TIPS ON SPOTTING STEROID USERS



KRT CAMPUS

Video games do not harm children or lead to violence

BY BRIAN O. GONZALEZ
Contributing Writer

Your parents have tried to ban them from home. Democrats Joe Lieberman and Hillary Clinton have persuaded the Senate to approve a sweeping study to be organized by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC.

Familyresource.com has claimed they are 'addictive' and Utah proposed a bill that did not pass to ban children from even seeing them. Is it a highly potent drug – maybe an opiate, or hallucinogen? Nope, they are talking about video games.

Video games have been around for two decades – from the original and simplistic Pong to the increasingly complex Final Fantasy series. Japan has claimed video games as a part of its culture and has recently opened a video game museum to commemorate the advances and history of video games.

But across the pond in the States, they are viewed as a malicious attack towards our innocent children. So much so that government funded studies are popping up everywhere.

Clinton and Lieberman's proposal for the CDC to study the "impact of electronic media use" was originally going to be a \$90 million study, but now has been rumored

to be costing upwards of \$200 million tax dollars worth of research. Heck, for \$200 million I'll not only research video games, I'll find the cure for athlete's foot.

I understand that an excess amount of video games, just like an excess amount of anything, isn't very good for you, but that does not make video games a disease. These guys are crazy, but the liberals aren't the only guys behind this lunacy.

Conservatives over in Utah are just as nuts. In January, Utah's Representative David L. Hogue proposed a bill that if passed, would make it illegal for anyone to show or give games, movies, or any media containing inappropriate violence to minors. Under Utah's current law for exposing minors to harmful material, each offense would be a third-degree felony with a minimum fine of \$300 and imprisonment (with no option for a suspended sentence) for at least 14 days.

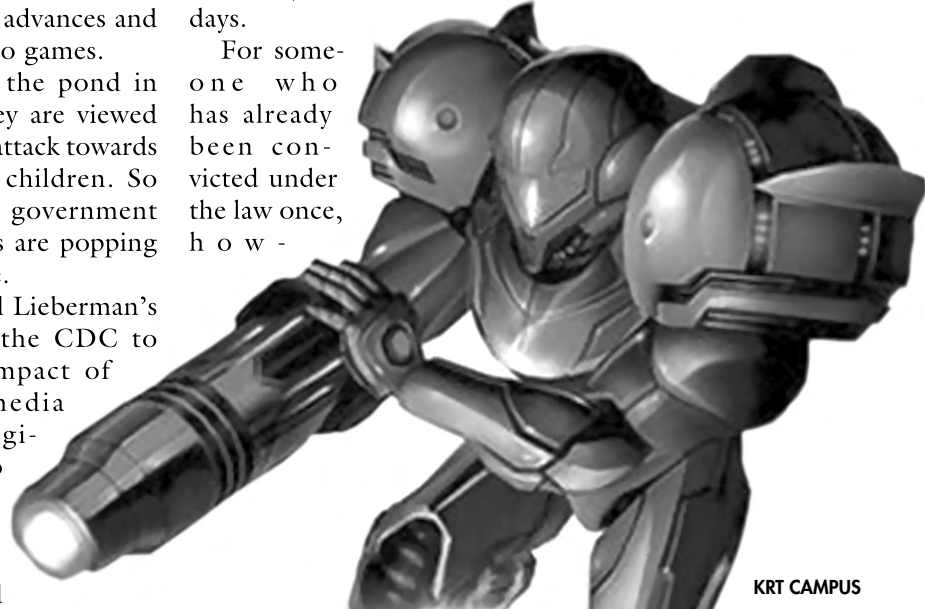
For someone who has already been convicted under the law once, how

ever, the crime is then considered a second-degree felony with a minimum fine of \$5,000 and at least a year in jail – again with no possibility of a suspended sentence. Luckily, it wasn't passed, so parents and adults alike are safe to buy their children "Star Fox Adventures" for the Gamecube and *Pootie Tang* on DVD.

Then again the latter would probably inflict more psychological damage than anything else.

Video games are no more harmful than movies or television and they are a form of entertainment. Violence does not come from video games and people who claim their crimes are video game inspired are either finding a way out of prison or probably belong in a straitjacket to begin with.

I have been playing video games since I was five and I haven't shot or murdered anyone in months. Just kidding – weeks.



KRT CAMPUS

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off in GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words.

Opposing gay marriage akin to opposing interracial marriage

BY ADRIAN DIAZ

Assistant Opinion Editor

In 1967, the United States Supreme Court ruled a Virginia anti-miscegenation law unconstitutional in the case of Loving v. Virginia, in which an interracial Virginia couple married in the District of Columbia to evade the Virginia law. When they returned to the state, they were charged with breaking the law. The law it struck down was the Racial Integrity Act of 1924 which put race-based restrictions on marriage. Ironically, in Massachusetts, some are using an even older law to ban gays from marriage.

The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled on Thursday, March 30, that non-resident, same-sex couples could not get married in Massachusetts unless gay marriage is legal in their home states.

Same sex marriage is only legal in Massachusetts; however, Vermont, California and Connecticut allow homosexuals to join in some form or another of civil union.

The Massachusetts Supreme Court upheld a 1913 statute that bans out-of-state residents from getting married in Massachusetts if the person's home state would find the marriage void. The statute was originally adopted to block interracial marriages. Although conservatives argue that same-sex marriages and interracial marriages cannot be compared, they are using the archaic tools that blocked the latter decades ago in the pointless fight against the former.

Just as bans against interracial marriage were brought down in the 60s, bans on gay marriage must be done away with today.

In reality, opposing gay marriage is just as bigoted and silly as opposing interracial marriage.

Marriage itself is not a natural human institution. It is, instead, a social construct which changes as society changes – and right now society is changing. After all, in the '60s, conservatives were worried that interracial marriage would hurt traditional marriage.

Massachusetts's governor Mitt Romney said in a 2004



THE FIGHT OVER MARRIAGE: Above, Gay couple Karen Nicholson-McFadden [left] and Marcye Nicholson-McFadden [right] listen to their lawyer make a statement to the media about a New Jersey gay-marriage case. Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney [right] is opposed to gay marriage. **KRT Campus**



National Review interview, "Like me, the great majority of Americans wish both to preserve the traditional definition of marriage and to oppose bias and intolerance directed toward gays and lesbians."

This is one of the more sensible arguments against gay marriage, but it is still fundamentally flawed in that it denies a section of the population certain rights that another group has only on the basis of sexual orientation. You cannot oppose bias and intolerance toward gays and not allow them to marry.

Conservatives attempt to argue that, unlike opposition to interracial marriage, which they say was based simply on prejudice, they oppose gay marriage on the grounds that they are attempting to preserve the

sanctity of marriage. The problem I see with this argument is that no one has been able to prove that homosexual marriage undermines marriage as an institution.

There is also an argument over allowing gays to marry and allowing them to have civil unions. For me, I think as long as gays can have all the same rights (hospital visiting rights, death benefits, etc.) as straight spouses, then I really don't care what you call it. I see it as a case of civil rights and not a problem of semantics.

Gays and the gay lifestyle are much more accepted than they were 10 years ago and their opposition, which seems fierce, to me, is only the last throes of those hanging on to outdated beliefs.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do you think internet voting is a good idea to increase voter turnout in the SGA elections?

- Yes - I don't have time to vote but I'd still like to be able to have a part in picking a candidate.
- No – It is not safe enough and would make it easier to manipulate the votes.
- Either way people won't vote.

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER



English: A survey showed Brits drink more than their European neighbors, about 2.2 pints a night. They would be celebrating but they are too busy nursing their hangovers.

LOSER



Corpulent kids: A bill is being passed through Congress to restrict the sales of junk food in schools. Finally, lawmakers are tackling the real issues.

QUOTATION NATION

"To begin with, they should exit the cities and take positions outside the cities and hand over security to the Iraqi forces."

– **Moqtada al-Sadr**, Shiite cleric, on American forces in Iraq.

"I think politics got in front of policy on this issue."

– **Edward Kennedy**, Democratic senator, on bi-partisan efforts to reform immigration that fell apart in Congress April 7.

"Burn in the U.S.A."

– **Zacarias Moussaoui**, Al-Qaeda terrorist, shouted during a morning break in his trial. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani testified in the trial April 6. Giuliani spoke about his experiences shortly after the World Center attacks.

"A lot of things happened that in retrospect today we would all do differently."

– **Thomas M. Davis III**, Republican representative of Virginia, on mishandling of money and supplies intended to aid Katrina affected areas.

"I plan to get working as soon as possible. Right now it feels fantastic."

– **Alfonso Leon**, SGA president-elect, on how it felt to win. Leon ran unopposed.

"Whatever we have been doing to address these problems has been insufficient and needs to be redoubled and tripled."

– **Robert J. Thompson Jr.**, vice provost for undergraduate education at Duke university, on accusations that three members of the university lacrosse team sexually assaulted a woman.

"In light of today's shocking revelation, President Bush must fully disclose his participation in the selective leaking of classified information."

– **Harry Reid**, Democratic senator from Nevada, on testimony by I. Lewis Libby Jr. that says President Bush authorized the leak of what was at the time classified intelligence about the war in Iraq.

F.Y.I.

Same-sex marriage around the world

- The Netherlands was the first country to allow same sex civil marriages. Other countries that allow it are Canada, Belgium and Spain. However, Belgium does not allow these couples to adopt children.
- On November 18, 2004 England passed the Civil Partnership Act which allows same sex partners to register with the government. The government has insisted that this is not same-sex marriage.
- Three countries in the European Union that constitutionally define marriage as a union between a man and a woman are: Latvia, Poland and Lithuania.

Inside ^{the} [student] Actors Studio

This is part three of a five-part series that features fun classes available to students.

BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

"We all do it. You're doing it now. You're asking a question. I think about my response. I respond. It goes back to who you are, who you respond to, and how you listen. The most important thing about acting is to experience and know how to respond. Acting is what we do in life," said professor Phillip M. Church.

Church is speaking about acting and the class he has taught for the past 26 years at the University. Introduction to Acting (TPP 2100) is a course that is meant as a first glance to the acting process, intended for students who do not plan to major in theater. Self-awareness, physical and vocal control and early scene study are the major techniques that are studied.

Church, passionate about teaching this class, says that he enjoys teaching students who are non-majors because they are usually more willing to go to open places and take risks.

"These classes are all about people who have no intention of being actors. These guys [non-majors] are heading out in different directions. They're open to discovering themselves and it's always a joy to see students experience themselves from a different character," Church said.

Freshman George Starling, an education major, one of the students in Church's acting class, admits that he enrolled to get an easy A and didn't expect to learn as much as he did.

"I learned a lot of new stuff, which was definitely more than I expected. I learned a lot more about myself as an individual and as an actor," Starling said. "When I walk into class, I enter with the satisfaction of knowing that I'll be having fun today and will be leaving with a smile on

my face."

With this class, Church hopes to introduce students to the language of theater, their voices and their hearts.

"It's not just about words. It's about language," he said. "The more the student explores him or herself, the broader the language onstage is going to be."

Freshman Maria Sara Roberts enrolled in the class because as a child, she had always wanted to be a movie actress. To her, taking this class was, in a way, a fulfilled dream.

"When I came here, I thought I would act out scenes from plays and also meet new people. Not only did I act out scenes and meet new people, but I also learned a lot about myself," Roberts said. "I realized that we are characters all day long and we change when we go from one situation to the next."

Freshman Adrian Fuentes agreed with Roberts.

"It's a big stress reliever because not only does it have a relaxing atmosphere, but it's more about being [yourself] among other people," Fuentes said. "Unlike most courses, it doesn't suffer from

book work and boring assignments."

Instead of basing students' grades on exam scores and essays, Church's introduction to acting class is graded based on punctuality, attitude, attendance and students' ability to work well with others. According to Church, it's the ethical discipline that is really important in a class like this.

"I really do take every student sepa-



AMATEUR THESPIANS:

Introduction to Acting gives students insight into basic techniques such as self-awareness, physical and vocal control and scene studies. Sophomore Lee Ravid (left) and Freshman Adrian Fuentes (right) engage in a concentration building mirror exercise. REUBEN PEREIRA/ THE BEACON

rately. When they come in at the beginning of the semester, I watch them to see where they are," he said. "At the end of the 16 weeks, I either see this arc of development or I don't."

Church doesn't believe that ramming facts, statistics and figures down the throats of students is really educating and he hopes more professors would try to make their classes interesting instead

of educating 'by the gun.'

"I believe that we must move students to discover themselves and their relationship with the rest of the world and strive to make our classes enjoyable as opposed to mandatory," Church said. "By doing this, we'll have more deeply educated young people because they'll learn because they want to and not because they have to."

"Kingdom Hearts II" introduces in-depth plot

BY BEN F. BADGER JR.
Staff Writer

Originally released in 2002 for the PS2, "Kingdom Hearts" became an overnight phenomenon, much to the surprise of gamers who never believed Disney characters and their worlds could be incorporated with "Final Fantasy" ones.

"Kingdom Hearts" is a must for any gamer. At the end of the highly climactic game, players were given a peek at "Kingdom Hearts II." On March 29, the four-year wait for the sequel finally arrived.

From start to finish, players are thrown into an incredible

story revolving around a boy named Sora and his Keyblade a special key-shaped sword with the power to destroy beings called Heartless and Nobodies.

Accompanying Sora on his quest to find his lost friend Riku (as well as defeating the Heartless and Nobodies) are Donald Duck and Goofy, trademark characters from the Disney. It was this odd mix that brought the first "Kingdom Hearts" success and the trend has continued.

I was blown away by the extremely in-depth plot of this game. The conspiracy involving Organization XIII has you

guessing right up until the last few hours of the game. It is also clear that the maturity of the game's plot was far beyond that of the first "Kingdom Hearts."

However, those who did not play the Game Boy Advance game "Kingdom Heart: Chain of Memories" will be confused as to what exactly is going on at the start of the game.

"Kingdom Hearts II" takes place immediately after the end of "Chain of Memories," picking up right where the previous game left off.

The vocal acting is another treat. Haley Joel Osment and James Woods reprise their roles

as Sora and Hades, respectively.

Considering Disney's resources, the myriad of celebrity voices is no surprise. An honorable mention also goes to the late Pat Morita, who voiced the Emperor of China for *Mulan* before his death last year.

It's a good thing the vocal talent is so good; otherwise, the countless cinematic scenes in the game would have been a real annoyance. Throughout the game, players are given dozens of cinematic scenes that move the plot forward.

While enjoyable, many times you will be tempted to press

the "skip scene" button (a new feature that was not available in the first game.) I recommend, however, you watch everything once and only use the skip feature if you get a *game over* and have to repeat something.

The battle system in "Kingdom Hearts II" is radically enhanced. The two most notable additions are the Limit and Drive abilities. The Limit ability comes from the "Final Fantasy" game series. Essentially, the Limit is a very powerful attack that can save you in a tight spot and it changes depending on which Disney character

Garcia's sets typical Floridian mood

BY LALINDA DE LA FUENTE
Contributing Writer

Garcia's Seafood Grille and Fish Market may be difficult to find, as it is discreetly nuzzled up to the Miami River, but its fresh seafood cuisine is anything but that.

Since 1966, Garcia's has been serving seafood to locals at affordable prices. In its Miami River location, with breezy outdoor dining, this seafood eatery is not only quintessentially Floridian, but also quintessentially Miamian.

Garcia's digs may not be posh and touristy like the restaurants of South Beach, but their North River Drive location gives it a cozy feel. Flanked by warehouses, churches and other seafood eateries, Garcia's is hard to find but well worth the zigzagging through the small streets of downtown Miami.

Garcia's offers minimal indoor dining, but the real experience is presented outdoors. Their river view dining area is small, so the wait can sometimes be long, but you're welcome to casually linger around their bar and sip on a drink while you wait. If you're lucky enough to be seated right next to the river, you can gaze out onto the water and watch boats move up and down the river, pelicans dive for fish and lobster fishermen load up their traps.

Garcia's is the perfect locale to enjoy long, leisurely and casual lunches on sunny weekends. Their appetizer menu features dishes that can double as light lunches. Their raw oysters on a half shell are a popular request, as is their fried calamari. Their conch fritters, a Floridian staple, are also a popular dish to nibble on while waiting for your meal. Their jumbo grilled shrimp on a skewer are so jumbo and perfectly grilled that, coupled with a house or Caesar salad, it can be a delectable, light lunch.

Garcia's offers some great soups,



RIVERSIDE SEAFOOD: Garcia's Seafood Grille and Fish market offers affordable seafood staples such as conch fritters and jumbo shrimp. LALINDA DE LA FUENTE/THE BEACON

especially their bisques. Their lobster bisque may be \$5 a bowl but it features chunks of real lobster immersed in incredibly rich and creamy red bisque. Small stomachs may want to skip the bisque and head straight to the main course.

One of Garcia's most famous and beloved dish is their fish sandwich. You can try a variety of fish, from grouper to dolphin, in a bun. Their fish is always fresh and never under or overcooked, making their sandwiches classically simple but very tasty. Fish is not the only seafood you can sample between bread. Their fried shrimp sandwich highlights battered shrimp on a bun.

Garcia's has not left out those who prefer to dine on low-carb meals. One can order a Caesar salad with a perfectly sized piece of grilled fish draped over the top. Their grouper is especially tasty and flaky. This option allows patrons of Garcia's a guilt-free meal without sacrificing taste. If you're like me and hate to forgo carbs, a side of flavorful yellow rice with chunks of grouper can be added to complement your dish.

Most of Garcia's main dishes hover at around \$10, a definite steal for the

quality of seafood that you receive. For those willing to splurge, Garcia's also offers stone crab legs and lobster tail meals. The cost for these favorites depend on the market price, which is anywhere from twenty to thirty-plus, dollars.

For those who love to end a meal on a sweet note, Garcia's has a tasty key lime pie. Not too sweet and with a nice hint of sourness, their key lime pie is the typical way to finish your very beachy Miami dining experience.

Meals for restaurant reviews are paid for by the reviewer and the restaurant is not notified in advance of the critic's presence.

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5

FIVE QUESTIONS OF INTEREST



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

Today I had to go to work. [In general] I think every new day is exciting. Each day is what you make of it. I enjoy life on campus and being worry-free.

2. WHAT'S THE BEST AND WORST PART OF YOUR JOB?

The best part of my job is that it's easy. I also get to see my friends that come in [the fitness center] often. The worst part is that it can be boring sometimes. The rules and regulations restrict you from having fun. It keeps me efficient, though.

3. IF YOU COULD SWITCH PLACES WITH ANYONE IN THE PAST, PRESENT OR FUTURE, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Anyone? I'd like to say Jack Johnson. He's the first black heavyweight boxer. He's criticized for the way he carries himself. If I were in his shoes I'd try to represent my people better. Either him or Jesse Jackson. I'd run for president.

4. WHAT CELEBRITY/TV PERSONALITY/SHOW MAKES YOU SWITCH THE CHANNEL IMMEDIATELY THAT YOU CANNOT STAND TO WATCH?

Oh man, that Tucker Carlson from CNBC. The guy with the little bowtie. He's obnoxious and annoying. Even though he's an intellectual, he's on the ignorant side. He does bring up good points sometimes, but I just don't like him.

5. WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THE SGA CANDIDATE CAMPAIGNS?

[The candidates and supporters] are the most annoying people on campus. I applaud their efforts, though. They take whatever means possible to get things done. I voted. I like their enthusiasm even though it's a little overboard.

- Compiled by Alicia Bustamante

FUTURE STUDENTS



ON AIR: Freshman Anthony Sobers-Assue, AKA DJ Main Event, explains the inner workings of college radio to a group of touring Centennial Middle School students touring University Park on April 7. CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

Know an interesting professor? Does your friend have a cool campus job?

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Look for the Life! 5 feature every Monday issue.

Disney and Final Fantasy characters reunite in game sequel

From KINGDOM, page 6

you have with you at the time. The Drive ability allows you to merge with Donald, Goofy, or both of them to have enhanced abilities and, in all but one case, use two Keyblades.

The Drive and Limit abilities really make the game easy. Once transformed, winning a battle is a mere formality and Limits usually cleared the

screen of any minor enemies. There is, however, one more new feature that really stands out, the Reaction Command.

Basically, whenever the command flashed you press a button and watch Sora use a unique attack or move. In the case of boss battles, it usually meant watching a short mini movie in which Sora launches a powerful attack.

The new features really make the fights a lot of fun and of course, easier. Although one of the most enjoyable fights in the game is when you had to defeat 1,000 Heartless by yourself.

The real point of the game is to tell a story. That is why, for experienced gamers, using the normal difficulty level in the game will feel more like using the easy setting. At the

start of the game, players can choose the difficulty level of the game easy, normal, or hard.

In the case of one optional boss, though, the difficulty setting won't make a difference, as he is nearly impossible to beat. Yes, the villain from "Final Fantasy VII" is back and worse than ever. Sephiroth returns in "Kingdom Hearts II" to give players the thrashing of their life.

As was the case in the first "Kingdom Hearts," Sephiroth is harder than the last boss in the game.

Basically, this game is fantastic. There are virtually no flaws – although the camera angle will sometimes act up. Disney and Square-Enix went all out with "Kingdom Hearts II."

Whether you're an experienced gamer or new to the world of video games,

you will enjoy this game. Most times, it's more like a movie than a game.

"KINGDOM
HEARTS II"

★★★★

4 out of 4 stars

Released: March 28, 2006
Released for PS2
Square-Enix, Inc.



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Student government prepares 'thank you' week

BY ANA SANCHEZ
News Editor

The Student Government Association planned out a series of events to take place the week of April 10 to extend their gratitude to the FIU community for their participation in University events and to highlight their accomplishments.

SGA President Alex Prado organized a "thank you" week which he hopes will develop into an annual event and continue through Representative-at-Large Alfonso 'Alfie' Leon's term as president.

"It is basically a week dedicated to informing the students of what SGA has been able to accomplish in the past year, and thanking them for all of their support and trust in their student government ... we couldn't have done it without them," Prado said.

In order to thank the student body, free University of Miami vs. FIU football game tickets will be given out at noon on April 12 at the Graham Center Pit where a countdown and a pep-rally will take place.

The money for the tickets will not come from student fees.

"It's all about access: We just

wanted to give students the ability to attend the game. We are working with athletics to provide the tickets," Leon said.

Tickets will continue to be given out during several upcoming University and athletic events.

There are 5,000 free student tickets in total which are to be distributed and, in addition to those, 5,000 more tickets are set aside for non-FIU students at \$35.

"It was really Alex [Prado] and Christine [Denton's] idea to thank the students because they realize we've always taken from the students but we have not given back to them," said Bill

Buchanan, representative-at-large. "We want to recognize what the students have done for, [SGA]."

The State of Student address is scheduled for April 13 and will take place at the fountain behind GC at 11:30 a.m.

Prado will give a speech in which he will review the year and SGA's accomplishments along with vice president Denton.

Leon will also give a speech on what he plans to accomplish during his term.

"We are doing this just to say thanks and show the accomplishments of SGA. We also want to compare platforms for the

year and thank faculty, staff and students for voting. Prado and Denton [also want to give their final farewells," said Wolfgang Acevedo, SGA intern at the College of Law and Business.

Also, the last SGA meeting of the semester will be held April 12 at the Pit as a town-hall meeting.

SGA members will hand out "thank you" T-shirts to students on April 10 for taking the time to vote for SGA elections. A faculty and staff luncheon will take place April 11.

Additional reporting by staff writer Cristela Guerra.

Currie given ten year sentence

BY ANDREW LEINS
Staff Writer

Frederick Currie, a former FIU Public Safety officer, was sentenced to ten years in prison April 5. Currie was convicted in January for molesting a young girl during a pat-down search at Tamiami Park. Currie's attorney plans to appeal the conviction.

Though there was a lack of physical evidence presented at the trial, an eight member jury convicted Currie of one count of sexual battery and one count of battery on Jan. 26. The assault took place last year on July 8 and Currie was later arrested on July 20. In a statement given to *The Miami Herald* the victim urged other victims of sex crimes to come

forward, "come forward right away and let them know that you are real and what happened to you was real, people will listen to you."

Currie was twice fired from University public safety prior to this conviction; both times he was reinstated by appealing to the Police Benevolent Association. Currie was placed on administrative leave on the night of the assault and was on paid-leave until the trial when he was formally released from employment from FIU Public Safety.

In a statement to *The Miami Herald*, Judge Jorge Perez called Currie's crime "extra-serious" because of the nature of the crime and the fact that he was a police officer.

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This is an event planned to promote awareness and consideration of The Florida Army National Guard as a viable career option. Attendees could end up walking away with giveaways. Stop by the event to learn more about the career opportunities within The Florida Army National Guard, and have a chance to meet Florida Guardsmen. This has been a semester-long effort done by Creative Edge also known as the American Marketing Association (AMA).

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*Steve Stowe '03, MS/MBA
Director of Community Affairs
Miami Heat*

Dominant Federer would not lose a set in entire tournament

BALLBOY, from page 12

23 on Court 2, literally. About to begin the warm-up for her first round match, Karolina Sprem asked me to grab something from her coach. I ran across the court to receive six bottles of water, nutrients and smelling salts.

As I waddled my way back, Sprem smiled and offered to help me. Just sharing a laugh with a 21-year old Croatian beauty can make a ballboy's day. It's too bad she lost.

Friday the 24th brought out the big stars and the big crowds. With fans buzzing, 2005 finalist Rafael Nadal and 2003 finalist Carlos Moya took to the court. Longtime *amigos* from Spain, Nadal and Moya were unlucky to draw each other in the second round.

Moya stunned the No. 2 seed with a dazzling array of whipping forehands and deceptive drop shots. Watching from the net, I couldn't believe my eyes as Moya crafted a top-spin backhand lob over Nadal's head to win the match.

The surprises kept coming March 25. Tim Henman entered his match against No. 13 seed Lleyton Hewitt with an 0-8 record against the Australian. A veteran serve-and-volleyer, Henman changed tactics by punishing groundstrokes from the baseline to set up his approaches to the net. The strategy worked as Henman finally beat Hewitt 7-6(5), 6-3.

Defending champion Kim Clijsters

seemed assured of restoring order when she took a 3-0 lead on American Jill Craybas in five minutes. But Craybas kept fighting and drew 78 unforced errors from Clijsters to earn the upset. Clijsters joined her fellow Belgian, No. 3 seed Justine Henin-Hardenne, on the early departures list.

World No. 1 Roger Federer also looked destined for an easy victory. I entered the court for my ballboy shift after Federer won his first set against Arnaud Clement, 6-2.

With the second set on serve at 5-5, Federer hit a first serve fault. I sprinted to pick up the ball and return to my position at the net, but I came up empty-handed - missing the ball completely - and had to screech my Filas to a halt, turn around and reclaim the ball while the crowd laughed.

Despite my slipup, Federer held for 6-5. In Clement's next service game, Federer asked for a ball from another ballboy. It looked like he was going to hit it to the other side, but instead he quickly slapped it directly at my feet. Somehow I managed to catch it on a short hop and roll it to a ballboy on Clement's end. I'm still wondering if Federer was testing me.

Clement won the final seven points of the second set tiebreaker to even the match, but Federer proved too strong in the third set, winning it 6-0. He wouldn't lose another set the entire tournament.

Look for part two in the April 13 edition of The Beacon.

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Coach Gwydir: '[Belanger] really elevates this team'

BELANGER, from page 12

selves out of it, most have trouble relying on their own ability instead of reassuring themselves that they are capable of getting out of the inning.

"I breathe a lot and do a lot of breathing exercises," Belanger said. "I tell myself to stay calm and remind myself that I have been here before and that I have been able to get myself out of the situation."

Eastman added, "As a freshman, to see the way that she handles situations just gives me confidence."

Even though it may seem as if she is invincible on the outside as she steps onto the field, Belanger can't help but feel a little uneasy.

"I'm always nervous," Belanger said.

"But I try to pump myself up. A lot of times I'll sing a song in my head and it helps."

For some it may seem that the redshirt freshman has accomplished about as much as many pitchers will ever accomplish. However, Sarah Belanger has other ideas in mind and feels that it doesn't stop here.

"I am always trying to become a more dominating university pitcher," Belanger said.

"She has the heart and is very physical," Gwydir added. "She really elevates this team."

While it seems that Sarah Belanger has quite some weight on her shoulders, she certainly continues to play as if it were to her advantage.

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April 10, 2006

CHRONICLES OF A BALLBOY

COMMENTARY



BY JOSHUA REY
Staff Writer

Part one of a two-part series.

I went to Key Biscayne for my Spring Break. It's a six-year tradition.

For two weeks and no pay, I ran myself ragged in the South Florida sun, putting in nearly 100 hours of work.

Driving back through University Park on April 3, all I had to show for myself was a worn-out Fila uniform and five classes worth of unfinished homework.

But I wouldn't have missed it for the world. I was a ballboy for the NASDAQ-100 Open tennis tournament.

To the audience our task looks simple: Six volunteers spread out along the backdrops and at the net trying to keep six tennis balls off the court and on the serving player's side.

In reality, the job is much more complex. Sharing a tennis court with the top professionals in the world can get interesting, even in the tournament's early stages.

March 20 marked the beginning of the two-day qualifying



NICE FOREHAND: Roger Federer returns a shot from opponent Tommy Haas in their March 27 match at the NASDAQ-100. **KRT CAMPUS PHOTO**

competition in which low-ranked players seek entry into the main draw and ballpeople get acquainted with being unappreciated.

2004 Olympic silver medalist Mardy Fish took on fast-rising Frenchman Julien Benneteau in a much-anticipated match. After being broken to lose the first set, Benneteau took a tennis ball from his pocket and

blasted it with all his might. The ball ricocheted off the umpire's chair, leaving a large neon-green mark and scaring the daylights out of Alejandro, a fellow ballboy who was positioned next to the chair.

For nearly impaling Alejandro, Benneteau received only a warning. Go figure. Ballpeople are supposed to be impartial, but we were pretty happy

when Fish won 7-5, 6-3.

Tennis history was made two days later, when the Hawk-Eye challenge system debuted on Stadium Court. I was at the backdrop when American Jamea Jackson began the second set of her match against Ashley Harkleroad with the first challenge ever.

Jackson was wrong and fading fast. After receiving a

medical timeout in the third set, she nearly served to the wrong side of the court. Facing match point at 2-5, Jackson miraculously won five straight games, ushering in the 2006 NASDAQ with a 7-5, 6-7(3), 7-5 win in three hours and eight minutes.

I had my hands full March

See **BALLBOY**, page 10

Redshirt freshman recovers from injury to help lead team

BY JANELLE PALENZUELA
Contributing Writer

After suffering a season-ending knee injury last season, redshirt freshman Sarah Belanger is looking to prove herself once more by picking up right where she left off. And by this point, it seems that nothing is going to stop her.

One way Belanger demonstrated this was by being named the Sun Belt Conference Pitcher of the Week for the weeks of March 20 and March 27.

For some, the recognition may be enough to get their heads flying a bit high. But for Belanger, it's a little different.

"It doesn't really affect my game," Belanger said. "I think every one of our pitchers deserves [the recognition] just as much"

Belanger is the second pitcher to receive the award this season. Sophomore Kerri Houck received the honor on the week of March 14. In 109 innings pitched as of April 4, Belanger leads the team with a 2.50 ERA. Her 112 strikeouts are a team high and third overall in the conference.

Her freshman year she went 2-0 with

a 1.66 ERA and 29 strikeouts in 25.1 innings. In her first and only start, she struck out 11 batters in a complete game win over Connecticut.

Unfortunately, Belanger's season was cut short due to a knee injury that would require surgery. For some athletes, such an injury would make them think twice when it comes down to making tough, physical plays. However, that is not something that prevents her from playing hard.

"At the beginning, I was a lot more cautious than what I am now," Belanger said. "But now I'm not worried at all about my knee."

Head coach Kim Gwydir added, "She was supposed to have great year last year and it was cut short."

One of the main things needed this year is the skill of an ace pitcher and Belanger has the potential to become that.

"She came in this year without any experience," Gwydir said. "She is very capable of becoming a dominating pitcher."

"She has a certain leadership that gives the team the confidence that it needs to have," pitcher Penny Eastman said.

In Canada, it is not common for players to receive scholarships to play for a university in the United States. Perhaps it was a perfect game against Guatemala in the 2004 World University Softball Championship, or a couple of MVP's, that made Belanger the exception. So when she decided she was going to play at FIU, she received nothing but support.

"My dad and all of my coaches back at home always helped me out [in becoming a better player] and supported me," Belanger said.

But as always, there were a couple of things that Belanger had to get used to upon arriving at FIU.

"It was a little hard to adjust when I first got here," Belanger said. "It's a bit of a different ball, yet better competition. But the team gets along really well and JP [senior catcher Jennifer Powell] helps me out a lot."

One thing that Belanger is familiar with is adjusting herself to some of the toughest situations a pitcher could face, such as a full count with two outs and runners in scoring position.

Although many pitchers get them-

See **BELANGER**, page 11



SPEEDY RECOVERY: Sarah Belanger has been named Sun Belt Conference Pitcher of the Week twice this season.

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