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The Beacon, January 28, 2008

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Our View:
Tuition increases are inevitable with lack of help from Legislature.
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THE BEACON

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

Vol. 20, Issue 43

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January 28, 2008

STEPPING DOWN
SOC-BBC president resigns

PIECES OF THE PIE
Tax cuts, exemptions double

SOUNDS OF MUSIC
Festival promises futuristic sound

SISTERLY LOVE
Freshmen learns from older sister

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FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

BUDGET CUTS SPUR TUITION HIKE

CHARLIE GRAU
Editor in Chief

With budget cuts looming, the Florida Board of Governors voted to increase tuition by 8 percent on Jan. 24.

If approved by the Legislature, full-time undergraduate students will pay \$186 more per year for tuition beginning this Fall semester.

The increase comes as a response to the state university system's \$157 million budget presented last October. Many on the BOG and at the University said the 8 percent increase won't be enough to offset the cut.

"The budget crisis is not a one-time budget crisis; it's going to continue into the future," said Faculty Senate Chair Bruce Hauptli. "This budget crisis makes it highly

unlikely that the state can provide additional funding for universities to take in the new students and grow or to correct the past problems."

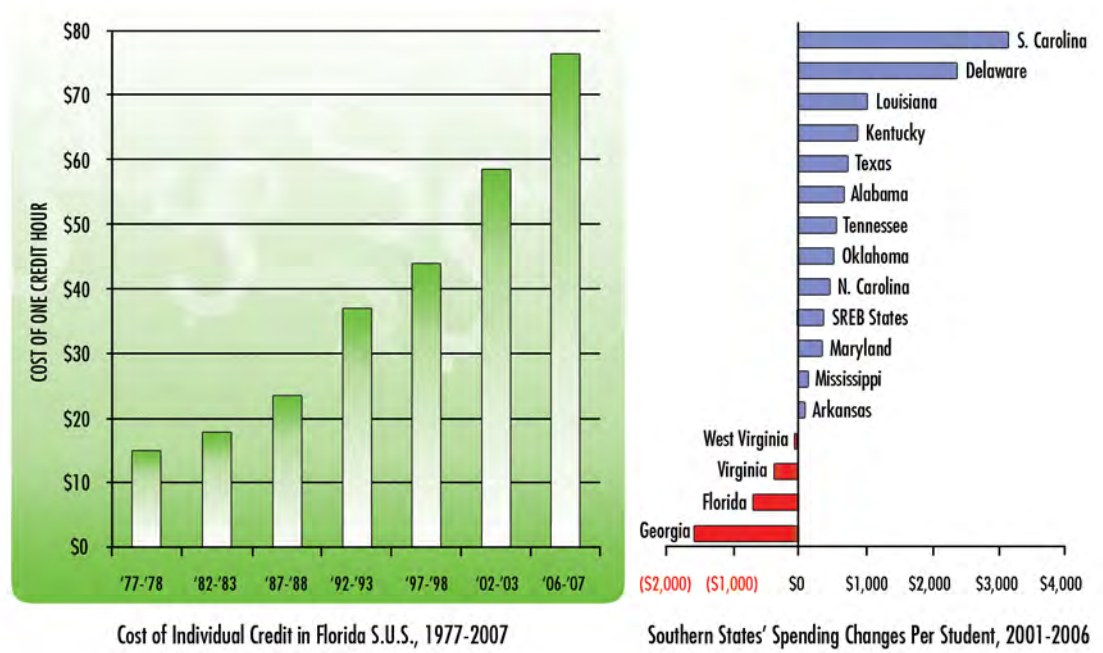
According to Board of Governors Director of Communication Bill Edmonds, the increase will only generate \$32 million.

Almost a third of the money brought in by the tuition increase would go to need-based financial aid under the plan. The rest of the money will go toward helping universities keep and hire more faculty. Florida has the worst student to faculty ratio in the country (31-to-1), according to Edmonds.

"This is about surviving. The reality is, if the system is broken, we need to increase the quality. We're at the bottom of the heap," Hauptli

TUITION, page 3

PUTTING IT ALL IN PERSPECTIVE



Despite scheduling conflicts, Giuliani makes time for FIU

JOSE MAYA
Staff Writer

The show is back on: Republican presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani is once again scheduled to speak at FIU on Jan. 28 at 9:30 p.m. in the Graham Center Ballrooms.

After canceling the event late on Friday night due to scheduling conflicts and last minute changes by his campaign, Giuliani and FIU signed contracts stating the former New York City mayor will indeed be at FIU on Monday night.

The move may indicate that Giuliani knows that FIU, with its diverse student population and strategic location within a large Republican base, will be key for a win in the Sunshine State. Strategists say he needs a win or a close second in Florida to keep his campaign alive.

"The last stop is at FIU," said J.C. Flores, Miami-Dade field director for the Rudy Giuliani campaign and an FIU alumnus.

The stop in Miami will mark the end of months of campaigning throughout the state for Giuliani and his supporters, who have had a wide range of help from people

of all ages.

"FIU is the largest public institution in southern Florida and we think it's important to bring the campaign. None of the Republican candidates are targeting the youth vote [enough]," Flores said.

The former mayor is hoping the youth vote will carry him into Super Tuesday, which will be held on Feb. 5.

It is set to have the largest number of states holding caucuses or primary elections in a single day.

The Giuliani campaign is optimistic to repeat what Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama did in Iowa earlier this month. CNN reported Obama won 57 percent of voters under 30 years old.

Strategists say the youth vote is crucial in any campaign.

"College students have been the backbone of any volunteer group. We all saw how huge the youth vote was in Iowa," said Javier Correoso, Miami-Dade outreach coordinator for the Rudy Giuliani campaign.

The Giuliani campaign will take all the help it can get, since many polls show him in a dead-

So you know...

Presidential Candidate on campus:

When: Jan. 28, 2008

Time: 9:30 p.m.

Where: GC Ballrooms

How to get in: RSVP with miamiforrudy@gmail.com

heat race with other Republican candidates such as John McCain, who is building momentum following a win in South Carolina where he carried much of the independent vote.

However, many pundits say Florida might not mean much to McCain, since the state's primary will be closed to independents.

Even Democrats are upset about the primary in Florida; none of the presidential candidates are campaigning there.

The state will find itself without delegate votes at the party's national convention this summer.

The Democratic Party handed

GIULIANI, page 2

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

It's official: new council approved

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

In order to streamline and maximize student services, a resolution for a student involvement council passed during the Jan. 23 meeting of the University Park Student Government Council.

The council was formerly called the Student Involvement Council, but its name is now being reconsidered.

"There were things that weren't working well," said Marbely Hernandez, SGC-UP president.

This new council will combine the Student Organizations Council and the Honors Council into one. The new council will also manage the Graduate Student Organizations.

According to Hernandez, the Residents Hall Association was not included in the new council because it does not have any organizations under it, and only deals with matters pertaining to housing.

Students not knowing where to go for their specific needs became a chief concern that led to development of the new council.

Franklin Soares, president of the Graduate Student Association, said that student confusion was a

common problem with his office. Soares said his office frequently turned away undergraduate students who did not know its function.

"We see this as a positive change," Soares said. "We will be able to do more programs and advocate more for the graduate students."

Under the new council, the GSA would essentially lose power over the GSOs, according to Soares. After he conducted an informal poll of graduate students, roughly 85 percent said they agreed with the shift in structure.

Not everyone saw the change as positive from the start.

"In the very beginning, I was against it because they did not give us a lot of notice," said Jennifer Houston, president of the HC.

However, after continued discussions and meetings about the new council, Houston has become more perceptive to the idea.

"I can literally see my words and concerns going into this proposal," Houston said.

Under the new council, 180 student groups would be categorized into one of 13 communities. These groups are

COUNCILS, page 3

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • JANUARY 28

SPC BBC- One World Celebration 2008:
12 - 3 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Resume Writing Workshop:
11 a.m. - 12 p.m., WUC 255 (BBC)

How to Prepare for a Career Workshop:
12 - 1 p.m., WUC 255 (BBC)

Friends of Wine Presents "A Taste of Italy":
5 p.m., Hospitality Building Dining Room, \$4 for members, \$8 for non-members, one year membership for \$10. Must be 21 years old and have proper ID.

TUESDAY • JANUARY 29

SPC BBC- One World Celebration 2008:
12 - 3 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Honors Council General Meeting:
3:30 p.m., Graham Center 140

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 30

SPC BBC- One World Celebration 2008:
12 - 3 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Leaders of Tomorrow:
1 - 2 p.m., GC 314

SGA General Meeting:
4 p.m., Graham Center 150

Asian Student Union General Meeting:
6 p.m., Gracie's Grill

SPC UP- N*W*C Comedy Show:
8 p.m., Graham Center Ballrooms

RHA General Meeting:
9 p.m., Everglades Hall

So You Think You Can Dance Finals:
8 p.m., Graham Center Ballrooms

THURSDAY • JANUARY 31

SPC BBC- One World Celebration 2008:
12 - 3 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Anything Goes Anime General Meeting:
3:30 p.m., Location TBA

Italian Club General Meeting:
3:30 p.m., Graham Center 150

Spencer Wells Lecture:
4 p.m., Graham Center Ballrooms

SPC BBC- N*W*C Comedy Show:
7 p.m., Mary-Ann Wolfe Theatre (BBC)

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 1

SOC Club Fair:
11 a.m. - 2 p.m., Campus Life Hallway (BBC)

Pan-African Preview:
12 - 2 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

SPC UP- Party in the Pit:
12 - 2 p.m., Graham Center Pit

SPC UP Movie- "Their Eyes Were Watching God:"
7 & 10 p.m., Graham Center 140

- Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*



Mock election reveals Obama, Paul among students' favorites

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
Staff Writer

The results of a mock primary election held at FIU on Jan. 23 once again confirm that the candidacy nomination is truly up for grabs.

Just days before the Florida primary on Jan. 29, Sen. Barack Obama and Rep. Ron Paul won for their respective parties in last week's mock presidential primaries elections held by Phi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society.

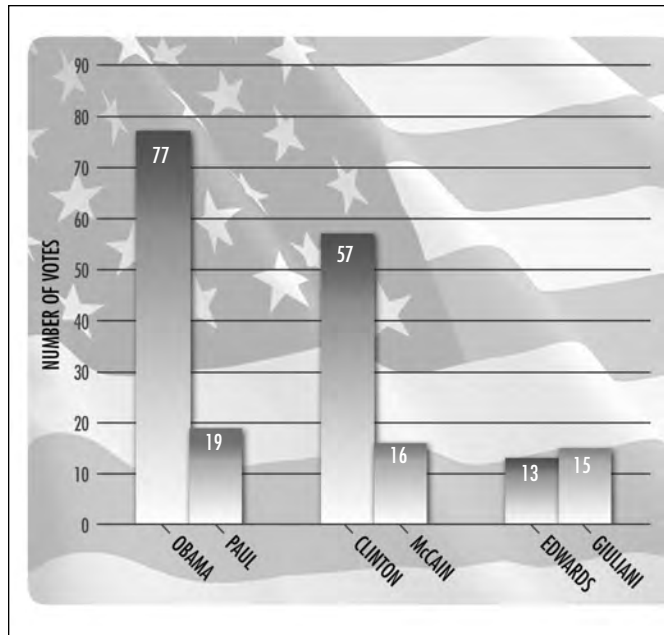
"We wanted a reflection of what happens with young people during the primaries and the elections," said Francesca Menes, president of the Phi Sigma Alpha Chapter at FIU.

That statistical reflection was revealing, surprising and disappointing all at the same time, according to the members of Phi Sigma Alpha.

In the campus Democratic mock primary, Obama swept through with 49 percent of the vote, Sen. Hillary Clinton came in second with 36 percent and John Edwards trailed far behind with 8 percent.

However, last week's *Miami Herald* poll with 800 sample voters shows Obama losing to Clinton by 19 percentage points. The two completely different outcomes in the polls show the extent of the fierce political rivalry between Obama and Clinton.

Still, for Menes, the buzzword of the campaign is change, and for this reason, she is not surprised by the



RESULTS

DEMOCRATS:

Obama: 49%
Clinton: 36%
Kucinich: 5%
Write In: 1%

REPUBLICANS:

Paul: 27%
McCain: 23%
Giuliani: 22%
Edwards: 8%
Huckabee: 9%
Romney: 11%
Thompson: 4%
Write In: 2%

Total student votes: 223

Obama win on campus.

"For me, [the voters] push for a new face, a new change," Menes said. "I'm not surprised [Obama won in the university mock primary]."

In contrast to the Democratic primary, the Republican election showed a closer race on campus with Ron Paul squeezing through with 27 percent of the vote.

Sen. John McCain followed with 23 percent and former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani came in third with 22 percent.

Peter Santa Maria, an art history major, evoked Gandhi's words to summarize Paul's lack of media attention and unexpected runner-up position in Louisiana.

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win," said Maria.

As *The Miami Herald* poll indicated last week, Paul

has daunting work ahead of him; the poll placed McCain, Romney and Giuliani as the top three sunshine state favorites before the state's actual Tuesday primaries.

Even though 223 students participated in the mock election, Menes still considers FIU's lack of interest and knowledge of American politics to be "very disappointing."

According to Phi Sigma Alpha members, it was difficult to attract student attention and they had to resort to enticing students with free food to get them to cast votes.

"Graham Center is like a mall. If you don't have anything to sell, no one pays attention," said Chris Daley, executive board member of Phi Sigma Alpha.

According to Daley, students voted on name recognition and "ethnic and skin politics." For instance,

if the voters were women, they usually voted for Clinton, and if the voters were black, they usually voted for Obama.

Though Daley and other students may consider FIU voters to be inadequately informed, others think the most crucial thing students must realize is that every vote does make a difference.

Mark Romero, president of the Florida College Democrats, passed by the mock election booth to cast his vote late in the afternoon and explained the importance of this election season lies in the range of ideological differences between the candidates.

"I would encourage people to vote because their vote will count," he said. "There are lots of varying viewpoints and people would really be sending a message with their vote."



Giuliani's final Fla. stop will be FIU

GIULIANI, page 1

down that penalty because Florida moved its primary

day to be earlier in an attempt to make the state more influential in United States politics.

The Republicans were also punished for Florida's moving its primary, however, half of its delegates will still count for its convention.

"Unfortunately, none of the main Democratic candidates will be down here," said Chris Cabral, president of the FIU Democrats.

Strategists say that the lack of Democratic candidates campaigning in Florida could help Giuliani get more media attention and push him over with a win in a campaign which has had many ups and downs during the past several months.

Scandals ranging from financial mishandling when he was New York

City mayor, to top aides announcing they would work for free to save money, have marked Giuliani's campaign so far.

For FIU, Giuliani's speech will bring national media attention and recognition for its diverse student body and mixed political views.

For his supporters it will be one last chance to convince others to back up Giuliani in the Florida primary, which will be held the following day.

"Miami-Dade County has been the most important county in Florida," Corroso said.

For more information on the event and to R.S.V.P. contact *miamiforrudy@gmail.com*.



GO ONLINE TO READ:

SGC-UP NOTES POLICE NOTES

THE BEACON

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College of Law hears court cases for first time

JESSICA ARISTE
Staff Writer

For the first time ever, the Third District Court of Appeals will hear its cases in the FIU College of Law Monday, Jan. 28 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Judges will hear oral arguments like any other workday, only this time, they will be in the law school's courtroom.

"It is a privilege they want to do this at our school," said Maria Garcia, president of the board of advocates.

The Third District Court of Appeals deals with questions of law rather than fact, which means it is where individuals who believe that the law was broken in some way during their trial must appeal the decision.

The court has no jury since the details of the actual case are no longer in question.

This event was organized through a meeting Garcia had with David M. Gersten, chief judge of the Third District Court of Appeals, as a way to strengthen the relationship between the

So you know...

WHAT TO EXPECT:

Enrique Fernandez v. the State of Florida: an appeal from a stepfather charged with forty-nine counts of molestation. The victim was his stepdaughter.

Thomas Walker v. IN RE: Estate of Clyde Walker: about a son appealing the circuit court's decision not to give him his father's estate.

Laurine Spivey-Ferguson v. Carnival Corporation: the appellant appealed the decision of the circuit court of dismissing her case against Carnival Cruise Line, after she allegedly slipped and fell walking through the wet floor of their lounge.

Shohreh Shojaie v. Gables Court of Professional Center, Inc: deals with a woman appealing the court's decision to rule in favor of the company she worked for, who she claimed was involved in promoting drug use and prostitution.

court and FIU.

"It's a great opportunity for students, faculty and administrators to actually see how the legal system works," Garcia said.

Students will be able to hear lawyers give oral arguments in five cases and see the workings of a Miami courtroom.

The cases that will be heard deal with very different issues and allow students to

see the problems dealt with in court on a daily bases.

"They are literally just picking up their work for that day and bringing it to our school," Garcia said. "It is an opportunity for students to see judges question attorneys about the law."

After the event, there will be a reception in the College of Law and all students are welcomed to attend.

New council aims to improve club finances

COUNCILS, page 1

made of SOC clubs, GSOs and honor societies.

According to Hernandez, each of the three councils will be selecting four delegates to meet with the SGC-UP in a committee to create the constitution of the new council, which will govern all aspects of how the new council will be run and organized.

During committee meetings, Houston hopes to retain as much as possible about the HC.

"Our goal going into this is going to be to fight for the name of the Honors Council to remain so that there is still some sort of identity and prestige for

social ones.

The SOC may also have a hard time during this transition because of the complex point system it uses to fund all 150 of its student clubs.

Allison Foster, SOC advisor, said she hopes a transition clause that addresses the point system will be added to the constitution of the new council. Currently a club must earn at least 12 points a semester through various activities in order to be considered an active club and to receive funding.

With the SOC being dissolved next semester,

will now be streamlined."

Once combined, the new council will save approximately \$17,000 in expenses, which come from the streamlined office expenditures.

Hernandez hopes that these funds will be recycled into the new council in areas such as special allocations, or extra funds groups can request.

The new council is expected to begin operations during the Fall 2008 semester.

According to Katiana Saintable, president of Biscayne Bay Campus SGC, the new council will only indirectly affect the campus, as SGC-BBC has no current plans to pursue a similar

any points earned during this semester will not mean anything unless the new constitution addresses the issue.

Foster believes the new council, which she helped create, will benefit students.

"The councils were doing the same thing three different ways," Foster said. "Things

restructuring.

Committee meetings on the new council's constitution will begin within the next two weeks, according to Hernandez, who also expects the constitution to be completed sometime in February. The deadline for the constitution's completion is July 1, 2008.

CAST YOUR VOTE



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

VOTING DAY: Senior political science majors Francesca Menes, Clement Quinones, and Isreal Castillo of Pi Sigma Alpha hold mock elections for the Florida Primaries on Jan. 24, in GC.

'Something has to give'

TUITION, page 1

said. "We are under-serving our students with the difficulty they have getting into classes and the getting basic services they need. If we have to do more with less, it's going to be more manifest."

With less funding, universities won't be able to offer the amount of classes needed for students to graduate within four years. As of now, the average time it takes a student in Florida to graduate with a bachelor degree is four years and a semester, according to Edmonds. With less classes being offered, graduations rates will fall.

"Students are either taking classes they don't need to maintain a scholar-

ship or they're taking them much later," Hauptli said.

Despite raising the amount of funds in the University's history this year, this potential surplus will most likely be used to offset budget cuts.

"We've raised \$30 million in new operating funds. These cuts could be as high as \$30 million," said University President Modesto A. Maidique. "For the first time in 30 years, a member of our community becomes speaker of the house and does tremendous by us and then the economy takes it all away."

Unlike other universities, FIU will not implement a hiring or traveling freeze, according to Provost Ronald Berkman.

"[We] budgeted for a

6 percent reduction, but there is going to be an 8 percent reduction. We are able to cover the additional 2 percent with monies not unspent last year," Berkman said.

Although there will be no cuts this semester, University officials are anticipating more budget cuts from the Legislature in the near future.

Although the BOG voted to increase tuition, it does not necessarily mean the motion will pass. The Legislature is responsible for appropriating funds.

"We've made some hard choices already. We're going to have to make some hard choices within the next 14-month period because something has to give," Hauptli said.

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated Jan 24, the story titled "Dark Knight star dies in apartment", Chris Cabral should have been credited with additional reporting.

In the same issue, the story titled "Couple's memory honored", the "Lighthouse Charitable Foundation" should have been called "Anthony's Light Foundation."

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.



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SOC-BBC president resigns

SUSANA RODRIGUEZ
Asst. News Director

Biscayne Bay Campus' Student Organizations Council's president has filed his resignation, effective Feb. 5 at noon.

His term would have finished April 2008.

Joel L. Mintz was elected in April 2007 as a second-semester freshman. He leaves SOC-BBC for employment with the Wolfe University Center's information desk.

"Things are in much better shape [at SOC] now than they were then. I decided, for my own personal sake and academic reasons, it was time to let the [executive board] take over and accept the job," said Mintz, who had been looking to work at WUC for a year and a half.

By "better shape," Mintz refers to the start of the Fall 2007 term when SOC faced the vice president's resignation and its e-board members were absent without leave, prompting special elections to rebuild the

council. At the same time, WUC offered Mintz a position but he turned it down due to his duties as president.

"We were just implementing our new [club] participation requirements, and to leave them would have been to leave that situation up in the air," Mintz said.

Among changes made were the simplification of the club application process and club activity system.

But the demands of his position, while taking 14 credits and working

a part time job, took their toll.

"I had to do quadruple duty for people who weren't here. It seemed like we were always working against the clock," Mintz said. "Ever since we had the special election for the vice president my heart just wasn't in it."

While Mintz looks forward to his new job, some of his peers disagree with his decision.

"Some people in the Campus Life office haven't been very supportive or understanding. A lot of people are like, 'You're a leader right now, you're gonna go be an info desk attendant?' Some have said, 'You're gonna go join the dark side,' and others have even bad

mouthered me to my future employers," Mintz said.

With Mintz's departure, Didier Georges, SOC-BBC's vice president, will become president according to SOC's constitution. Georges defended Mintz's resignation.

"This is something he wanted, and the position finally opened and he has a great opportunity," Georges said. "I don't know why people are knocking him down or making fun of him. If he's happy they should be happy for him. The people that are bad mouthing him to his employers should stop and look at what they're doing - they're trying to knock someone down who feels in his heart he's made the right decision."

Comedy show tests limits

DAHIANA VILLALOBOS
Contributing Writer

A year after provoking race discussions, "Nig***, Wet****, Chi***" returns to FIU."

The NWC Comedy Show's message "There's only one race: the human race," plays with tensions in American race relations.

"It's a combination of stand-up and play, weaved into one show," said John Morris, a senior history major who will attend the Jan. 31 performance at the Wolfe Theatre at Biscayne Bay Campus.

The NWC's controversial satire made the theatre production a hit with FIU faculty and students last year. The show mixes drama, hip-hop, slam poetry and stand-up comedy that appeals to many nationalities. It aims to teach its audience lessons about stereotyping and racism. The goal is to help people reflect

on their own prejudices.

"You learn something from it. The moral to the story is that you shouldn't categorize people until you know them," said Johnita Hatcher, president of BBC's Student Programming Council.

Three comedians act out stereotypes embodied by African Americans, Asians and Hispanics.

"It was informative, real and funny," said Petra Haven, chair of SPC's Women's Celebration Week, who saw last year's show.

Controversial language and risky subject matter are reasons for this show's success. The company tours nationally, and is not limited to college campuses.

"It's an educational comedy that people must come and see," Hatcher said.

The show is free and open to all FIU students.

UNTIL NEXT TIME



SARIT WORK/THE BEACON

SPRINGER'S FINAL THOUGHTS: Jerry Springer visited BBC Jan. 23 and answered audience questions moderated by SGC-BBC vice president Cassandra Andrade.

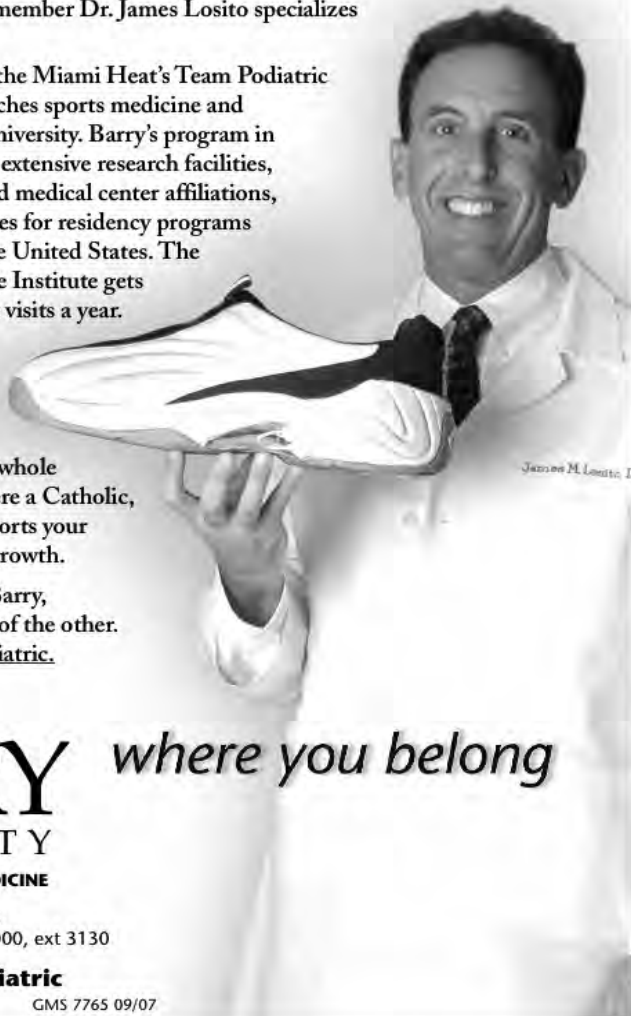
He keeps the Heat on their feet

Barry University faculty member Dr. James Losito specializes in fancy footwork.

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Photography by mariapaola GMS 7765 09/07

NEWSFLASH

Friends of Wine presents "A Taste of Italy"

Friends of Wine will hold their first wine taste of the year on Jan. 28 from 5 to 6 p.m. at the Hospitality building's dining room. Red and white Italian wines will be served with bread and cheeses. Entry is \$4 for members and \$8 for non-members. Yearly \$10 memberships will be offered. Guests must be 21 or older and present valid ID.

Wild Succulent Women to present "Fetishism"

Wild Succulent Women will present their first lecture of the semester, "Fetishism," on Jan. 31 at 9 p.m. in the Bay Vista Community Room. Free food will be served.

- Compiled by Catherine Kaiman, Eddith Sevilla and Susana Rodriguez

FIU CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY presents

Thursday, January 31, 2008 @ 7:30 p.m.
Graham Center Ballroom East,
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THE BEACON | Editorial

Budget cut hinders public services, education

In the wake of a legislative decision to implement a 5 percent tuition increase – effective this semester – state lawmakers have approved another, significantly larger increase: an almost ungodly 8 percent, or an additional \$186 per year. The increase is much better than the proposed 13 percent increase.

This recent increase comes from the state slashing nearly \$65 million from the State University System's (SUS) annual budget. There has been speculation that the cut in funding is a preemptive effort to save money on public services, such as law enforcement, schools – including the SUS – if and when Proposition One is implemented, lowering property tax and taking money from public services.

From 1977 to 2008 the average annual increase in tuition has been about 5.82 percent for in-state students. With this increase, the State University System stands to only generate \$32 million which does not justify the tuition increase. It's not just the schools themselves that will suffer, but the students who rely on state funds to attend the in-state universities. Students utilizing Bright Futures, which is funded by state lottery income, and the prepaid tuition program will find themselves in a rough situation when it comes time to pay the balances of their tuition.

The raise has also resulted in universities openly talking about laying off professors and further limiting enrollment which may eventually lead to community colleges having to cap enrollment as well.

Currently, Florida is ranked near the bottom in terms of tuition costs, but legislators hope to bring it up to about 38 or 39 in

the national rankings; closer to states with rapid increases like Mississippi and Arizona.

A recent finding by the Board of Governors estimates that if the prepaid program continues to guarantee full tuition, with the assumption that the tuition increases by 6.5 percent every year, the program's funds will run out of money in the foreseeable future.

What makes this cut even more alarming is that the Board of Governors says the quality of Florida universities is slipping because of budget cuts, but the Legislature keeps proposing more and more budget cuts for Florida's 11 state universities and, unfortunately, FIU students stand to lose a lot, besides just money.

A large portion of FIU's students rely on state funding and are even going to great lengths to stay enrolled.

"Students are either taking classes they don't need to maintain a scholarship or they're taking it much later," said Faculty Senate Chair Bruce Hauptli.

FIU has its fair share of private investors but the funding from the state is of critical importance. It's unfortunate that the state feels it necessary to improve by cutting funding to our universities. No one stands to win from this predicament, especially if money-guzzling amendments like Proposition One pass.

"We've raised \$30 million in new operating funds. These cuts could be as high as \$30 million," said University President Modesto A. Maidique. "For the first time in 30 years a member of our community becomes speaker of the house and does tremendous by us and then the economy takes it all away."



Proposal deals blow to tax payers

RODRIGO LOZANO
Contributing Writer

Florida will vote next week on a "property tax reform" referendum that will have long-term repercussions on our economic and social well-being.

All Floridians, especially students, must express concern when our state government attempts to make constitutional amendments that tarnish our social infrastructure, while being justified in the name of ameliorating property taxes.

In order for the government to provide services to the people, it must impose taxes to pay for such resources.

After all, government is the ultimate manifestation of a family unit. In order to maintain equilibrium, the government must stabilize its budget. It must make rational choices to avoid the abyss, and it must create diversity of services to ensure family utility. We Floridians have had our local governments burdened by the careless oversight of a state government eager to "shift burden for funding services onto local governments because of a revenue cap at the state level", so said the well respected local non-profit organization, Human Services Coalition.

If this proposal passes next week, it will mean that potential revenue to reinforce our local services will be cut. This is just a reflection of a government that over time, has continually cut taxes, while leaving our disadvantaged populations with no services and funding for social programs. Former President Ronald Reagan is a prime example of this mentality.

The President cut taxes to higher-end income brackets; dramatic welfare cuts were implemented; domestic social programs were discontinued; and insidious deficits were accrued, leading to monumentally high budget deficits.

A homestead exemption is a provision from the state government that protects a deceased resident's primary property; this also applies to people living on a fixed income, provided that the property is at least a half acre in size. The provision allows for portions of a resident's property tax to be exempted or cut by a set amount. The property is then taxed in proportion to the assessed value of home, minus the exemption value.

What Proposition One is intended to do is to double this exemption value, and reduce the amount of taxes paid by every individual

property owner. Essentially, Florida residents will pay less in taxes, but be allowed to exempt more for various reasons.

Under normal circumstances a tax cut would be a wonderful thing, but in this case, it's at the expense of public services: If Proposition One passes, law enforcement, emergency services, and schools will all suffer financially, as a result. Since this is a statewide bill, the results will be resounding, directly affecting the state university system, possibly resulting in yet another tuition hike.

The savings that are being touted by supporters of the amendments are a mere \$240 annually statewide, and \$300 in Hillsborough County for double-homesteaded exemptions. Savings aside, the flaws of the legislation are revealed by a simple cost-benefit analysis of the proposed changes. It is estimated that roughly \$5 billion in tax revenue would be forgone over the course of the next five years if the proposal passes. It's not worth sacrificing prompt service from local emergency services to save a mere \$300. We must not be distracted from the intricate repercussions of Proposition one. An attempt to save a few dollars should not undermine our concern for the collective good.

Campaign dies hard as Thompson drops out

ERIC FELDMAN
STAFF WRITER

The race for the GOP presidential nomination continues this week, even after Fred Thompson ended his campaign. Thompson was reminiscent of Ronald Reagan, not only on the political spectrum but also by his recognition as an actor.

Thompson ceased his run for the nomination this past Tuesday, Jan. 15, after entering the race rather late.

He was backed by a support-base that was eager to have a candidate who focused more on straight talk with regard to controversial issues, than campaign trail stops laden with fanfare. In terms of delegates won, Thompson finished fourth, sandwiched between Mike Huckabee and Ron Paul.

It is not clear which of the GOP candidates Thompson's supporters will now throw their

support behind. Huckabee may appeal to the religious right but has liberal policy ideas, John McCain will appeal to those who desire a strong military; even Mitt Romney has gotten support from former Thompson supporter, but

“ However, fewer than half of states have gone to the polls so far, and until Super Tuesday rolls around there is no ruling out an upset of predictions. ”

his campaign platform advocating "change" may not appeal to Thompson's conservative base.

The previously wide-open field of GOP hopefuls is finally beginning to see frontrunners emerging. Romney and McCain are

leading in both the delegate count and in recent Gallup polls. Huckabee's religious appeal fails to wield the same amount of momentum in the rest of the nation as it did in Iowa. His recent comments regarding how the Constitution

should be revised to be in line with God's will all but lost him any glimmer of support outside of the Christian Conservative wing.

Meanwhile, Rudy Giuliani has failed to win any primaries. In spite of his name recognition, his chances of securing victory, even

in Florida, where he has campaigned actively, has waned significantly.

Fewer than half of the states have gone to the polls thus far, and until Super Tuesday rolls around, there is no possibility of telling whether an upset will take place in the polls or in the primaries.

Huckabee did manage a second-place finish in South Carolina, and Giuliani has intentionally poured the majority of his campaign resources into larger states.

Paul, while trailing significantly behind the GOP's big three, has enjoyed a couple of morale boosting second-place finishes, in the Nevada and Louisiana caucuses.

He is currently in fourth place, above Giuliani. Neither Paul or Giuliani's campaigns have hinted toward leaving the race in the near future.

The candidates now focus on Florida, whose primaries are held on Jan. 29.



Music festival promises to be electrifying

ROCIO BLANCO-GARCIA
Staff Writer

The Music Technology Program at FIU's School of Music will be hosting the second annual Florida Electro-Acoustic Student music festival (FEAST).

The two-day-long festival will feature the works of student composers of some of Florida's major schools such as UM, UCF and FIU.

It is a free festival and will begin at 8 p.m. in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

"This event will be full of 'sound art'. It will be something different everyone should experience," said Erik DeLuca, one of the coordinators of the event and a performer in the concerts.

The event will also draw some prominent guest speakers. Kris-

tine H. Burns, associate dean of academic affairs for the College of Architecture and The Arts at FIU will give a lecture.

She is also the author of the book "Women and Music in the U.S. Since 1900."

Burns' husband and prestigious composer and author, Colby Leider along with Gustavo Matamoros, director of the Sound Arts Workshop since 1996, will also speak. Their lectures will take place Feb. 2 in Green Library 135 at 3 p.m.

"This event is really special and students are really lucky to have events like this happening on campus. It's like going to an art museum. All you have to do is use your ears as if they were your eyes in an art gallery," DeLuca said.

DeLuca also said the pieces in

this year's festival will be really different.

"Some of the pieces will be fun, others serious, obnoxious, melodic, loud or soft. Some will leave you in a confused state," he said.

DeLuca is not the only one showing excitement for the event. Steven Chen, a senior majoring in music, is also excited about the festival.

"I think this event will open people's minds and creativity when it comes to music and it will help them explore something they may have never experienced before," Chen said.

Jessica Rodriguez, public relations coordinator and student assistant for the College of Architecture and the Arts, believes this is one of the events music students get most excited

about.

"It's not the typical music concert. This is acoustic music that allows students to be more creative," she said. "Even I'm excited about it."

Electro-acoustic music, a genre that originated at the end of World War II in France and Germany, has evolved from the use of tapes to record the sounds, to the use of laptops, which is the technology that will be used in the festival.

The coordinators of the event have been looking for volunteers to help out and many clubs have joined them.

The association EARS, Electro-Acoustic Research Society, has made itself responsible for much of the organization of the event.

It will be running the technol-

ogy and mixers used in the open laptop/electronic jam sessions that will take place Feb. 2 at 10 p.m.

They are also responsible for making the performers feel comfortable.

An advertising company has also collaborated by providing posters to promote the event.

Coordinators have also created a Web site, www.feastfest.org where Paula Matthusen, visiting instructor and coordinator for the music technology department, together with the other participants of the event, invites music enthusiasts to join the two-day-long festival.

"We have been working really hard to make this a successful event," DeLuca said. "Now all we need is for people to come and join us."

Past experiences give assistant director the edge

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

A primary mission of the Disability Resource Center is to help students with mental and physical disabilities. For one of its members, that mission statement takes on a much more personal meaning.

Assistant director of the DRC, Beverly Trott grew up with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and dyslexia. Growing up, Trott said that she was mistreated by teachers as a result of her disabilities.

"When I was a child, I sat next to the teacher and they used to beat me up...back in my day it was perfectly acceptable for you to be smacked with a ruler if they thought you were a little rambunctious," Trott said.

That treatment pushed her to overcome her disability and earn a magna cum laude bachelors in science of psychology, a master of science in psychology and a doctorate of psychology in clinical psychology.

"I know the pain that comes along with being special," Trott said. "I had to repeat a doctoral course three times because I couldn't spell the big words. Sometimes it's best to find the professor who is willing to

accommodate your needs."

Trott's experiences have also given her valuable insight to the students she helps, according to Amanda Niguidula, interim director of the DRC.

"Her rapport with students is typically very remarkable," Niguidula said. "I've always been impressed in my time working with her here at the DRC. She is such an energetic, committed and engaging staff member."

According to Niguidula, Trott is creative when it comes to problem solving for students. That comes partially from her own history. That creativity has had a strong impact on the students she helps.

"I seldom hear anything from the students than the fact that they felt supported and encouraged and at least some level of resolution to whatever they were trying to get assistance with," Niguidula said. "She often finds ways to empower students by working with them directly."

Other DRC staff members are equally impressed with Trott's determination.

"No battle is not worth fighting. There is no problem that can't be fixed," said Joanna Lindsay, assistant director at the DRC. "She always champions the students."



BEN F. BADGER JR./THE BEACON

SOCIAL WORK: Beverly Trott assistant director of the Disabilities Resource Center works on helping a student document their mental disability.

When asked what would happen if Trott were to leave the DRC, Niguidula said that in the short term the office would feel the loss as Trott has become key in servicing students and faculty.

"In some ways you take her for granted," Niguidula said.

Though Trott does not have an imme-

Helping students with disabilities cope

TROTT, page 6

desire to leave the DRC, she has expressed a desire to add to her psychology doctorate by receiving her clinical license.

“I think if she were to leave, the students would be impacted by her loss,” Lindsay said. “I think so much more because of their relationship with her. It would be hard for me to recreate a four or five year relationship she has with someone.”

All around, having strong relationships are among Trott’s top strengths at the DRC, and they are not only with the students she counsels at the DRC.

“Me and Dr. Trott are very good friends,” said Christopher Petersen, a senior and Trott’s assistant. “She helps me out, I help

her out. She has this disability yet she’s able to help so many people. She’s awesome.”

In addition to Trott’s five years at the DRC, she is also an adjunct professor for the Psychology department and teaches intro to psychology.

“Through lots of hard work and determination, I’m going to do it, no matter what, with more time, more energy, more effort,” Trott said.

For more information on the DRC you can visit their Web site at www.fiu.edu/~drc.

- additional reporting by Jose Martinez

Contact Ben F. Badger Jr. at ben.badger@fiusm.com

BLOOD DONOR



VICTORIA LYNCH /THE BEACON

SAVING LIVES: Junior Ever Zambrano saves two lives by donating blood at the on-campus blood drive in front of the Graham Center bookstore last week. The blood drive lasted three days and donors received free food among other freebies.

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Dentistry club gives students an upper hand

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

The Pre-Dental Society offers career preparation and training for students with dreams of dentistry and drills. For 10 years the club has molded future dentists and currently boasts about 170 members.

Meeting only 4 times a year with social events between each semester, the Pre-Dental Society prepares its members for the dentistry field by having workshops.

The workshops help guide their members through the application process to get into Dental School giving tips on how to get accepted, when to apply and how to fill out their personal statement, an essay that must be submitted to any

dental school along with their application.

This year, the group began holding Dental Workshops. They are separate from the general meetings and teach students different things about dentistry. The workshops are coordinated by the club's community service coordinator, Maria Gonzalez.

One recent workshop focused on impressions. The group arranged for a dental technician to come into the school with all the necessary materials and equipment so the students could get the chance to do moldings and impressions of their own teeth.

Potential members must fill out an application and pay a \$35 dollar fee. Applications can be found on their website, www.fiu.edu/~dental.

The \$35 dollars includes a club t-shirt

chance to go to the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, where only the most active members are selected based on a point system created at the beginning of each semester.

The UF Trip is an open house where students have the opportunity to see first hand what the Dental School is like. Afterward, the group goes to Orlando allowing them to bond together as a group.

The club will also be participating in Relay for Life, which takes place this year on February 15. Relay for Life is a fundraising event that raises money for Cancer research. Historian, Cynthia Yu and Events Coordinator, Norbert Camacho are captains for the event.

Camacho and Yu are proud to be part of the first club to have bought five teams to Relay for Life under the banner of the same group. The club received a certificate for this accomplishment. As of now they have raised \$1800 for the event.

Another opportunity the Pre-Dental Society offers is the chance to shadow a dentist. Recently elected Shadowing Coordinator is junior Fernando San

require him to arrange for members to meet with dentists and see how procedures are done on patients.

"You really don't know what you want to do unless you are exposed to it," said Camacho. "You want to be many things but until you [are] there in front of it, that's when you say 'I love this and I can do this for the rest of my life'."

Camacho, Yu, and San Juan are excited about the medical school that will be opening soon on campus. They hope that in the future FIU will have a Dental School because currently there are only two dental schools in Florida; University of Florida and Nova Southeastern University.

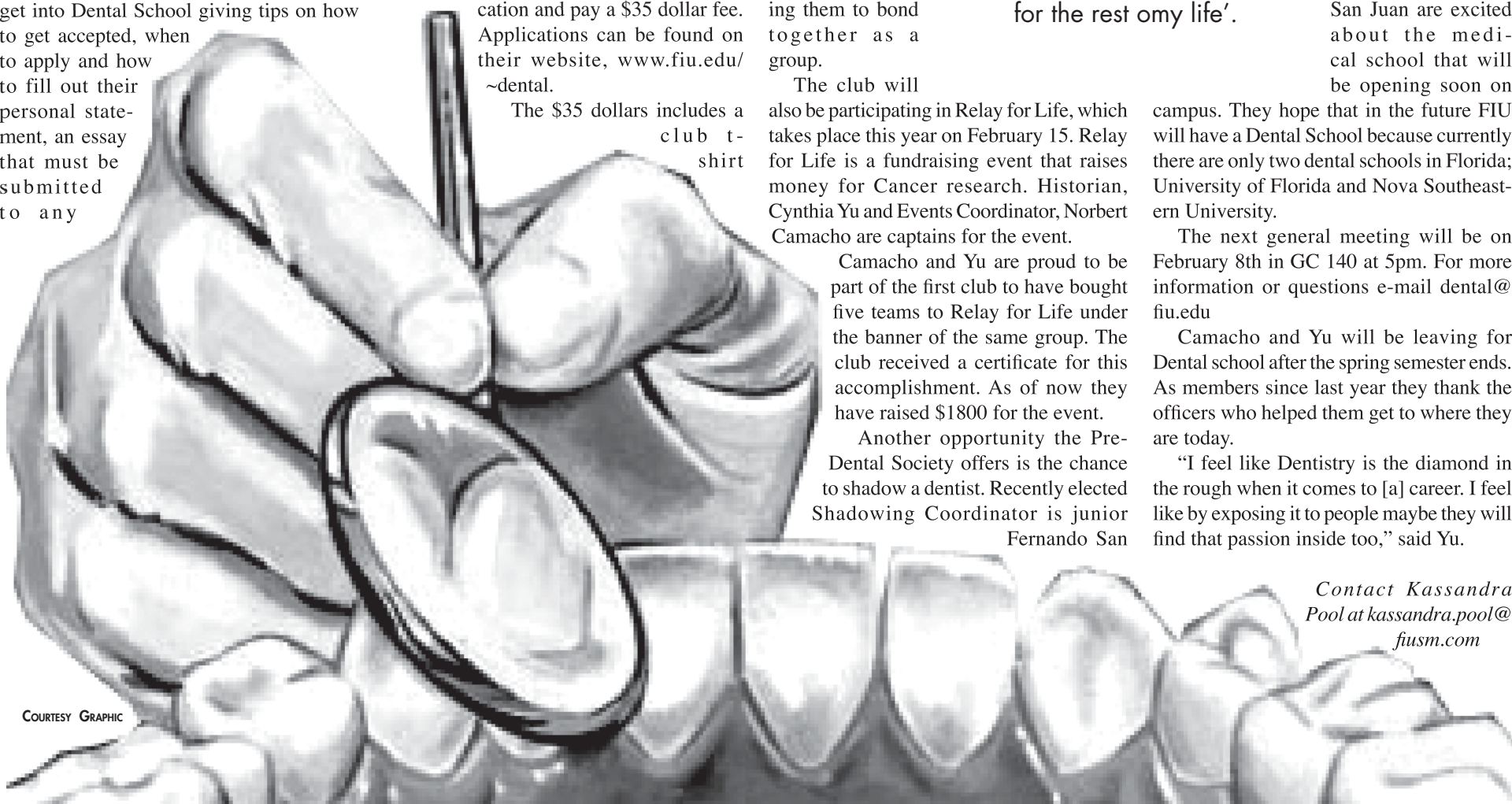
The next general meeting will be on February 8th in GC 140 at 5pm. For more information or questions e-mail dental@fiu.edu

Camacho and Yu will be leaving for Dental school after the spring semester ends. As members since last year they thank the officers who helped them get to where they are today.

"I feel like Dentistry is the diamond in the rough when it comes to [a] career. I feel like by exposing it to people maybe they will find that passion inside too," said Yu.

You really don't know what you want to do unless you are exposed to it ... You want to be many things, but until you [are] there in front of it, that's when you say 'I love this and I can do this for the rest of my life'.

Contact *Kassandra Pool* at kassandra.pool@fiu.edu



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REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

CONCERT *The Audition/Envy on the Coast*

'Audition' green with envy at Culture Room

VICTORIA LYNCH
Staff Writer

It took only one song for the crowd to go wild when Envy on the Coast, a band that was named one of Alternative Press' 100 Band You Need To Know in 2007, took the stage last Saturday night at the Fort Lauderdale Culture Room.

The band, natives of Long Island, opened with a more famous song, "Sugar Skulls."

It was played with intense energy, an energy that was smoothly brought down a notch, in a good way, when the band performed the ballad, "Starving Your Friends."

This was complemented by the voices of the crowd singing along to the dramatic and surprisingly beautiful lyrics.

Guitarist Brian Byrne describes the band's sound best on the band's Web site.

"We can write a song

that's aggressive and has a really heavy bridge in it that's almost like a breakdown. But then we can have songs with really big choruses, soaring leads and lots of harmonies and not be afraid of it," he said.

Envy on the Coast proved to be a hard act to follow.

The Audition, a band that is more famous and sounds similar to pop-punk stars Fall Out Boy, never got to the level of energy that Envy on the Coast had, even though The Audition is the tour headliner.

Since they had a new record being released three days after the show, they opted to play more of the new songs instead of the ones the audience knew, which made their performance suffer and sing-alongs not so common.

However, their performance wasn't a complete disaster. When they played popular songs "It's

Too Late" and "Don't Be So Hard," the crowd couldn't resist jumping up and down to the beat and a mosh pit exploded in the center of the club.

The band mentioned the increase in crowd energy, which made them rock out even harder to match the crowd's intensity.

Unlike Envy on the Coast, though, The Audition got the whole crowd involved, not just the people who were lucky enough to be on the ground in front.

At one point, Danny Stevens, the band's lead vocalist, attempted to climb on top of the speakers so he could join his friends on the balcony who were otherwise left out.

Ultimately, both bands left a lasting impression on the packed house and on me especially - so much that I couldn't help stopping by their merchandise booth on the way out.

MUSIC *The Magnetic Fields*

Band charged, ready to roll

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. News Director

There is a troubling trend going on in indie music lately that is making me wonder whether I am sitting on an island all by myself. From Interpol to The National to The Magnetic Fields, whose eighth album "Distortion" was released on Jan. 22, there are a large number of indie bands who seem content to ride on their semi-interesting sounding bass voices and dial it in when it comes to melody.

This probably seems borderline sacrilegious to the numerous music fans and critics who count the National's Boxer or the Fields' 69 Love Songs among their favorite albums, but for me, there has to be more going for a band than a bored baritone vocalist and some minor chords somewhere in the background.

Now, what sets The Magnetic Fields apart, is lead singer Stephin Merritt's use of guest vocalists. This is what ultimately saves the feedback drenched album.

The best songs on the album are the ones other singers take the reign for, such as "California Girls," a breezy send up of the Beach Boys classic.

Relying on cliché lyrics that are, at best, clumsy ("They ain't broke, so they put on airs, the faux folks sans derrieres"), lyrically the song does not hit its stride until vocalist Shirley Simms describes her response to those fake girls, a killing spree with a battle axe.

Moments like that shine through the distorted sound the album has, which proves to be a fairly boring listen for the most part. "Mr.



COURTESY PHOTO

Mistletoe" and "Too Drunk To Dream" are the only songs by him that come close to shedding this style.

"Too Drunk to Dream," after a pretty horrid 35 second opening, is arguably the album's best song. It uses the feedback of the guitars effectively, adding additional textures to the song that would leave the song lacking without them. It also might actually be able to get people out of their chairs if played in a crowded room; isn't that ultimately the goal of pop music?

When he sings "I gotta get too pissed to miss you or I'll never get to sleep/I gotta drink wine not to pine for you and God knows that ain't cheap,"

I see it as a sort of mission statement. Cover up the bad parts so maybe the good can shine through eventually.

If that was the goal, it is difficult to say whether he achieves it.

The distortion doesn't do much to cover up the boring songs, but it allows the few great songs to really shine through.

Contact Chris Towers at chris.towers@fusm.com

GAME *Line Rider*

Violence can be funny



Violence is no laughing matter. However, in the world of video games, there are some exceptions. "Line Rider" is one of these exceptions. Although not necessarily a violent game, I think most people will find that half the fun is in the potential that this game has to get pretty violent in its own special way.

"Line Rider" is a two-dimensional game that features a heroic bobsledder willing to traverse any kind of track you dare build for him. The player uses the drawing and editing tools provided to draw lines from top left to bottom right, creating a track.

There are three types of lines you can draw on your track. Regular lines are blue and can be used as the standard line for your track. Acceleration lines are red and will give the rider an extra boost of speed when he is over them. Scenery lines are green and do not interact with the rider but are used instead to create a background scene.

Regular and Acceleration lines each have a colored side and a black side. The black side of the lines is the collision side. A run-in with these is like slamming into a wall

for the rider. If you pick and choose where he will collide carefully, it can make for a really interesting show.

Once you have your track set up, a play button will send the rider down the track. You can watch what happens and make any changes. You can also designate a new start point for the rider but he will still travel from left to right.

An interesting tool to use is the flag. Kind of like an instant replay, the flag tool lets you save the rider's current position and speed at a specific point in the simulation. Once a flag is placed, pressing the play button will start the rider from that position.

You can either free hand the track or use the line tool to make straight lines. There is an eraser in case you make a mistake. If you have made a total mess of things and can not figure out how to even begin to fix it, you can delete the whole thing and start fresh.

"Line Rider" is a game with a very simple concept. You can make your rider perform tricks, or lead him to a certain, albeit entertaining, death. A couple minutes of playing around with the tools and perfecting your track can lead to an endlessly rewarding experience. You can get started at www.mostplays.com by searching "Line Rider" at the top of the page.

Contact Ashlyn Toledo at ashlyn.toledo@fusm.com

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Hockey hooligans, nice guy agent and goofy golfers make top 10 sports movie list

TOWERS, page 12

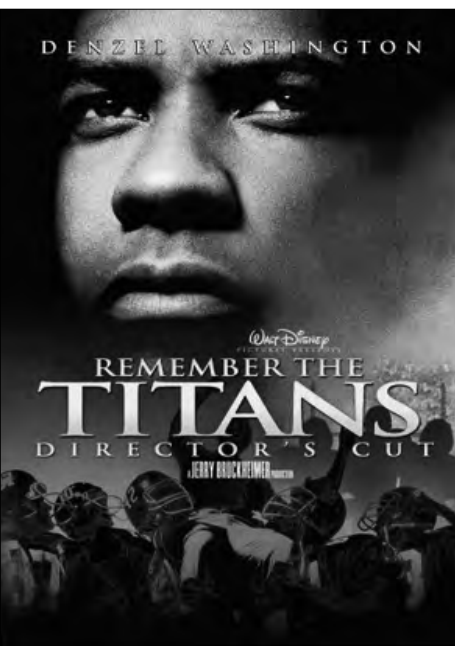
5. SLAP SHOT (1977)

The lone hockey film on the list is also the least well known of the ten, which is a truly sad fact. If you have ever seen this movie, you know just how brilliantly foul mouthed and entertaining it is.

The story is about how a typical “bastard owner threatens to move a team, team gets motivated” story line that permeates throughout half of all sports movies, but the characters – specifically the goonish Hanson brothers, whose style of play looks more like professional wrestling than hockey – give the movie a liveliness most movies can’t touch.

6. REMEMBER THE TITANS (2000)

I felt bad for not including a football movie in my top 5, but for some reason, football movies simply don’t translate that well to the big screen. That is why I felt compelled to pick a football movie that, again, isn’t really



COURTESY PHOTO

even about football. Sure, Denzel probably overacts this role like he does every role, but he is really an afterthought for me in this movie.

The two young actors who play the defensive captains truly steal the movie, best exemplifying the growth the players truly go through. For every cliché in this movie (and there are many), there are real human relationships that shine through 10 times brighter.

7. HOOP DREAMS (1994)

The lone basketball movie to make the list is also the lone documentary to make the list, which makes perfect sense.

The big elephant in the room nobody wants to discuss is the racial and social-cultural undertones that run through middle-America’s relationship with basketball, which is an issue that is impossible to replicate through fiction without caricatures.

The only way to address it is through unbiased lens of a documentary. The emotion rings more true in this movie than perhaps any other as you are watching the rise and fall of real people, which is something that is important to remember regarding this movie.

8. A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN (1992)

Six words—“There’s no crying in baseball!”—are all this movie needs to deserve its spot on this list.

9. THE BIG LEBOWSKI (1998)

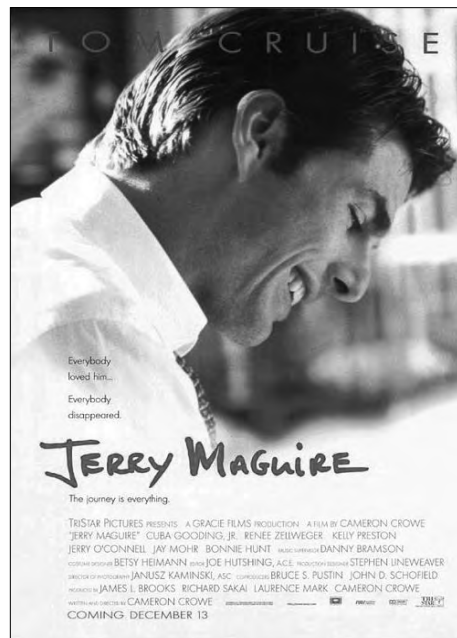
Is bowling a sport? Probably not. Is the Big Lebowski about bowling? Not really, despite the fact that anywhere from a quarter of the film takes place in a bowling alley. So how can this be on the list? Because it is just that good, and that funny.

The bowling is secondary to a convoluted plot involving nihilists, feminists and Tara Reid’s pinky toe, but the common theme throughout is the bowling

alley the characters constantly return to.

10. JERRY MAGUIRE (1996)

I admit, I may be cheating with these last two, as they both only feature sports



COURTESY PHOTO

as a secondary part of the plot, but both movies are so good they transcend any categories you want to put them in, and that is why I feel no remorse for including them.

Honestly, in this movie, the best relationships aren’t between the man and the woman, but rather the agent, played by Tom Cruise, and the egotistical athlete, played brilliantly by Cuba Gooding Jr. in his best role to date.

In the days before cocky, outspoken wide receivers like Terrell Owens and Chad “Ocho Cinco” Johnson, Gooding’s portrayal of Rod Tidwell seems rather subdued in this movie, but he still commands every scene he is in, creating one of the greatest fictional athletes in movie history.

Football gods biased toward Pats


VILLARMARZO, page 12

nullified after a timeout came from the Ravens sideline. The Patriots converted the fourth down and were stopped before reaching the endzone, but a very controversial defensive holding penalty gave the Patriots a fresh set of downs to score the winning touchdown.

Fast forward now to the recent AFC Championship game against the San Diego Chargers. Not only were there multiple non-calls against the Patriots defenders – including holding penalties, pass interference penalties, roughing the passer penalties, etc. At one point, linebacker Mike Vrabel performed a leg sweep on Charger quarterback Philip Rivers that wasn’t called. The trip caused Rivers to throw off balance and get intercepted in a crucial moment in the game.

That wasn’t the first game the Patriots have played dirty. They’ve been doing it for years – not to mention the whole controversy about filming opposing defensive signals. Why, football gods, is this team getting all the luck and getting away with dirty play? I think it’s about time you proved to everyone that sometimes, the bad guy gets taken down. That David can beat Goliath once again. And that the almighty Patriots can be knocked off their high pedestal. Give the millions of Americans who will not be rooting for the Patriots – everyone outside of New England – what they want to see and have the Patriots collapse at the worst possible time to the younger brother of Tom Brady’s arch nemesis.

With Love,
Xavier Villarmarzo
P.S. If you want, I will totally sacrifice a goat for you.



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Sisters' relationship still strong despite distance

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Liene is more athletic and a better defender, according to Lasma.

"It would be interesting to play against each other one day," Lasma said. "Then all the differences and similarities would be easier to track, although my dream would be us playing together on a team some time in a future."

Senior guard Asha Neal played with Lasma and now plays with Liene and she has noticed the differences between the Jekabsons sisters.

"I think Liene has come in a little stronger than Lasma did," Neal said. "Lasma came out and was better her junior and senior year. Liene has come in and done a tremendous job on rebounding."

Despite following in her older sister's footsteps, Liene feels no pressure.

She said the most pressure she has received thus far is from having to step up due to the team's injuries.

"I think she has really stepped up, because we have lost two to major post players," [who said this?] "She has done an outstanding job stepping and handling all this pressure as a freshman."

Although Liene does enjoy living in Miami, she misses Latvia because her parents and family live there.

Like many student-athletes, she lives on campus and actually rooms with the teams' other freshmen: guard Tabitha Drake, forward Fanni Hutlassa and center Maja Krajacic.

As far as her teammates

go, Liene feels she has learned a lot from senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson, who she feels helps keep the team together.

"I think LaQuetta does that [lead the team] very well and I admire how she does it. She always supporting and encouraging us," Liene said.

This season, Liene has scored 36 total points and pulled down 44 rebounds.

Those numbers surpass Lasma's freshman year statistics. Her older sister still contacts her before every game.

"I try to leave her an encouraging message in Facebook or Skype before the game," Lasma said. "The last part of our conversations always is wishing each other good luck and more minutes for next the game."

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



PHOTO COURTESY FIU SPORTS

THROWING IT UP: Joanne Jadotte was named the Sun Belt Conference indoor women's field and track athlete of the week. She set the shot put toss record at 15.16 meters.

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SISTER ACT

Final plea to football deities



Commentary

Xavier Villarmarzo
Copy Editor

After a disappointing and frustrating NFL season – especially the playoffs – the upcoming Super Bowl between the 18-0 New England Patriots against the New York Giants is the final chance for this season to be redeemed for me.

If the Patriots lose, it would make everything more memorable. The Patriots finishing 18-1 will make all the other horrors of this season disappear.

There is no way the Giants, who make a nice Cinderella story, will be able to defeat arguably the greatest team in NFL history. So without resorting to sacrificing a goat to the football gods, I will write them one final plea:

Dear football gods,

Seriously, what's with the favoritism to the Patriots? Why give them their fourth Super Bowl title this decade? What did they do to deserve it?

People argue that it's the result of good coaching and personnel moves, but I know you have been showing them some favoritism dating back to that "tuck rule" game against Oakland in the 2002 playoffs that led to New England's first Super Bowl win.

Year after year they seem to get every break. After all, they have won three Super Bowls already. But that's fine. I got over those three. But this year has been ridiculous. The near-losses to the Indianapolis Colts, Philadelphia Eagles and Giants in the regular season were well-deserved victories. But the Dec. 3 contest at Baltimore against the Ravens should have been a loss. The Patriots got two favorable calls on the final comeback drive. First, the stopped fourth-and-1 quarterback sneak that was stuffed, but

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SAM LEWIS / FIU ATHLETICS

JESSICA MARSHALL / BEACON FILE PHOTO

JEKABSONE FAMILY: Lasma Jekabsone (right) influenced her younger sister Liene (left) to play basketball in Latvia as a child.

Freshman fills older sister's shoes

DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

For the last two years, the Golden Panthers frontcourt was anchored by center Lasma Jekabsone.

Even though she graduated in Spring 2007, the Golden Panthers welcomed another jersey reading "Jekabsone" on the back. Freshman Liene Jekabsone enters this season as a forward one season after her older sister Lasma was second in the team in scoring last season.

Born in Smiltene, Latvia, Liene learned English at a young age and Lasma introduced

her to the game of basketball.

"She helped me like a sister, not like a player and I always learned from her," Liene said. "I did not know what to do and she was playing sports. Basically, I went to basketball because she was playing basketball."

Before coming to FIU, Liene was an accomplished prep player in Latvia where she won four national championships as a youth player. Liene was also named MVP of the Riga City Championship in 2007.

The sisters both hope they can one day play together and perhaps compete against one another. Due to their age difference, the sisters have never actually played one-on-one

against each other.

"I am so proud of my sister," said Lasma, who is currently playing basketball in Naples, Italy. "When I got in FIU, I told her that one day she could be right there where I was. In a way, this is her second time of living a collegiate athlete's life. She already went through it with me once."

On the court the sisters have a similar style as they are both nearly the same height. Lasma says they are both good rebounders with the only a couple of differences – Liene is left-handed and Lasma is right-handed. Also,

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No crying here if you didn't make the top 10 sports movies



Commentary

Chris Towers
Asst. News Director

As the two most dominant forms of diversion in our society over the course of the last century or so, sports and movies have sometimes been intertwined.

From "The Freshman" – arguably the first sports movie – until now, movies have been an important part of cinema and it is with this in mind that I am counting down my top sports movies of all time.

1. THE SANDLOT (1993)

The best sports movies, like the best

2. CADDYSHACK (1980)

Not only is it the second greatest

movies, are only ever ostensibly about the topic they claim to cover.

The Sandlot is a movie that is seminal to anyone born between the years of 1985 and 1995, but is mostly unknown otherwise, so this might be somewhat of a surprise pick.

But if you ask me, no movie in history has so accurately captured the pure joy of being a kid during the summer.

From getting kicked out of the pool to getting into the "biggest pickle" of all time, to the ultimate schoolyard taunt ("You play ball like a girl!"), this movie represents everything that was great about being a kid. Plus, who among us still doesn't want a pair of PF Fliers?

sports movie of all time, it is arguably the funniest movie of all time. It features three comedic geniuses at the absolute height of their games: Bill Murray, Chevy Chase and Rodney Dangerfield.

They are all absolutely hysterical in every scene they are in. It is also Tiger Woods' favorite movie, so how can you argue with that?

In the early 1980's, nobody had better comedic timing than Chevy Chase, who deadpans every single line in this movie, and Murray's Carl Spackler is one of the most brilliantly dim-witted characters in all of cinema.

3. ROCKY (1976)

Sure, the boxing scenes are more like ball room dancing with blood and you can't understand a word Stallone says

throughout the entirety of the film, but it is impossible to deny the power of this movie, which launched one of the most successful franchises in movie history.

4. FIELD OF DREAMS (1989)

This is maybe the only movie that "manly men" will allow themselves to shed a tear in. That says a lot about the dramatic impact of this movie.

"If you build it, he will come" stands as one of the most enduring lines in any movie, and the scene when he finally gets to play catch with his dad is the one where even the hardened of hearts has to, at the very least, let out a little sob to let the world know they aren't dead inside.

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