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NADERADE

Nader hobbels back into race

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TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY BILL

Summer may bring cheaper textbooks

CHRISTINA VEIGA
News Director

Long lines and outrageous prices could become a thing of the past at State University System campus bookstores.

If passed, Florida House bill 603, or the Florida Textbook Affordability Bill, will require Florida colleges and universities to provide textbook information to students, allowing them to hunt for the best prices at the beginning of each semester.

The bill has been filed in the 2008 Legislature, and will become effective July 1 if approved.

"I'd be all for a bill making textbooks cheaper," said senior Kris Graham. "It's almost as bad as prescription drugs."

Graham bought all his textbooks through the FIU Bookstore this semester, costing him \$400-\$500 for four classes.

Championed by Rep. Anitere Flores, R-Miami and former FIU lobbyist, and XBooks Inc., a free online textbook selling company based in Tallahassee, the bill will require schools to post the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) of required textbooks on university Web sites at least 30 days before the beginning of each semester.

"The biggest problem is there is obviously no competition in the college textbook market because students really only have one option, and that's the campus bookstore," said Audie Rowell, president and co-founder of XBooks, Inc. "They don't have time to search for the cheaper books online, and they don't have an opportunity to sell their books to other students."

With many students turning to online services and alternative book stores that surround college campuses, knowing in advance which texts are required will give students time to shop around, and allows shipping time for online purchases.

"I'm a fan of Amazon; anything not to buy textbooks from the school bookstore," said junior Nina Martinez, who admits to not buying textbooks or just copying crucial parts from friends when prices are too expensive.

Martinez said she spent \$150 buying books on *Amazon.com* this semester, but has spent \$300-\$400 at the FIU Bookstore in the past.

The bill will also require professors to determine whether changes in new editions make it necessary to use that edition, and to ensure that items sold in packages would

BOOKS, page 2

WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

NOT YOUR AVERAGE CLASSROOM: Hospitality Management students at FIU shuck fava beans for Tyler Florence's BubbleQ menu at this year's South Beach Wine and Food Festival. More than 700 students volunteered at the festival, which attracted 30,000 people.

Taste buds satisfied on Ocean Drive

EDDITH SEVILLA
BBC Managing Editor

More than 30,000 people visited the South Beach Wine and Food Festival to mingle with their favorite Food Network chefs, taste different wines and spirits and eat various foods.

Bobbette Coulter of Philadelphia, an avid merlot drinker, was shocked when she discovered FIU students made the merlot she had drank.

"I didn't even know that when I got it. I think it's wonderful. Coulter said. "At home, I strictly drink merlot. This is a little bit more

fruity than what I have at home, but I liked it very much."

The festival featured various events including the "Kellogg's Kidz Kitchen" hosted by star chef Giada De Laurentiis and the "Barilla Interactive Cooking Lunch," a hands on cooking course on Asian cuisine hosted by chef Ming Tsai.

"We went to the French tent and we tried all the wines there and the cheeses and that's when we saw Giada and Paula Deen," said Vivian Franco, an FIU alumna who spent a short time in line to get her book autographed by one of the star chefs.

Despite the heat, FIU alumna Jessica Rodriguez enjoyed the numerous events presented by the Food Network.

"I come every year and I love it. I watch the Food Network religiously. I love the chefs, I love the food, I love the wine and it's at the beach," Rodriguez said. "Other than the [heat], it's South Florida. That's expected."

While thousands enjoyed the food, beverages and chef presentations, about 700 students volunteered to help the event run smoothly.

WINE AND FOOD, page 3

FIU plucks six Model U.N. honors

LUIS VALDEZ
Staff Writer

The FIU Model United Nations delegation brought six awards back to the University after participating in the Harvard Model U.N. conference in February.

The winnings were unprecedented in the organization's history.

"We've never done this before," said Alexandra Acosta, one of the head delegates. "It was a huge surprise that shows that humble schools like FIU can come up on top."

The FIU delegation was comprised of 10 rookies and seven veterans who were involved in nine separate committees.

Together, they brought home awards in five of these committees, including three honorary mentions, one outstanding delegation and one best delegation.

In addition, the FIU team won best overall small delegation.

This award is one of the top three honors bestowed by the conference, which includes best international delegation and best large delegation.

"We have never done so well at the

Harvard conference before. Our only previous award was from last year when we got one honorary mention," Acosta said.

The Harvard Model U.N. conference was held in Boston from Feb. 14-18 and is considered to be the country's second most important competition for model U.N. organizations.

According to Kathleen Black, a head delegate, this is second to the model U.N. simulation held in New York, which is to be held next month.

MODEL U.N., page 2

Power outages leave millions without electricity



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

BLACK OUT: The Graham Center is seen in a whole new light by students on Feb. 26, when major power outages affected much of Florida, leaving students in the dark.

AP Wire

Hundreds of thousands of people were without electricity across Florida Tuesday after eight power plants went offline, authorities said.

Between 600,000 and 800,000 households had no electricity at the height of the crisis Tuesday afternoon, though power was slowly being restored, Karen Vissepo of Florida Power and Light told broadcaster CNN.

Media reports said the outage could have affected as many as 4 million people.

The outage affected traffic lights, Miami's International Airport, air conditioning units and trapped people in elevators.

Authorities said some kind of grid disturbance likely caused

the power plants to shut down - sparking rolling blackouts - but could not give an exact cause of the problem by the time of publication.

At least two nuclear power plants were involved, though it was unclear if the power plants themselves went offline first or if the shutdown was triggered by a problem on the grid.

Much of the outage was restricted to southern Florida, though *The Miami Herald* reported that electricity was out as far north as Jacksonville.

Mayor Carlos Alvarez of Miami-Dade County said in a news conference that the problem was "technical," not criminal, and that power would be restored "within the next couple of hours."

Bill may provide scouting time for best book prices

BOOKS, page 1

all be used in a course.

That's good news to students like Graham, who said new editions and bundled packages are just one way campus bookstores "stick it to us."

Rowell helped start XBooks, Inc. when he realized how expensive textbooks are as a returning student at Florida State University.

The company provides a way for students to network together to be able to buy and sell their textbooks among themselves, Rowell said.

When XBooks realized their site wasn't working out because students didn't have enough time to shop around, they approached Flores, who was already working on a bill that would have exempted textbooks from sales tax.

Flores recognized the need for textbook reform through her previous work as a lobbyist for FIU.

Instead of pushing for tax exemptions, Flores and Rowell merged their ideas.

"You don't necessarily make textbooks cheaper by not charging tax on them. We have a much bigger prob-

lem," Flores said. "The way we make textbooks cheaper is by promoting competition and encouraging professors and universities to ask questions that maybe they aren't asking now."

Flores expects the Legislation to pass by May, when the legislative session will end.

"It's an issue that the universities, community colleges and student governments have gotten more vocal about. One of the most important things is for university students to let their elected officials know that they want this to pass," Flores said.

New York next stop for Model U.N. participants

MODEL U.N., page 1

There, the procedures significantly differ from the Harvard conference; in the Boston simulation, a team could only propose one resolution.

In New York's, however, this is not the case, as there is no limit to proposals.

"At Harvard it was much more regulated and we could only pass one resolution. In New York, where it's less regulated, we plan to pass many more," said veteran participant Robert Myers, who won the Best Delegation Award at the Harvard conference alongside his partner.

Teams of delegates from schools all over the

world compete in both events.

"The Model U.N. is an international organization with schools from all over the U.S. and from places like Turkey, China, Latin America, Europe and Africa," said Gonul Tol, director of the FIU Model U.N.

According to Tol, the student delegates represent a country at the Model U.N. conferences and simulations.

They then try to make alliances with other countries to support a number of proposed resolutions.

Countries are selected for the Model U.N. delegates based on a submission of the group's top 10 choices, said Kathleen Black, also a head del-

egate.

At the Harvard conference, FIU delegates represented Cameroon. In March, delegates will represent the Czech Republic for the New York simulation.

According to Black, Cameroon is a developed African nation with close ties to the African Union and European states, and the Czech Republic is a part of the most powerful economic block and has ties to both the Eastern and European Union.

The FIU Model U.N. is one of the most challenging institutions the University has.

"We do a lot of research into our countries so you have to be a good academic researcher. You must also be able to express, present and defend your views with good communication skills," Tol said. "Also, it is very competitive to get in. For this semester we got 90 applications and we accepted only 17."

If a student is interested in joining the Model U.N. team, they must apply ahead of time and have an interview with the staff.

"FIU has a long tradition of success and it is always looking for students to uphold its high standards," Myers said.

At FIU, the Model U.N. program is a political science course offered during spring semester.

Students study the diplomacy and use their skills to compete in national conferences, according to its Web site.

Applications are available at <http://www.fiu.edu/~modelun/>.

THE BEACON

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Star chefs, cook-up fancy treats

WINE AND FOOD, page 1

"It's been the most successful I think out of any year - especially the time I've been here - and it's because we developed a lot more organization as far as more supervisors goes and a lot of planning. We've been planning since November of last year," said Alex Blanco, a senior majoring in hospitality management who was in charge of the culinary students.

Sean Menke, a student volunteer in charge of delivering inventory, said that although he was getting paid to work, he would have liked to have been allowed to sample some of the foods and drinks.

"I understand that these are the customers, but I think that as volunteers it would be nice if before or after the event they would allow the students to do a quick walkthrough and try a sample of the food," Menke said. "We've been working our butts off since eight in the morning till eight at night."

Blanco said students are not allowed to drink because the work they do is considered a job.



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

CHEERS: Al Roker, Giada De Laurentiis, Philippe Pinnon, Chris Lily and Katie Lee Joel celebrate the Celebrity Chef's Party on stage during BubbleQ, one of the many scheduled events at the South Beach Wine and food festival.

"We let the culinary students walk around and try a little bit of food, as long as they don't drink," Blanco said. "But as a culinary student I want to drink not necessarily to party, but to taste the new things that are coming out. This should be important, especially for someone that is in the culinary industry."

Christian Fombrun, festival liason, said allowing students to drink alcohol while on the job can get out of control.

"If you tell the [students] 'yeah, you

can have a drink,' they're not just going to have that one drink, they're going to have a lot of drinks. It's so hard to put that limit. It's not that we don't want that. We would love to let [the students] have that break and participate but then how do you control it? It's completely uncontrollable," Fombrun said.

Dr. Barry Gump, professor of beverage management at FIU, said the festival offered opportunities for people to learn more about the products in the market.

"It was a wonderful opportunity for people to get a sense of the many products that are available today to go with different meals and social occasions," Gump said.



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ON TATTERED LIMBS

Nader makes another feeble bid at White House

JOSEPH MEATLOAF MARHEE
Opinion Editor

Apparently, Ralph Nader's impromptu entrance into the presidential race is meant to be a holy day for the members of the Green Party and anyone else who is Nader-minded.

Formerly a Nader supporter, I understand his appeal: He's critical of unethical practices by companies, proactive on environmental issues and seemingly has the cleanest of political records — to the public's knowledge — only equaled by Ron Paul.

Why is it that anyone would have any reason to distrust Good Ole' Ralph?

Is it because he's a hypocrite owned by the Trial Lawyers lobby? Or is he just a typical politician, a Lyndon Johnson for the new millennium?

What's more, he has since been replaced as the politically disenchanted students' candidate du jour; an honor Ron Paul currently holds with his slightly more believable, superhuman platform.

According to Nader's Web site, he's a self-proclaimed "critic of corporations" and a "public interest activist."

I found this amusing since Nader, according to *RealChange.org*, owns stock in corporations he outspokenly opposes; chief among them, Cisco Systems, a huge violator of Human Rights.

Despite his "holier-than-thou" act, Nader has always been as ambitious and easily bought as any

other politician in Washington, but this is something his own party has known for some time.

"[Nader running for president again is] an ego-centered exercise in futility. [Until the Green Party wins more local elections], wasting its time in races that are unwinnable only detracts from its message, long-term goals and current accomplishments," said Larry Barnett, Green Party member and in Green Horizon Quarterly.

Even his own "lieutenant" has given up on the hopeless Nader crusade of money, power and hypocritical greed.

"We spent a hundred years trying to clean sweatshops out of our system and what happens," said Jim Turner, former Nader campaign officer in a . "Along comes the first major reformer of any impact, and he starts doing the same goddamned thing."

Even Nader's background is full of holes. He claims to live on \$15,000 per year according to the *Washington Post*. He actually earns about \$250,000, as of 2006 per year and (through the 1970s, at least) lived in a boarding house.

A bulk of his income comes from speaking fees, attests *Forbes* in the article "Ralph Nader, Inc." According to *Forbes* in 1990, Nader owns at least \$1 million in Cisco stock and a \$100,000 home, while technically purchased by his brother, in 1976 is his primary residence.

The only honesty in Nader's campaign—as far as I can detect—is his claim of defending "the little



REG EBERSOLE/AP PHOTO

HE'S BACK: Nader earns his keep by speaking to a crowd at the Columbia Theatre in Washington in 2002.

guy."

By this, Nader means hiring his network of trial lawyers—who has always been a big source of campaign funding—to defend said "little guy[s]," at least according to *Forbes* and the *Wall Street Journal* in 1990, '91 and '92.

If Nader intended the lobby to actually protect the "little guy" then he would have outlined a more altruistic plan. Something along the lines of defending the downtrodden through a registry satisfying the federal pro bono requirement would be more ben-

eficial.

Nader's status as a phony is nothing new. Even as far back as 1976 he's had the media (Mary McGrory and Nicholas Van Hoffman among them) peddling his "Draft Nader" rhetoric to the otherwise indifferent masses, explained David Sanford in *Ralph & Me*.

Even with his all-time low in supporters, he's still touted as a champion of the "little guys" rights, look no further than the Feb. 24 MSNBC report announcing his candidacy.

Nader certainly isn't the boarding house, ride-bumming martyr he's made himself out to be.

I'm sure his \$1,000 a plate support dinners, as reported by Dan Burt in *Abuse of Trust*, should be able to ring over supporters for his next shameful loss in November.

After a good three decades of playing the "good guy," Nader should get the hint. Americans didn't need you in the 70s and they certainly don't need you now.

Stop before you embarrass yourself ... again.

MTV: Students need to stand up for issues or die

ROBY GONZALEZ
Contributing Writer

A few days ago my friend and I were having a typical political discussion on who would be the best candidate for president. My friend was a tremendous Ron Paul supporter and of course was telling me the great things Paul could bring our country, and was happily pointing out all the negative qualities of my candidate.

After Super Tuesday, I contacted my friend again, and to rub Paul's defeat in his face, I asked him "Who are you going to vote for now?" His answer was, "I am voting for Ron Paul. If he isn't the republican nominee, then I am not voting."

Although correct or not, he based his opinion on the "Douche and Turd Sandwich" episode of "South Park" and went to draw a parallel between the episode and the presidential election.

This made me ask: you would throw your vote away because you don't like either candidate? I under-

stand your support for Ron Paul, but why not cast your vote for a viable candidate and have a say in who will become the next leader of the Free World?

If young adults between the ages of 18 and 26 voted more, maybe they would save our social security system and maybe minimize that deficit that we will inherit.

But we tend not to vote, so what do politicians do? They protect the interest of the generation that has the highest voter turnout per capita, the "Baby Boomers." So their social security and their interests are protected, regardless of if we inherit the \$10 trillion.

The reason Paul has gained so much popularity is because he has a large college student support base. He had many ideas which our generation related to, and if he would have won, we would've expected him to deliver on his promises for our vote.

Since the percentage of college students who do vote is miniscule, candidates don't find it necessary to

develop strategies to address issues that concern us. Personally, I have seen a billion political ads talking about social security, and who will do a better job protecting it. But I have never seen a political ad talking about providing health-care, or nutrition for students attending college.

I read an article the other day that nicknamed our generation, "Generation Me." It claimed that our age group was self-absorbed and self-interested. It claimed that we were driven by our own materialism: such as our cars, our clothes, and our iPhones.

I absolutely don't find anything wrong with receiving the best benefits possible, looking good or having an iPhone, but what I do believe, is that we're stuck on the smaller picture.

We need to center our self-interests in long-term goals, such as protecting our retirement, minimizing the taxes we will have to pay and maybe protecting our constitutional rights while we're at it. But first we face immense obstacles such as

increasing the voter-turnout of our generation.

It has come to the point that MTV has to tell us to "Vote or Die," when we sit down to watch "The Real World." In November, let's awaken the sleeping giant, and let this nation know that we are no longer silent.

We should want politicians concerning themselves with the issues that affect our lives and our generation, not those of our parents or grandparents. It needs to be recognized that we don't just watch MTV but have the power to swing elections.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should AIDS research be solely the responsibility of the private sector?

• Yes — The government research funding is more than sufficient for the current statistic of those living with AIDS

81%

• No — AIDS cases are reaching a critical level and needs to be better funded by the government

19%

Total participants: 30

Cast your vote at www.fiusm.com

THE MIRACLES OF DANCE MARATHON

Students dance to raise money to help children

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

They say dancing is good for the soul. If that's the case, then 25 straight hours of it must be even better.

Dance Marathon, the largest philanthropy event at FIU, benefits the Children's Miracle Network, specifically the Miami Children's Hospital, the only CMN hospital in the area. The festivities kick off at noon on March 1 and end at 1 p.m. on March 2. "It's not just about donating money to the Children's Miracle Network," said Leah Dunleavy, DM executive director. "It's about having the donations really represent what the kids go through."

Besides raising funds, the theme of all Dance Marathons across the country is to stay on your feet for a number of hours. Dunleavy explained that this self imposed exhaustion gives those participating in DM a look at how the children in the CMN feel every day - a ges-

ture that means a great deal.

"It means a lot to the kids to know the dancers are going through a glimpse as to what they go through," Dunleavy said.

This year, the fund raising goal is \$100,000. Last year, DM was able to raise \$86,000. While current totals are kept confidential, the grand total will be announced on March 2 during the closing ceremonies.

"We are very well on our way to getting to our goal," said Mariela



IRIS AMELIA/THE BEACON

for 25 hours and, this year, things will be a little different for them.

Cam-puzano DM advisor.

In order to participate as a dancer during DM, individuals must raise \$140 and, to be a committee planning member, \$575.

Donations will be accepted until 12:30 p.m. on March 2, according to Dunleavy.

Once DM starts, participants will be on their feet

For the first time ever, participants will have a chance to take a shower, which is a very big deal for Eliza Arenas, DM special events director who has also participated as a DM dancer in the past. "It's upsetting for some dancers not having the opportunity to shower," she said.

The newfound ability of participants to shower is due to the new location for DM which, for the first, time will be held in the Recreation Center instead of the Pharmed Arena.

In general, DM staff believes the Recreation Center will be a better venue for the event. Besides the shower, participants will also have their own lockers. Events can be more sectioned off and food can be kept in its own area that does not interfere with the actual events. No outside food or drinks will be allowed during DM to prevent caffeine highs that could lead to a caffeine crash, according to Campuzano.

Food is being provided for all participants by several vendors including Quiznos.

DANCE, page 6

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WEEKEND RUNDOWN

• THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 28

What: Carlos Mencia "Live"

Where: Hard Rock Live
5747 Seminole Way,
Hollywood, FL 33314

When: 7 p.m.

How Much: \$40 - \$60

What: Bubbles & Blowouts

Where: Ritz-Carlton South Beach

1 Lincoln Rd

Miami Beach, FL 33139

When: 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

How Much: Varies

What: College Night Thursdays

Where: Hooligan's Pub and Oyster
Bar

9555 S Dixie Hwy

Pinecrest, FL 33156

When: 12 a.m. - 2 a.m.

How Much: Varies

What: Drink of the Week: Mojito

Where: Berries

2884 SW 27th Ave

Coconut Grove, FL 33133

When: 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

How Much: Varies

• FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 29

What: Canizares

Where: Broward Ctr for the Perf Arts
Amaturo

201 SW 5th Avenue, Ft Lauderdale,
FL 33312

When: 8:30 p.m.

How Much: \$25 - \$35

What: Mannheim Steamroller

Where: Fillmore

1700 Washington Ave

Miami Beach, FL 33139

When: 8 p.m.

How Much: \$36 - \$66.50

What: Carnival Miami 8K Run

Where: Eighth Street at SE First
Avenue

Eighth Street at SE First Avenue

Miami, FL 33155

When: 7:15 a.m.

How Much: Varies

What: Belly Motions

Where: Belly Motions, Inc.

430 S Dixie Hwy

Coral Gables, FL 33146

When: Varies

How Much: Varies

• SATURDAY • MARCH 1

What: Asian Culture Festival

Where: Fruit and Spice Park

24801 SW 187th Ave

Homestead, FL 33031

When: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

How Much: \$7

What: Just the Funny ninth
anniversary

Where: Just the Funny Theater

3119 Coral Way

Coral Gables, FL 33145

When: 9 p.m. & 10 p.m.

How Much: Varies

What: Macy's Shop for a Cause
Day

Where: Macy's Aventura

19503 Biscayne Blvd

Aventura, FL 33180

When: All Day

How Much: Varies

What: Whole Wheat Bread

Where: STUDIO A

60 NE 11th Street,

Miami, FL 33132

When: 6 p.m.

How Much: \$10 - \$12

• SUNDAY • MARCH 2

What: Harlem Globetrotters

Where: American Airlines Arena

601 Biscayne Blvd

Miami, FL 33131

When: 3 p.m.

How Much: \$18

What: International Orchid
Festival

Where: Fairchild Tropical Botanic

Garden

10901 Old Cutler Rd

Pinecrest, FL 33156

When: 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

How Much: \$10

What: Festival De LA Cancion

Where: Miami Dade County

Auditorium

2901 W. Flagler Street,

Miami, FL 33135

When: 3:15 p.m.

How Much: \$13 - \$36

What: Silverstein

Where: Revolution Live

200 West Broward Blvd.,

Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312

When: 6 p.m.

How Much: \$16

- Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*

Dance marathon sees a big reform

DANCE, page 5

For those participating, Arenas suggests getting a good night's rest the day before and to show up on time in addition to bringing as many changes of clothes as participants feel they will need. Shoes are also important with Crocs being Arenas' number one suggestion for participants, followed by, sneakers.

Planning for this year's event started 10 months ago, organizers said. The extra time has had a huge impact on the preliminary success of the charity fundraiser.

It has also attracted new students to keep the organization going such as this year's Mr. Dance Marathon, freshman Robby Valls. Valls won the title during the "So you Think You Can Dance" competition hosted by DM in February.

"The cause is great," Valls said. "I really want to see if I can hold out. I'm really going to try my hardest."

For more information on FIU's Dance Marathon, visit their Web site at <http://www.fiu.edu/~dm/> or e-mail DM@fiu.edu.

Creating ringtones fosters individuality



With today's cell phones capable of playing MP3 quality songs, ditching factory-default beep and whistle ringtones has never been more tempting.

The possibilities of assigning specific tones to friends, family or that special someone you might be avoiding will also stoke the fires of freeing your inner customizer.

Thankfully, you need not yearn anymore as there are available outlets for these creative urges.

Phone service providers such as AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless all offer high quality ringtones for purchase on their Web sites.

However, having the corporate muscle to provide the latest songs for your phone allows these companies to digitally price gouge you.

At \$2.50 a download, the cost of individuality grows exponentially when you factor in the speed at which personal musical taste evolves in a college setting.

In the future, make your own ringtones, for free.

Sites like www.makeyourown-ringtone.com and

tones.

www.foxbusiness.com allow for easy file uploading and conversion online.

Users can upload their favorite files to cut them down to a ringer friendly 30 seconds by hovering and selecting their preferred portions from a visual time map of the song.

For more control, Audacity's free audio editing software comes in handy.

Available at www.audacity.sourceforge.net, Audacity lets users manipulate songs to their tastes using a visual editor and a variety of audio effects to home brew ringtones.

Simply take your favorite song, open it in Audacity and cut it down to size using the same visual editor used by online editors.

Once you've cut down the song, select the effects menu to fade in and out the first and last seconds of the ringtone to smooth out the cut's rough edges.

To export files in MP3 format, users will have to visit the site's help and frequently asked questions section for directions on downloading LAME, an MP3 encoding library.

Audacity also comes in a variety of operating system flavors to satisfy Windows, Mac and even

Linux aficionados.

Before getting ringtone happy though, spend some time thinking about the songs you may use.

Anything in the Top 40 countdown is out of the question.

A popular ringtone will get lost in a crowd - be it you and three people in an elevator or fifty people dancing to it in a club.

If you have to have the latest popular song as your ringer, consider

choosing a section of

the lyrics that catch your attention rather than the chorus everyone and their mothers are rocking out to.

But beware of the curse of strident individualism.

Having "The Macarena" as your ringtone may score you points for irony among friends, but it may scare away those who don't know you within hearing distance, including attractive members of the opposite sex with a dry sense of humor.

So now that you have been empowered with the knowledge of how to create your own special, unique ringtone, make sure to use this knowledge wisely.

Pitching must improve for team to win

MARTINEZ, page 8

his collegiate career over the fence in the initial match with the Trojans. Meanwhile, Raimy Fuentes knocked in 5 RBIs and batted .429 over the three game series.

While the first two games were effectively devoid of drama, the third was particularly disheartening for the Golden Panthers. Taking a 7-3 lead into the seventh inning, the bullpen was mercilessly rocked as the Trojans added nine runs in three innings to cap the score off at 12-7. Should FIU continue to swing the bat, wins will inevitably come their way. Coach Thomas needs to address the pitching issue immediately, although his options are seemingly very limited. The bullpen's struggles have carried over from last season. The team's weakest point last season cost the Golden Panthers quite a few games including both games against UM where the bullpens let late inning leads evaporate.

In college baseball, some of the scores could be mistaken for football box scores. So, the Golden Panthers will have some games where it seems their offense can't be stopped. Obviously, the Golden Panthers' fans were reminded of the old adage after the three-game series: pitching wins ball games. Despite the potential offensive juggernaut the Golden Panthers could be, their bats do, at times, go cold, and the pitching staff had best be prepared to handle these rough times.

Otherwise, it will be a very long debut season for coach Thomas.

Team cannot hold late lead in finale

BASEBALL, page 8

run in the seventh inning and senior Louisville-transfer capped his first game in a Golden Panther uniform with a solo shot in the eighth. Center fielder Raimy Fuentes finished 3-for-5 with three RBI and two runs scored.

USC 9 FIU 3

Sophomore lefty Corey Polizzano started for the Golden Panthers and struggled from the start. After a double by second baseman Joe De Pinto in the first which gave USC a 1-0 lead, the Trojans tacked on two solo home runs by shortstop Hector Rabago and left fielder Will Rice in the third inning putting FIU in a 3-0 hole.

Pollizano left after five innings finishing with five runs allowed

(four earned), two walks, and two strikeouts. FIU sophomore Tyler Townsend launched a deep two-run home run to right-center field off of USC starter Ryan Cook to cut the deficit to 5-2. In the sixth inning, with runners on second and third and nobody out, Jorge Castillo lined out to first baseman Mike Roskopf who quickly threw to shortstop Hector Rabago who tagged out senior John Petika to cap off a double play.

The Trojans' Hector Rabago and catcher Robert Stock also went deep in the eighth inning as they hit solo home runs off of FIU reliever Daniel DeSimone. Trojans added two more in the ninth before going on to win the game 9-3 and seal a series victory.

USC 12 FIU 7

Townsend, Stewart back from surgery

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The presence of Castillo could be a key ingredient to FIU's success this season mostly because of his on-field talent but also because of his experience. Starting 161-of-180 for the Cardinals over three seasons is experience that Turtle Thomas' young roster could use. Castillo contributed right away as a Golden Panther after

launching a solo home run off of Trojan reliever Kevin Couture in the eighth inning of his first game for FIU on Friday.

NO ILL-EFFECTS

Two Golden Panthers returning from off-season surgery did not show any ill-effects from their procedures in their effective performances during the opening series.

FIU senior starter Steven Stewart made his first appearance in a Golden Panther uniform after missing the 2007 season due to off season elbow surgery and showed no lingering complications. Rami Fuentes and Tyler Townsend each drove in two after consecutive doubles in the third inning to give FIU an early 4-0 lead. Stewart was pulled in the sixth inning after pitching 5.2 innings with two earned runs, two walks and a strikeout and FIU clinging to a 4-2 lead.

Sophomore reliever Evan Ellison coughed up one more run making it 4-3 before FIU added three more insurance runs in the sixth inning to make it 7-3.

After the Trojans scored three more runs in the seventh to again cut the deficit to one run at 7-6, they unloaded with six more runs

in the eighth inning highlighted by a three-run homer by center fielder Nick Buss to push it to 12-7 in favor of the Trojans.

Sophomore reliever Brian Santana took the loss for the Golden Panthers after allowing six earned runs in only 1.2 innings.



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

SWING AWAY: Sophomore Tyler Townsend had a solid series.

a combined a 5-for-11 with a home run and five RBI over the weekend.

UP NEXT

The Golden Panthers will host Wagner University for a four-game set Feb. 29-March 3. The starters for the mid-week games have yet to be determined.

**Are you unable to fall asleep before midnight?
Do you have difficulty waking up in the morning?**

You may suffer from Delayed Phase Sleep Syndrome

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You may qualify if you:

- 1. are 18 years or older**
- 2. are in good general health**

Study participants will receive study-related examinations & investigational medications at no cost. Study participants will also be compensated for time and travel.

For more information contact: 1-877-455-5757



MD CLINICAL



BASEBALL SERIES: USC 3, FIU 0

TROJAN SWEEP



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

DISSAPOINTMENT: Head coach Henry "Turtle" Thomas walks away from the mound during another poor Golden Panthers outing.

Panthers' pitching can't hold

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

The Turtle Thomas era did not begin how Golden Panther fans would have hoped as the USC Trojans swept FIU in a three game set at University Park Feb. 22-24.

"We've got some good guys they just got to settle down and I think that the next time out we will be much better than we were today," manager Turtle Thomas said as his squad was outscored 37-19 over the weekend. "We certainly believe in them, and we certainly have confidence in them and were going to throw them right back into the fray on Tuesday and Wednesday."

Although there were good turnouts at all three games and both pre and post-game festivities, the Golden Panthers often fell behind and were not able to recover. The three game sweep at the hands of the Trojans left FIU with an 0-8 all-time record against the Pac-10 foe and an 0-3 to start off the 2008 campaign.

USC 16 FIU 9

Both squads were locked into a tight battle through the first two innings on opening night until the Trojans unloaded on No. 1 starter senior Chris Allen in the third inning. After RBI singles by center fielder Nick Buss and shortstop Grant Green respectively, the Golden Panthers trailed 2-0. Two batters later, designated hitter Mike Roskopf launched a grand slam just to the right of the scoreboard to give the Trojans a 6-0 lead, and USC would never look back.



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

THE WIND UP: FIU pitcher Steven Stewart looked healthy in his first start since surgery.

In the fourth inning, two critical errors by second baseman Ryan Mollica and first baseman Jorge Castillo allowed USC to score 3 runs total in what would eventually be a four-run inning and a 10-0 lead. Allen was pulled after just 3.2 innings and allowed a total of ten runs, six of which were earned.

USC started Brian Boxberger pitched five innings allowing six hits and four runs total.

On the Golden Panthers' side, FIU accumulated runs slowly as they scored four in the fourth, one in the seventh, two in the eighth and two in the ninth.

Freshman Javier Sujo hit a pinch hit home

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BASEBALL NOTEBOOK

Castillo will add valuable experience to young team

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

For Golden Panther first baseman Jorge Castillo, the decision to transfer from the University of Louisville to FIU for his senior season was based on two things: family and manager Turtle Thomas. "I wanted to come back home to play in front of all my family and for Coach Turtle," Castillo said after compiling a .301 career average in three seasons at UL. "Turtle Thomas knows all of his stuff, knows what to do, and everything about the game of baseball; he's a good teacher."

He participated in the College World Series last season, where he gained some knowledge on how to play on big stages. "I learned to how to cope with pressure and just to have fun," Jorge said.

The presence of the senior, who also won a Florida National High School championship while at Gulliver Prep, will be instrumental for some of the younger players, Castillo explained, "You just have to work hard and learn that baseball is game of failure and that no matter what happens, you just gotta keep going at it."

As far as Jorge's plans after his lone season in a Golden Panther uniform, he mentioned that he hopes to continue playing once his collegiate career is over. "After this season, hopefully we win, and hopefully get drafted and go pro."

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Opening series' hopes deflate



Commentary
Chris Martinez
Contributing Writer

Leading up to the team's season opener against the University of Southern California, the Golden Panthers' baseball team generated as much excitement for the upcoming season as it should have with many other FIU teams not doing so well.

A rebuilding season for the football team, a dip in performance for the men's basketball squad and a three game series against a nationally renowned USC program set up new manager Henry "Turtle" Thomas with an unusual amount of excitement from a fan base still finding its footing.

Scoring 19 runs in three games is nothing to scoff at, especially against a team like the Trojans that has taken home 12 national championships. Unfortunately, giving up 37 runs against the opposing squad diminishes the grandeur of that offensive achievement.

The Golden Panthers received a dose of reality this weekend as they lost three games against the Trojans. Coach Thomas got the same reminder in baseball that first year coach Mario Cristobal learned in football - simply changing regimes will not erase last season's problems.

Pitching problems made the games hard to win. Starting pitching once again undermined FIU's chances against the Trojans during the first two games while the bullpen let an early lead slip away in the finale. Certainly it is not time to panic, but Thomas is going to have to find a way to keep six members of his staff from giving up so many home runs in a three game series.

Sophomore designated hitter Tyler Townsend is entering his second year as a Golden Panther after a successful freshman season. During the three game series, Townsend was the most dangerous hitter for FIU, checking in with an OPS of 1.371 and driving in five runs.

Those numbers will obviously deflate as the season goes on, but turning in such a potent performance against an extremely strong team is certainly a positive experience to draw from. Freshman Javier Sujo was a pleasant surprise for the team, getting on base at over a 55 percent clip and writing himself a nice little story as he put the second pitch of

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