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A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

Vol. 20, Issue 66 www.fiusm.com April 18, 2008

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PUTTING THE WINDS TO WORK

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO IRENE PORTILLO

Beacon Staff

Civil engineering students who work in FIU's Structures and Construction Laboratory now have

a new reason to smash things.

With Miami-Dade County's recent accreditation of the lab, students can now test products to their breaking points to determine whether building materials comply with the county's hurricane building code.

"When you see a huge structural member being loaded all the way to failure — knowing how it fails, seeing visually how it fails — it makes a long lasting impact in the mind of any student," said Amir Mirmiran, professor and interim dean of the College of Engineering and Computing.

Although there are other hurricane testing labs in the area, the SCL "stands out" because of its size, said Jamie Gascon, Product Control Division Chief in the Miami-Dade Building Code Compliance Office.

The SCL is one of the largest research labs in South Florida with 2,250 square feet of space.



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

BREAKING POINT: Graduate students Muhammad Azhar Saleem and Yilei Shi, doctorate students in civil engineering, apply pressure to aluminum beams until they break. The beams may be used in drawbridge construction.

Nakin Suksawang, assistant director of the SCL, explained that the size of the lab is important because while most structural labs scale down their models, the SCL allows full-scale structure testing. The results using scaled

models might not reflect "the actual behavior" of a full-sized structure in a storm, said Suk-

"The lab is quite unique,"
Mirmiran said. "This is the only
lab in the state of Florida that

allows [us] to test a bridge inside a lab – up to a 65-foot bridge. The lab allows us to test the entire house inside the lab under uplift that is generated by wind."

LAB, page 2

Vice provost Fernandez resigns

EDDITH SEVILLABBC Managing Editor

Biscayne Bay Campus Vice Provost Damian Fernandez announced his resignation to University President Modesto Maidique and Provost Ronald Berkman on April 14.

Fernandez, who served as interim

vice provost and nominal head of BBC for almost two years, has accepted the position of provost and executive vice president at The State University of New York in Purchase, effective Fall 2008.

"It's a fantastic



FERNANDEZ

opportunity ... But at the same time, it's bittersweet. We've all been committed to FILL in general, but to PRC

mitted to FIU in general, but to BBC in specific," Fernandez said. "Despite the current budget challenges, I know that the momentum that we inaugurated here years ago will continue."

With the help of Witt/Keifer, an executive search firm that helps individuals find jobs within the university system, Fernandez accepted the position

"I read the advertising and I called the person. I had been approached in the past by another member in that firm so it was a mutual interest," he said.

Fernandez said the budget cuts the

FERNANDEZ, page 3

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO Staff Writer

With their future uncertain due to unprecented budget cuts at FIU, mailroom employees are worried their protests are falling on deaf ears.

"This is hard and it's hard for everyone," said Vivian Sanchez, senior vice president for Finance and Operations. "We are really trying to do the right thing."

Frustrations over the possibility of the postal services being outsourced have resulted in outspoken protest by mailroom employees.

Sanchez, as well as University President Modesto Maidique and Provost Ronald M. Berkman, have been steadfast in communicating with the University community that nothing has been decided and that all options

are on the table.

However, emphasis is being placed

in the "need to protect the educational and instructional part of the institution," Sanchez said, adding that finding internal "deficiencies" and external "investment dollars" is necessary to keep the University growing academically.

For years, the mailroom has sent proposals to different department heads in attempts to implement ideas that would save the University money, said Assistant Post Manager Livio Dominguez.

One of his ideas is to update and correct mailing lists. The turnaround rate – rejected mail that is returned at a fee – costs the University around \$20,000 a year, he calculates. The search for investment dollars led the University to consider sending out Request for Proposals to various multinational vendors to outsource a package of services including mailing.

This launched the subsequent

verbal protests by mailroom employees during the University Services and Personnel Senate meeting on April 9 and the President's Town Hall meeting on April 14.

According to Catherine Vasquez, assistant to the Post Manager, mailroom employees were approached three weeks ago and told about the possibility of outsourcing. The following Monday after the announcement, she said, vendors were surveying the mailroom.

Vasquez calls the move "unfair" because mailroom employees' desires to make it more efficient and economical were attempted for years but were ignored by the University.

Senior Clerk Thomas L. Piacente, said when the employees were told about the outsourcing, none of the representatives from Facilities could answer their questions.

Sanchez said she never heard of

any proposals from the mailroom until an April 16 *Beacon* interview wth. Nicolas Diciacco, director of Facilities Operations, said that he had only received one from the Biscayne Bay Campus mailroom a few years ago.

For the sake of transparency and communication, Sanchez said, she organized the April 22 meeting after the mailroom sent her a letter in protest of the outsourcing.

The lack of communication will be brought up, as well as the instructions given by the Facilities administration that forbid the entire mail room from speaking to *The Beacon*, Vasquez saidSanchez eventually lifted the ban when she became aware of it.

When *The Beacon* expressed concern that administration may not be acting as transparent as it claims, Sanchez said that accusation "rings to the core of what we are, and it's a little bit offensive."

MAILROOM EMPLOYEES PROTEST POSSIBLE LAYOFFS

Meyer/LaPointe to face cuts; cabinet spots open

BEN F. BADGER JR. Asst. News Director

With elections over, the new executive board of University Park's Student Government Council has been left with several challenges to face next year.

"Every year you come in not knowing what's going to happen," said Marbely Hernandez, SGC-UP

Arthur "AJ" Meyer and Paige LaPointe, president and vice president elect, will face budget cuts while trying to fulfill as many campaign promises as possible.

"We are working with a difficult budget year," Meyer said. "We plan to work as hard as we possibly can with our budget and trying to accomplish our many initiatives."

While hopeful of completing all of his campaign promises, Meyer said that fulfilling all of them may not happen during his tenure.

"It's not necessarily that every one of our platform points will be accomplished this upcoming year," Meyer said. "If we don't fully accomplish them, the foundation will be set for future administrations to come in and accomplish those initiatives."

Aside from budget concerns, securing a complete cabinet is another objective for Meyer's

Normally, cabinet positions are appointed by the SGC-UP president, but following a tradition started by Hernandez, positions are open to any students who wish to apply. Applications for cabinet positions are now available on the SGC-UP office located in Graham Center room 211. The deadline to complete and submit applications is April 22.

This year, there will be 13 different cabinet positions and two assistant positions to the Chief of Staff and Student Advocate.

According to Anthony Rionda, this year's chief of staff, one of the most important new cabinet positions is the Coordinator of Parking and Campus Safety, since one issue brought up at nearly all SGC-UP forums has been safety.

Other challenges that await Meyer and LaPointe include the integration of a new constitution and a new governing council, the Council of Student Organiza-

Despite challenges, LaPointe is confident in her administration.

"I'm very excited," LaPointe said. "There are a lot of new transitions and I am more than confident that we will do a great job."

Hernandez, who has worked with closely with Meyer and LaPointe for the last year, is also confident of that the pair will surpass any challenges thrown at

"I wish them the best of luck," Hernandez said. "They are very well prepared for this position and are just taking what they know and their love for this organization and going with it. I know they both can do it."

exhibit censored

EDUARDO MORALES

Staff Writer

While the Honors College's art exhibition in the Green Library caught the attention and eyes of several hundred students this year, one of the more important and provocative pieces was hidden under the veil of a blanket.

"We sent a copy of the piece to the dean [Lesley A. Northup] with an e-mail as to why we wanted to put it up, and what it meant to us so that she'd be prepared for it when she came back to school," said Natalie Zamora, junior. "We knew it would come as a surprise to the library and the dean."

The photograph titled, "You're Not Like We Are," created by Maritza Molina, depicts a shy, young girl (Molina) covered in clothing and surrounded by voluptuous women with their skirts extended above their heads. The photograph is meant to speak out to a society that tells woman how they should look, dress and feel.

Since the students weren't sure how the faculty would receive the photograph's depiction of female nudity, it was covered with a blanket during a large duration of the show. Molina's work was finally uncovered and as a result, extended the art show's stay for another

Molina was represented by Zamora and Jose Otero, two third-year Honors College students.

The photograph and two other pieces by Molina can be seen on the second floor of the Green Library until April 20.

Honors College | Athletics hosts first book drive

CHER MALONE

Contributing Writer

In a new effort to fight illiteracy among Latin American youth, FIU has partnered with Worldfund for the University's first "Better World Books" book drive.

"Education is power," said Office Manager of the Student Athlete Academic Center Helen Gonzalez, who is helping to organize the event.

Worldfund is an organization working to end poverty through high-quality education for children.

Founded just five years ago, the organization has already provided \$30 million to 30,000 students in Latin America.

Gonzalez believes that Worldfund is a perfect

organization for FIU students living in a Hispanic populated community.

"A lot of us are Hispanic in one way or another," she

Working in Academic Advising for student athletes, Gonzalez decided to use books that no longer had value for underprivileged students.

If FIU's first Worldfund book drive is successful, Gonzalez will hold another drive next semester.

The Better World Books and Worldfund partnership has run book drives at over 900 colleges and universities.

All books donated to Better World Books will go directly to Worldfund.

Organizations participating in the Worldfund book drive include FIU Athletics, Undergraduate Education and Golden Key International Honor Society. Each group will contribute in collecting, organizing and packaging books. Books that are unusable for the drive will be recycled or donated to adult centers in Miami.

Donated books must be intact and pertain to college course subjects. Trade paperbacks, highlighted books and textbooks are also accepted.

Collection sites are available at both University Park and Biscayne Bay campuses, as well as student housing.

While these sites will be available until April 25, the Student Athlete Academic Center will be collecting books throughout the year at Room 105c.

So you know...

Places to Donate:

University Park:

ECS411 (UP)

• SAAC105 (UP) • PC237 (UP)

• ZEB221 (UP)

Biscayne Bay:

ACI180 (BBC)

 ACII230 (BBC) • EC3236 (EC)

Front Desks of

Bay Vista

Panther Hall

 University Park Apartments

 University Park Towers

Everglades Hall

Lakeview North

Lakeview South

Lab gives "real world" experience

LAB, page 1

The lab is, above anything else, an opportunity for students to have handson experience in an actual

"I think it is a great opportunity for engineering majors to experience the real world," said sophomore Corina Moreno.

Several doctorate students, like Ahmet Kallyci, use the lab to conduct research

Kallyci is working on the usage of fiber reinforced polymers, a material stronger than steel used in airplane bodies, bridges and housing structures.

Kallyci tests the polymers by simulating forces on the structures until they

Ruilong Li, a doctorate student in the field of hurricanes, uses the lab to test extreme conditions such as earthquakes and hurricanes.

Outside of the facility, there is a massive structure used to test extreme wind speeds and their effect on different buildings known as the "wind wall." Inside the SCL is a scale version of the wind wall to test how hurricanes affect structures,

The engineering department faculty trains their graduate students to handle the machines and materials used in the lab.

Though the lab was recently accredited by Miami-Dade County, it has been open since 2006.

The SCL utilizes \$250,000 worth of materials and equipment to conduct all of its testing needs.

According to Mirmiran, the University budget does not accommodate for the lab, for there are two other sources of financial means: research agencies that grant the funding and from the engineering industry itself.

For more information, visit http://www.eng.fiu.



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACO

APPLYING PRESSURE: Doctorate students use the Structures and Construction lab to test aluminum beams.

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated April 16, 2008, the photograph titled "pointed questions" should have been credited to Victoria Lynch.

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

BEACON

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INFORMATION

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Contact Us Eddith Sevilla **BBC Managing Editor** eddith.sevilla@fiusm.com

AT THE BAY

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PARTING WITH SWEET SORROW



CUTTING OUT: After 25 years of service as associate dean to the FIU School of Hospitality Management, Lee Dickson celebrates his retirement from administration.

Cafeteria's future on hold

JULIA CARDENUTO Contributing Writer

It is the end of the spring term and many students are wondering when the new caf-

eteria is going to be ready. The remodeling project, involving many Biscayne Bay Campus areas, began in late 2004 and is costing \$4 million, according

Gregory Olson, senior director of Student Affairs, said he has no predications for when the new cafeteria will be complete.

to reports in *The Beacon* from November

"There is a permit in Tallahassee and we are still waiting for that to come through,"

Cathy Akens, assistant vice president of Student Affairs, said last time she checked, the project was scheduled to be completed in August of 2007, but that the University is still waiting for the permit.

The new cafeteria will cover 10,000 square feet and seat a capacity of 235 people. FIU is currently under contract with Aramark to provide dinning services at BBC. Akens said that FIU will continue using Aramark's services to supply food

The larger cafeteria will provide more food options and diverse vendors than the current cafeteria. Since 2006, students affairs and the student government council have been conducting surveys asking students their opinions of what the new cafeteria should serve. Akens said that the idea of an all-you-can-eat buffet has been discarded.

There will be 9,000 square feet of empty space once the current cafeteria moves to its new location and the question of what to do with that area is still unanswered. Akens said student affairs is concerned with students wants and needs.

"We plan to talk with students and find out exactly what they want and what are their priorities and ideas for a recreational space," Akens said.

Last October, the idea of dividing the space left by the current cafeteria into two separate rooms was introduced. One part would be a multipurpose room and the other a student lounge. Akens said that this idea is still possible and that student affairs really wants to give students a new recreational space.

Both Olson and Akens will not make any predictions of when students will be able to enjoy the new dining facilities at the BBC. John Cal, the associate vice president of facilities management, was not available for comment.

Alumna self-publishes child-rearing guide Book focuses on faith, love

TATIANA CAMPUZANO

Contributing Writer

Caroline Arit Okon Thompson, an FIU alumna who completed her degree in counselor education in 2006, has just published her latest book, "Parental Influence Matters."

Published in December 2007 by iUniverse, "Parental Influence Matters" provides readers with guidance on how parents' involvement in their children lives is the key to raise exceptional individuals, according to Thompson.

"A child needs to act like a child but needs to do it wisely. If not, they can't be responsible adults," Thompson said.

Incorporating aspects such as faith, family, tradition, discipline and heritage, Thompson combines personal knowledge, community analysis and her African background to reach parents and parents to be.

"I cherish the tradition where I came from. You can't raise your children without them learning your heritage," Thompson said, quoting an African proverb. "In Africa, it takes a village to raise a child."

Dwight Nimlett, assistant director of the Student Learning Center at Biscayne Bay Campus, and Reymond Levy, an adjunct English instructor helping hands in the process of writing the book.

Thompson sought support from Nimlett and Levy to put her material together and obtain the professional guidance necessary to make her book a success.

"Caroline and I clicked since the beginning, she brought in her manuscripts and I assisted her by giving her all the support needed before publication," Nimlee said. "She is an amazing person, and the sky is the limit for her."

Levy also wrote the book's foreword.

"She divided her book in ten different qualities that matter in life and goes through each aspect, making this book a very practical life advice book," Levy said.

He felt inspired by Thompson's voyage through life, the African folklore incorporated in her writings and her very heartfelt material.

"She really impressed me with the work she has done and her social contributions," Levy said.

Thompson said her eldest daughter, Comfort, inspired her to write.

"One day my daughter came to me and said, 'Mom, I see many women who write. Why you don't become a writer?" Thompson said.

Thompson has since written three books, "Cross River State at a Glance," "The Joy of the Overcom-

at University Park, were ers: Slavery from an African perspective," and "A Daughter's Love: Remembering my father, my teacher and my friend(s)."

> Thompson has served as news reporter for the Nigerian Television Authority's Channel 9. She came to the United States in search of more educational and career opportunities.

She received numerous honors as a student and professional, for being an active member in the community and for assisting her church.

Her career orientations and her desire to encourage love and respect among each other drove Thompson to keep on writing and to continue to grow as a motivational speaker.

Her first public motivational speech, given in 1998, was titled "The Power of Faith-Lord Increases my Faith."

Since then, Thompson has presented seminars about enriching woman, woman of faith, and hosted youth events at the Open Bible Church, among others.

Thompson will be signing copies of "Parental Influence Matter" at the Broward Regional Library, Thursday, April 24 at 7 p.m. The library is located at 100 S. Andrews Avenue, in Fort Lauderdale.

"Parental Influence Matters" is available in most major bookstores in hard and soft cover editions.

Cuts not a factor in departure

FERNANDEZ, page 1

"It was not part of my decision. In the contrary, the budget crisis, in some ways, made me think whether I should leave at this point because I would want to help the institution," he said. "These positions take half a year or more to fill and I applied in the fall. We weren't clear on the severity of the crisis [back then]. The timing was just coincidental."

Fernandez has been the director of the Cuban Research Institute at FIU for the past five years.

His career with the University began in 1988 as an assistant professor in the department of international relations where he

In September of 2006 Fernandez was named interim vice provost for BBC and has since maximized opportunities for undergraduate research and performance; developed a plan that created new start-to-finish programs and expanded the Honors College.

Uva De Aragon, associate director for the CRI, said working with Fernandez is challeng-

"He's very demanding, and I say it in a good way," De Aragon

Fernandez made his mark by taking the institute a step further with new partnerships, grants and initiatives, according to De Aragon, who has been working

"For the past four years [we haven't been able] to go to Cuba and he found a way to make our work relevant. He did that by engaging with partners in Canada, Mexico and Washington," she said. "Having conferences outside of the U.S made it easier for other Cubans to attend."

With the announcement of Fernandez's resignation, Cristina Eguizabal, director of the Latin American and Caribbean Center, will oversee the CRI for the next year, according to De Aragon.

"You always have to be happy for any colleague that pursues greener pastures, even though it's a loss for FIU," De Aragon



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

HAT TRICK: Katherine Bennett plays a game of air hockey with friends in Panther Square as part of Release Week, April 15.

OPINION

The Beacon – 5 April 18, 2008

MAYBE NEXT TIME

Better knowledge of candidates needed

JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ

Contributing Writer

"What can they do for me?" asked Alejandra Sanchez, a political science graduate student explaining why she did not vote in the Student Government elections this year. "No matter who is chosen, it won't make a dif-

What exactly took place in the very brief week that actually made us, the panther community, decide who would be our best representatives? What sparks this extent of apathy toward a council that exerts so much control over students' money and services?

Elections should be based on ideological differences and whether they listen to voters' concerns. Many students rightfully feel that they were not included in the campaign process and that there was a lack of focus on the issues. As a voter myself, I don't want to be asked to vote for hopefuls without knowing who they are or what they stand for.

There is no doubt that charisma and popularity play an important role in people's minds during every election. However, should we really start picking our candidates based on how many fullcolor flyers they print to promote their candidacy?

There should be some simple but effective changes made to the SGA campaigning process

Candidates should hold multiple town hall meetings where they have face-to-face conversations with students at different times of the day to ensure that the greatest amount of students can attend. A large number of students work day or night shifts, so debates among candidates should be held

within both time frames.

This would be in contrast to the one poorly-advertised debate between representatives, which was attended by few students and fewer candidates, as well as a separate debate for the presiden-

The debates should also be better advertised with flyers containing their times and locations as prominently littered across campus as we see for other organizations' events.

The current state of debates raises the question of whether the only ones being exposed to the candidates' discussions are the candidates themselves, campaign managers and their friends. It would seem more democratic if all of us were informed of what took place on campus.

To achieve this, it would be necessary to extend the campaigning process. As seen in the last election, one week is not enough to get to know the aspiring university leaders.

office] are obviously well-known by students," said Ana Maria Santiesteban, a freshman studying psychology.

For biology student Bridgette Gun, it is not a question of popularity, as she explained her reasons for not voting. "It's not that I think they don't do anything good, it's just that it benefits only the Greek life," Gun said.

Some within SGA have a different take on this issue of apathy,

"Since [Gun] didn't vote, her voice was not heard and she has no right to criticize individuals who devote their time to the student body," said Kenneth Gelok, a senior in political science at FIU and an SGA representative.

Yet, whether success depends on the Greek life or popularity, the main concern for all running and voting can be simply said with the phrase "What's in it for me?" Students on campus feel left out of the whole government process since they don't have the time or money to belong to an expensive organization.

Belonging to the Greek life and other interest clubs seems to be a very effective method of persuading voters. Gelock admits that "Greeks are a powerhouse in the elections."

Transparency of funds would also help us see who is behind the scenes contributing to candidates. Budget limits on campaigning would make the process more democratic and, at the same time, fair to the other side. According to Gelock, the candidates themselves pay for the advertising of the campaign.

Despite this sentiment, the voter turnout for this year skyrocketed in comparison to other "The people running [for years. This is fantastic, but we have a long way to go for the entire campus (or even most of

> Although the whole election process was an amazing experience as a freshman at FIU, I believe that we still have room for improvement. When it comes to elections and deciding the student body representatives, we should look beyond face recognition and start becoming responsible voters.

> We must educate ourselves about every candidate and ask them what their plans are once elected. SGA should start to imitate real-life campaigning so that we can have a more democratic government that prepares our students for political wit.

Look beyond cars and gasoline use **JASON GELLER** Contributing Writer

Want to go green?

Smokestack fumes spewing from factories and carbon emissions spouting from Hummer tailpipes are threats to the environment, as shown by the amount of press they are receiving from the "going green" movement.

What should be noted, though, is that there are other lesserknown evils plaguing the bio-

More attention must be

Here in sunny South Florida, one of the most prominent environmental issues is overdevelop-

The Everglades' marshy terrain used to go as far north as the Orlando area. In the past century, 50 percent of the Everglades has been demolished to make way for gated communities, strip malls and beachside mansions.

The state needs even more land in the near future; South Florida's population is expected to double in the next 50 years. This spells

More attention must be focused on less prominent emitters of carbon, such as the harmful effects of livestock grazing as well as land degradation caused by overdelopment.

focused on less prominent emitters of carbon, such as the harmful effects of livestock grazing as well as land degradation caused by overdevelopment.

According to a study by Princeton University and the Woods Hole Research Center as reported in The Wall Street Journal, clearing fields to make ethanol releases more harmful gases into the environment than the supposedly harmful MTBE-based fuel used by many vehicles today.

Cars aren't the only source of harmful carbon dioxide emissions - cow flatulence is even more harmful to the environment than speeding cars. Livestock flatulence, livestock grazing and livestock rearing account for 18 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, according to a 2006 report published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

The report also stated that about 65 percent of humanrelated nitrous oxide, which has 296 times the Global Warming Potential of CO2, comes from livestock manure. Livestock takes up 30 percent of the earth's land surface.

In South America alone, about 70 percent of the Amazon has been demolished to make way for cow grazing. But cows aren't the only cause of land degradation.

These harmful effects are perpetuated by the cravings of industrialized nations, but seldom is changing food habits considered as a means for saving the environment. People focus on driving less and finding new sources of energy to power our already wasteful lifestyles.

danger for alligators, bobcats and our very own golden panthers.

But there is help.

With more than \$1.5 billion in donations, Florida Forever, a state program under the auspices of the Department of Environmental Protection, has protected 603,454 acres of land from being demolished. But the conservationist organization is expected to expire in 2010 and is desperately low on funds. If contractors continue developing over state land, 68 endangered plants and animals aren't the only ones at risk. Overbuilding our communities isn't just an eyesore; it also causes water shortages.

"If we cover the surface with houses and pavement, then the rainwater and the surface water from the Everglades cannot get into the aquifer," said FIU Earth Science Professor Dr. René M. Price. "The aquifer is where we get our water from. If we continue development, we're reducing the area that the aquifer can receive

Another organization working to preserve the land we live on is Hold the Line coalition.

"[Hold the Line] works to keep the urban development boundary right where it is," said Adam Rivera, spokesperson for Environment Florida. "If that boundary moves further west, that means developers can develop right where it was protected."

Instead of obsessing over what global warming might do to us in 100 years, let us focus on the land we live in now. We call ourselves the Sunshine State, but pretty soon we won't have anything left to enjoy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

President Modesto Maidique opens budget meetings to reporters

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the article and editorial in the April 21 edition of *The Beacon* about Beacon staffers' efforts to attend a Budget Stabilization Task Force meeting.

It is the position of the University that meetings of this task force are not subject to the Sunshine Law because this committee functions in an information-gathering, consultative capacity, with no delegated or decision-making authority.

The Budget Stabilization Task Force includes a student representative as well as representatives of other key constituencies such as the Division of Student Affairs,

faculty, staff, deans, research spirit of transparency, cooperaand university finance. It is my understanding that the student representative shares developments with peer students after every meeting.

It is clear that the cases and legal advice cited by The Beacon simply do not apply to this situation. Beacon reporters did not have the right to barge into the task force's meeting last week, even if they believed that this meeting was subject to the Sun-

However, I recognize that Beacon reporters and readers are interested in the work this committee is doing to help us address the current budget crisis. In the

tion and the continued sharing of information, I have decided to open future meetings of this task force to Beacon reporters.

We have made every effort to communicate through town hall meetings, employee meetings, weekly updates and a budget Web site, http://president.fiu. edu/budget1.html. I hope every member of the University community - students, faculty and staff - feels included in this process and I welcome the participation of our student newspaper.

Sincerely, Modesto A. Maidique President, FIU

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Porn stars swarm South Beach

Adults-only convention to feature actors, 'screaming O'

JONATHAN DAVILA Staff Writer

EXXXotica, a three-day

erotic event making its third annual South Florida appearance, will be held this weekend at the Miami Beach Convention Center, presented by Hotmovies.

> The exposition will feature exhibitions from several top-tier adult industry organizations, appearances by numerous adult film stars, musical performances and many other adultthemed events.

"We have been getting bigger and better every year, and this year we have really blown the doors off," said J. Handy, coowner of Victory Tradeshow Management and creator of DXXXXotica.

The convention kicks off on Friday

Beach Convention Center.

at 4 p.m. with a welcoming performance by Dan Diamond. Following Diamond's performance will be an appearance by Puerto Rican regaetton duo, Los Fugitivos.

Other opening events vary from professional pillow fighting to the "Screaming O" contest: a competition in which attendees compete to see who can conjure the mightiest screaming orgasm.

The preliminary round of the Ms. EXXXotica pageant will also take place during this time.

At night, the first day of the exposition culminates with an after party at Mansion, hosted by adult film star, Stormy

On Saturday, EXXXotica will be open from noon through 11 p.m. and feature even more events than Friday's lineup. The "Queen" of Comedy, Mrs. Shirley Q. Liquor, makes an appearance at 1 p.m. and a wet T-shirt contest will be held in the evening.

Additionally, Ms. EXXXotica 2008 will be crowned after the final round of the pageant takes place at 6 p.m.. More pillow fighting, the AMMY awards, and additional performances by Diamond and Los Fugitivos are also part of Saturday's schedule, which ends with another after party at Glass, hosted by starlets Jesse Jane and Gina Lynn.

"We have added more nonstop entertainment, an award ceremony, seminars ... and our list of exhibitors is a who's who of the adult industry," Handy said.

All of the events scheduled for Sunday already premiered on either Friday or Saturday, so Sunday could be used by attendees to catch up on any events they may have

Besides performances by Diamond and Los Fugitivos, contests, pageants and appearances by adult film superstars, EXXXotica is hosting a number of instructive erotic seminars.

Self-help author, Mabel Iam, is giving her lecture, "Become a Perfect Lover," on Friday at 7 p.m. "Making Adult Videos for Profit" will

be taught by Steve Harper, Alex Rottenberg and AJ Comparetto, Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. and 2 p.m..

Many other lectures can be heard throughout the weekend such as, "The Art of Dirty Talk" and "Swinging

Tickets for EXXXotica are \$35 each for a one-day general admission and \$70 for general admission all three

VIP admission tickets are \$50 for one day and \$100 for three.

VIP ticket-holders gain access to a meet-and-greet with adult film stars, an entrance to the Crazy Horse Saloon and a souvenir bag "stuffed with tons of XXX swag."

"We have raised the bar and then jumped over it, Handy said.



XXX Info

The hours of the event are as follows: EXXXOTICA Miami Beach is this Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 18-20 in Hall C at the Miami

Friday, April 18 from 4pm - 11pm Saturday, April 19 from noon - 11pm Sunday, April 20 from noon - 7pm

www.exxxoticamiami.com

Ticket prices are as follows:

3 day - VIP Admission, \$100

1 day - VIP Admission, \$50 3 day - General Admission, \$70 1 day - General Admission, \$35

Luck brings secular Biatti to Miami's Crocs Tour

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO

Staff Writer

Daylight was a small shimmer in the horizon, but the bright stage lights beckoned the musicians of Biatti to take the stage at the "Crocs Next Stop" college tour last week

It was the band's first major stage performance, an experience they would call surreal in retrospect, but at that moment, their jitters needed to be calmed.

Their solution was to break into their "Ninja Dance." High-kicking, karate-chopping and all out channeling Mr. Miyagi, or simply put - pure energy, is what Biatti is all about, said Felippe Biatti, the band's lead singer.

"When you get to know us, you understand why we are jumping on stage like a bunch of animals, because we are all animals, especially Cat," Biatti said.

Cat Chang is the band's keyboardist and the only female member of Biatti, an upand-coming rock band from Ft. Lauderdale. Due to their hard work, chance and a little stalking on Felippe's part, the band won the opportunity to play at the Crocs Tour concert on April 10 before headliners OneRepublic and Fabolous.

"He came and haunted us for almost a year so he could be in the Battle of the Bands," said Sophia Del Zoppo, president of the Student Programming Council.

At every university stop on the tour, one local band performs as the opening act of the Crocs Tour. The student organization is responsible for arranging the concert at a hectic week of five-hour rehearsals every that university must choose three bands that

Del Zoppo, the band signed to another tour, leaving the door wide open for Biatti.

Luck might have brought them on stage but dedication makes them stand out. Biatti played six songs during the set, including the introspective, "Long Road Out Of Here," and the pumped-up, "Shoulda Never," after

Felippe Biatti, Lead singer

When you get to know us, you understand why we are jumping on stage like a bunch of animals, because we are all animals, especially Cat

will compete in an "electronic Battle of the Bands," said Zoppo.

On the Crocs Tour Web site, anyone can hear a song sample from each group and vote

Biatti battled against a well-known local band, The Drive Home, but during the competition, the Crocs Tour Web site got hacked. SPC picked The Drive Home as the opening act by default. A week before the concert, said

According to the band, their style has formed from a smorgasbord of influences. '80s and '90s rock, pop and jazz, not to mention Queen and The Beatles, have all added a splash of color to their stylistic repertoire.

Although the songwriting is left to Felippe, each band member brings their own opinions to the song-making process.

Originally a fast-tempo song, "Say Goodbye," eventually slowed down as suggested by the band's drummer, Ian Achong.

Communication comes easily for them. They played together for years at their church and finally transformead into Biatti when they decided to "start something new, but doing something we love and delivering [music] to different people outside of church," Chang said in an e-mail.

Biatti is a secular band whose songs most people can associate with life experience.

The band's guitarist, Tyler Milam, said the band is "fun, energetic, easy to relate to and catchy.'

By Felippe's reception after the Crocs Tour performance, the band's self-description seems on-point.

There were also girls wearing grey Tshirts printed with the band's name walking around the soccer field, suggesting the band already has a following

Still, said Felippe, playing for college students can be intimidating, but it is the best experience out there.

College students are the ultimate critics and "if they don't like it, they'll walk away and have a beer," he said.

At least at this univ ersity, Biatti seems to have passed the ice-cold beer music review.

SUNDAY • APRIL 20

WEEKEND RUNDOW

FRIDAY • APRIL 18

WHAT: Exxxotica WHERE: Miami Beach Convention Center 1901 Convention Center Dr Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$35

WHAT: Nestor Torres
WHERE: Miami-Dade County Auditorium
2901 W Flagler St
Miami, FL 33135
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$30 - \$60

WHAT: Guys and Dolls WHERE: The Ring Theatre 1312 Miller Drive (University of Miami) Coral Gables, FL 33146 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$8 - \$10

WHAT: Miami Hip-Hop Arts Festival WHERE: Joseph Caleb Auditorium 5400 NW 22nd Ave Miami, FL 33142 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$31

WHAT: Charlie Daniels Band WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre 601-7 Sansburys Way, West Palm Beach, 33411 WHEN: 7 p.m.

HOW MUCH: \$12.00 - \$36.50

WHAT: Earth, Wind & Fire WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach at Jackie Gleason Theater

1700 Washington Ave, Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: 8 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$46.50 - \$83

WHAT: Barefoot at Oasis WHERE: Mandarin Oriental Hotel 500 Brickell Key Dr Miami, FL 33131 WHEN: 6 p.m. - 11 p.m. HOW MUCH: Varies WHAT: "Mosaic Arts International 2008"
WHERE: Bakehouse Art Complex
561 NW 32nd St
Miami, Ft. 33111
WHEN: Varies
HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Record-Breaking Bikini Bash WHERE: Nikki Beach 1 Ocean Dr Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: 10 a.m. HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Secrets of Coconut Grove Twilight Walking Tour

WHERE: Miami City Hall 3500 Pan American Dr Coconut Grove, FL 33133 WHEN: 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$25

WHAT: "Marilyn Monroe" WHERE: Untitled 2144 2144 NE Second Ave Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: 3 for All Fridays WHERE: Grove Isle Hotel 4 Grove Isle Dr Coconut Grove, FL 33133 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band WHERE: BankAtlantic Center 2555 Panther Pkwy, Sunrise, FL 33323

WHERE: BankAtlantic Center 2555 Panther Pkwy, Sunrise, FL 33323 WHEN: 7:30 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$95

WHAT: Belly Motions WHERE: Belly Motions, Inc. 430 S Dixie Hwy Coral Gables, FL 33146 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$75 an hour SATURDAY • APRIL 19

WHAT: Exxxotica WHERE: Miami Beach Convention Center 1901 Convention Center Dr Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$35

WHAT: "Marilyn Monroe" WHERE: Untitled 2144 2144 NE Second Ave Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Belly Motions WHERE: Belly Motions, Inc. 430 S Dixie Hwy Coral Gables, FL 33146 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$75 an hour

WHAT: Inside In Style WHERE: Ocean Drive (between 8th and 9th Streets on Ocean

Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$25

WHAT: Earth Day WHERE: Various Miami Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Various Times HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Self-Help, the Comedy WHERE: Abdo New River Room 201 SW 5th Ave, Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312 WHEN: 3 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$30

WHAT: Lincoln Road Gospelfest WHERE: Miami Beach Community Church 1620 Drexel Ave Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: 6 p.m. HOW MUCH: Free WHAT: Guys and Dolls WHERE: The Ring Theatre 1312 Miller Drive (University of Miami) Coral Gables, FL 33146 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$8 - \$10

WHAT: Miami Hip-Hop Arts Festival WHERE: Joseph Caleb Auditorium 5400 NW 22nd Ave Miami, FL 33142 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$31

WHAT: "Mosaic Arts International 2008"
WHERE: Bakehouse Art Complex
561 NW 32nd St
Miami, FL 33111
WHEN: Varies
HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Sweat Records three-year anniversary

WHERE: Sweat Records 5505 NE Second Ave., Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Rockstar Energy AP Tour featuring All Time Low & The Rocket Summer WHERE: Revolution Live 200 West Broward Blvd., Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312 WHEN: 6 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$13

> WHAT: Back 9 mini golf course WHERE: Upper Eastside Garden 7244 Biscayne Blvd Miami Shores, FL 33138 WHEN: 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Drink of the Week: Mojito WHERE: Berries 2884 SW 27th Ave Coconut Grove, FL 33133 WHEN: Daily HOW MUCH: Various WHAT: Exxxotica WHERE: Miami Beach Convention Center 1901 Convention Center Dr Miami Beach, FL 33139 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: \$35

WHAT: Guys and Dolls WHERE: The Ring Theatre 1312 Miller Drive (University of Miami) Coral Gables, FL 33146 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: S8 - S10

WHAT: Miami Hip-Hop Arts Festival WHERE: Joseph Caleb Auditorium 5400 NW 22nd Ave Miami, FL 33142 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$31

WHAT: Avril Lavigne WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre 601-7 Sansburys Way, West Palm Beach, FL 33411 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: S9 - S46

WHAT: Mae WHERE: Culture Room 3045 N Federal Hwy, Ft Lauderdale, FL 33306 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$14.99

WHAT: Reba WHERE: Hard Rock Live 5747 Seminole Way, Hollywood, FL 33314 WHEN: 7 p.m. HOW MUCH: S60 - S95

WHAT: 4/20 Celebration WHERE: Various Miami Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Various HOW MUCH: Free WHAT: AIDS Walk Miami
WHERE: Miami Beach Convention Center
1901 Convention Center Dr
Miami Beach, FL 33139
WHEN: 8 a.m.
HOW MUCH: Various

WHAT: "Marilyn Monroe" WHERE: Untitled 2144 2144 NE Second Ave Miami, FL 33137 WHEN: Varies HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Belly Motions
WHERE: Belly Motions, Inc.
430 S Dixie Hwy
Coral Gables, FL 33146
WHEN: Varies
HOW MUCH: S75 an hour

WHAT: "Mosaic Arts International 2008"
WHERE: Bakehouse Art Complex
561 NW 32nd St
Miami, FL 33111
WHEN: Varies
HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Back 9 mini golf course WHERE: Upper Eastside Garden 7244 Biscayne Blvd Miami Shores, FL 33138 WHEN: 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. HOW MUCH: Varies

WHAT: Jake Shimabukuro with Future Man & BLK Mozart En WHERE: Broward Ctr for the Perf Arts Amaturo 201 SW 5th Avenue,

Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312 WHEN: 8:30 p.m. HOW MUCH: \$35

WHAT: Baby Boom WHERE: Jungle Island 1111 Parrot Jungle Trail Miami, FL 33132 WHEN: Various HOW MUCH: \$27.95



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BLUE VS. GOLD



FIU PLAYS AGAINST FIU: The FIU offense plays the FIU defense in the Blue vs. Gold game on April 18.

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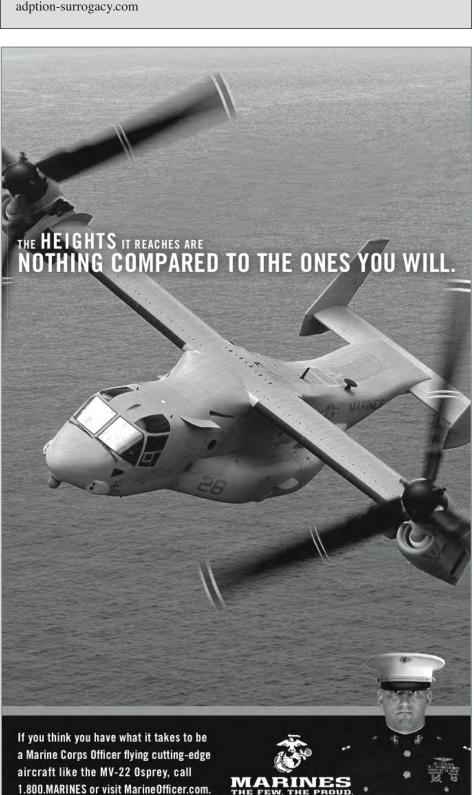
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SPORTS

The Beacon – 8 www.fiusm.com April 18, 2008

BASEBALL: BARRY 10, FIU 9

Wild 9th inning, errors cap off loss

LUCA MESSINA Staff Writer

First baseman Tyler Townsend was inches away from breaking a 9-9 tie in the bottom of the eighth inning. His line drive landed in the glove of Barry centerfielder Andrew Frezza.

If Frezza doesn't catch the ball, the Golden Panthers head into the ninth inning with a two-run lead. Instead, they headed into the ninth still in a tie.

Without recording a hit, Barry managed to score the game-winning run off a wild pitch.

After scoring 16 runs and amassing 12 hits in an extra-inning victory in their previous meeting, the Golden Panthers (12-27) fell to Barry University 10-9 on April 15 at University Park Stadium.

Sophomore Jorge Ramos, who is pushing for a spot in the weekend rotation, pitched 3 innings and didn't allow a run on 4 hits. He also left with FIU ahead 4-0 and received a no-decision.

"I felt good out there, and everything was working for me, so I felt comfortable out there," Ramos said. "I also felt comfortable about the lead, knowing that my team was going to score for me, but unfortunately our pitching didn't hold up. It's OK though; I'm pretty sure that we're going to turn this thing around and get the job done."

The Buccaneers (29-12) stormed back from a four-run deficit by scoring three runs in the fourth inning and two in the fifth.

Senior Jorge Castillo would tie up the score 5-5 with a solo home run in the bottom of the fifth inning off of Barry starter Aaron Main

Although senior reliever Carlos Martinez rebounded from a previous poor outing on April 13 and pitched 1.2 innings of scoreless relief, the Golden Panther bullpen was once again a problem as relievers Daniel DeSimone and Kyle Preshong allowed nine runs, eight of which were earned.

FIU trailed 9-5 in the latter part of the game before finally tying up the score in the eighth inning. Freshman Jorge Marban (0-3) took the loss for FIU even though the deciding run he allowed was unearned when he committed a throwing error. Bobby Riley (2-1) picked up the win for Barry.

Sophomore Enrique Cepero was the designated hitter and went 2-for-5 with one RBI. The hits were the first of his collegiate career. It was also his first collegiate start.

"It was good," he said. "I was excited, and I was pumped. Every pitch, my heart started beating faster and faster, but I gotta do what I gotta do."

Sophomore Ryan Mollica finished 2-for-5 with one RBI and two runs scored. He also extended his hitting streak to 21 games but flied out to right field to end the game with runners on the corners.

The Golden Panthers have lost nine of their last 10 games, including two tenthinning losses.

PREPARING



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

TEAMWORK: The tennis team is trying to win its fourth consecutive conference championship, as they participate int the Sun Belt tournament from April 18-20.

Tennis team heads into the Sun Belt Conference Tournament ranked No. 51

Tennis team

2008 season

• Record 11-8

Brito (#27)

Ranking No. 51

Played 5 teams

• Best doubles: Egle

Petrauskaite and Liset

ranked among top 20

JONATHAN RAMOS

Asst. Sports Editor

Heading into the Sun Belt Conference tournament, the Golden Panthers (11-8) will feel very familiar with their surroundings. As the three-time reigning conference champions, FIU should be comfortable and confident with what it can accomplish at that level.

With that optimism, the women's tennis team will be out to avenge a NCAA regional loss to South Florida and contend for a national championship. The 4-3 loss to the Bulls last season was an early exit for team looking to advance deep into the national bracket.

The Golden Pan-

thers found out their seeding at the league tournament at the University of Louisiana-Monroe and are guaranteed to be the third seed in the field of 12 schools and will also receive a first-round bye.

The team begins competition today at 7:30 p.m., and will go on play the winner of the match-up of No. 6 seed North Texas and No. 11 seed Florida Atlantic

The Golden Panthers defeated South Alabama in its final match of the season

in preparation for the tournament and shoulder high expectations due to their history. The match was close as three of the six singles contests went into third sets and another was decided by a tie breaker, but FIU was able to close on their way to a No. 51 ranking in the nation. USA, who was ranked in the top 50 in the nation prior to the contest, gives FIU a signature win going into

the postseason.

Denver, who comes in with an impressive 19-2 regular season record, will give the Golden Panthers their biggest road block toward a fourth straight conference crown. Mallory Voelker, who is ranked No. 65 in the country, will look to lead DU to its second

women's tennis championship. DU, who is the first seed in the tournament, won the title on one previous occasion in 2004. USA is the second seed in the tournament.

Coming into the playoffs, FIU throws out the two strong doubles tandems in the nation with No. 27 Egle Petrauskaite and Liset Brito and No. 51 Brito and Priscilla Castillo.

In addition to her doubles ranking, Brito is also the ranked No. 107 among singles player. **BASEBALL NOTEBOOK**

Pitching coach's staff struggles

LUCA MESSINA Staff Writer

Pitching coach Felipe Suarez has had plenty of experience as both a coach and player. He mainly pitched in the minor leagues and was invited to spring training with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim in 2002. He also recently coached the US Under-16 National Team to a 2007 World Championship.

Because of his credentials, first year coach Turtle Thomas felt that Suarez would be the perfect candidate to work with the FIU pitching corps.

Unfortunately, the pitching for this year's baseball team has been well below-average. No weekend starter has an ERA lower than 5.00 and only relievers Akeem Francis and Eric Hortsmann have respectable ERA's under 5.00 (3.48 and 4.72, respectively).

"It's been a freak season, and you've seem some things that you normally don't see," Suarez said. "You just have to stay positive."

Despite the strugles, Suarez does not believe this is a lot tougher job than he had anticipated

"I knew that we had our work cut out for us and this team as a whole is operating on very few scholarships, so I have a lot of blue-collar guys," he said. "I knew that we were really going to have to do special things and play all aspects of the game extremely well in order to compete and win."

As it is quite obvious that the pitching woes have greatly contributed to the 12-27 record and the 7.20 team ERA, Suarez mentioned that the brunt of the blame varied on any given night.

"It's been a mixture [of the bullpen and the starters] to be honest with you, and there was a stretch almost three weeks ago that we had maybe eight quality starts, quality guys going into the seventh inning," he said. "There were also times were we didn't get quality starts, but a reliever came in and did a hell of a job."

Overall, this has been a trying year for the squad, but the pitching truly has been the ultimate downfall. The offense has scored enough runs to win more than 12 games, but former coach Danny Price left the team with very few quality pitchers.

Thomas and Suarez we're dealt a bad hand, and they won't be able to see the results of their recruiting for a few years to come. It is too soon to place the blame on Thomas and Suarez for the team's shaky pitching performance this season.

Suarez has appeared to acknowledge that this year has not panned out the way he would have hoped but believes that this project still has a lot of work to be completed.