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SCRATCH THAT

Pharmed Group loses naming rights

SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

FIU decided to change the name of the Pharmed Arena to the FIU Arena in early June after the Pharmed Group filed for bankruptcy in October last year.

The former Golden Panther Arena was renamed after the medical supply distributor donated \$1 million in 2004 – the largest donation to Athletics to date.

The confidential donor agreement made between Pharmed and FIU noted the company had to pay FIU an unknown

amount of money every year. However, after the bankruptcy, the Pharmed Group was unable to complete the remaining payments.

“There was an agreement in place and [Pharmed] did not finish paying the amount,” said Vice President of Community Relations Sandra Gonzalez-Levy.

Founded by Jorge and Carlos de Céspedes in 1980, the medical supply distributor was once recognized as the eighth largest Hispanic-owned business in the United States, and the 24th largest

privately-owned business in Florida.

Despite the company’s financial success through 2004, the Pharmed Group was embroiled in legal problems before the donation to FIU.

Most recently in June 2008, three hospital employees working at Kendall Regional Medical Center were charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud in connection with the Pharmed Group, *The Miami Herald* reported on June 12.

The same *Miami Herald* article dis-

ARENA, page 8

Religion not a prime concern for Floridians

CHRIS LAZAGA
Staff Writer

Floridians are less likely to attend weekly services or claim religion to be central in their lives, according to a survey published by the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey last month.

The Pew Research Center conducted the survey on a national and state scale, and polled approximately 35,000 adult Americans concerning their religious attitudes.

“Globalism is happening among religions, too, mostly on an unconscious level, and the [Pew] study is picking up on that,” said Nathan Katz, founder of FIU’s Center for the Study of Spirituality, in an article published by *TCPalm.com*.

The survey revealed larger disparities between the general population of America and Floridians in particular occurred on questions regarding their religion. Florida residents were less likely to believe literal scripture interpretations or regularly attend religious services.

Steve Lantz, chairman of the Multifaith Council, believes the trend is not surprising, especially since Florida has liberal centers like Miami where people from different backgrounds tend to flock.

“Miami is the least church city in America. Miami tends to be a place for people to get away and start a new life,” Lantz said.

However, an informal poll of 30 FIU students yielded somewhat more polarizing results. Of those polled, 90 percent believe in God. A majority of the 30 questioned also indicated that religion is very important in their lives (63 percent) and they pray at least once a day (60 percent).

At the same time, a greater majority reported that they do not regularly attend religious services (80 percent), they do not believe literal interpretations of scripture (80 percent) and that their religion plays a minor, if any, role in their political ideals (70 percent).

Junior Samantha Simeon notes the waning interest in religion among college students.

“[My friends] all grew up Catholic, but when we got to college, we stopped going to church,” Simeon said.

Simeon also said that besides having less time for regular church attendance, college has opened her mind to new ideas that her religion staunchly opposes. For example, Simeon said she has friends who are homosexual, though her religion condemns the lives they lead.

“I just don’t agree with [such Catholic dogma],” Simeon said.

While some college students have come to reject certain aspects of their religion, others have rejected religion all together.

FAITH, page 2

GUITAR HERO



OLIVER MACDONALD/THE BEACON

FANCY FINGERS: Junior transfer student Carlos Andrade, plays classical music on a bench adjacent to the Cube sculpture. He will be attending FIU in the Fall to major in music.

SGC-UP

Coordinator has eyes set on safety, progress

PAULO O’SWATH
Staff Writer

Yuniel Molina, new coordinator of Special Events for Student Government Council-University Park, holds himself to high standards.

A junior double majoring in political science and international relations, Molina is motivated to work with the Student Government Association.

“I want to work with SGC because I see a great potential in SGA and I feel that there is a lot to take care of,” Molina said.

“I feel the need to provide my skills

and services to our student body for the betterment of FIU.”

Molina has many objectives in mind while working with SGC-UP; he plans to facilitate the welcoming of new freshmen and transfer students to FIU during Welcome Week, hold a presidential election voter’s registration event and oversee Panther Hall’s renovation.

Molina is also dedicated to improving student safety with continued work on Mobile Campus, an ongoing project that sends students text messages in the event of an emergency at the University.

Molina also hopes to hold at least one major event per semester for the student

body as well as several student town hall meetings.

“I hope that this year’s SGA works diligently for the students,” Molina said. “I encourage the whole student body to be informed of what SGA is and what SGA can do for them.”

Other than being involved with the SGC-UP, Molina is also Entertainment Chair for Dance Marathon, FIU’s largest annual student-run event, which raises money for the Miami Children’s Hospital Foundation.

He is also a member of Sigma Alpha

MOLINA, page 2

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY • JULY 09

Panther Promotions Warped Tour Showcase:
 Noon-2 p.m., GC Pit
Mushroom in Her Hands: 8 p.m., DM 150
SGA General meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 155

THURSDAY • JULY 10

Music Saves Lives Summer Blood Drive: 11 a.m., In front of FIU bookstore
FIU College Democrats Meeting: 6 p.m., GC 316
Go Greek BBQ: 8 p.m., GC Lawn
Panther Promotions General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 1235
Panther Power Recruiting: 10:30 a.m., WUC Campus Life Hallway

FRIDAY • JULY 11

Panther Rage Presents: Heat Stroke: 1 p.m., UP Housing Quad

SATURDAY • JULY 12

Vans Warped Tour: 11 a.m., Bicentennial Park
The Hate You Gave Tupac Shakur Story: 6 p.m., MDC Kendall Campus

MONDAY • JULY 14

Beat BBQ: 8 p.m., Betty Chapman Plaza (in front of GC)

- Compiled by Rosalyn Delgado

SHOOT SOME HOOPS



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

B-BALL: Sophomore Thomas Muñoz (left), and friends take time to enjoy a game of basketball on the courts near the Red Parking Garage.

Views of faith vary with students

FAITHS, page 1

Raymond Matias, a junior majoring in psychology, also sees interest in religion among his peers diminishing.

"Science has proved to be more important [than religion]," Matias said.

Matias sees religion as more of a safety blanket. "People use religion when it's convenient for them or when they need something," Matias said.

Orlando Vega, a senior majoring in hospitality management, believes that college students need religion or spirituality in their lives despite the results of the Pew poll.

"Secularization is the trend, but I note [college stu-

dents] retain a certain degree of spirituality, whether it's expressed through belief in some higher order or some form of reflective meditation," Vega said.

It is the disconcerting feeling of having an all-powerful supreme being judging each individual that drives people away from traditional religious dogma in a modern society, according to Vega.

"It's kind of intimidating," he said. "That's why I think Eastern ideals like karma are so popular now. They take God out of the picture but retain a reward system for proper moral judgment and behavior."

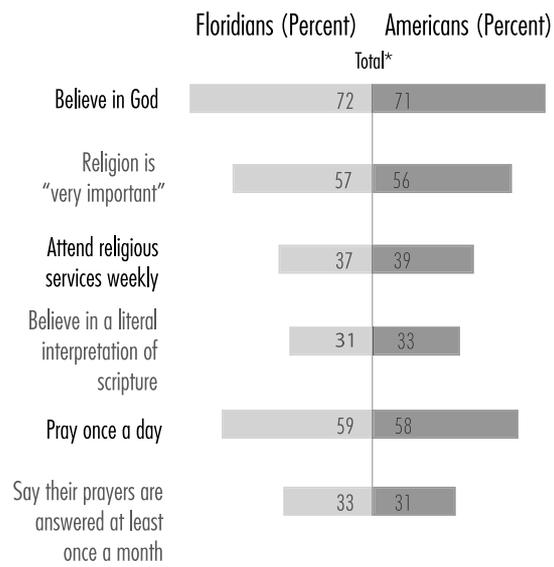
In the end, Vega sees a growing trend in secularization among his peers, yet notes the attachment most people have to faith in something.

"I think people just want to have faith in a happy ending," Vega said.

Upon arriving to a college atmosphere a new student may go in any direction in terms of his or her religious affinity.

Deborah Perez is a soph-

U.S. Religious Survey



* 35,000 Americans surveyed by the Pew Research Center

by Alejandra Ramirez

omore studying sociology at the University of Miami. Perez noted an elevated interest in religion among her group of friends.

"Coming into college religion has become more prominent in my life."

Although the FIU survey shows diverging student opinions of a miniscule part

of the FIU population, Lantz still believes the informal poll shows a nice variety of opinions, even if they oppose his personal beliefs.

"The positive part is that it is much easier to live an authentic life in Miami because you don't have many people pretending. They are more genuine," Lantz said.

Molina looks to the present for guidance in the future

MOLINA, page 1

Mu and serves as the Family Relations Chair.

Molina hopes his SGC-UP position will help him gain the experience and expertise necessary to be able to handle another position in the SGA next year.

"I feel that what I will learn will benefit me," Molina said. "I will already know the way SGA works

along with knowing the staff, deans and other school officials."

Molina was born in Havana, Cuba but he grew up in Miami.

No stranger to student government, Molina was involved in the Student Government Organization and was president of his junior and senior classes when he attended Hialeah Senior High School.

After he graduates from FIU, Molina's plans are to pursue a career in the United Nations or the State Department, mainly focusing in on international problems and conflict resolutions.

Although he plans a life in the world of politics, Molina said he would also like to pursue his childhood dreams of becoming an actor.

THE BEACON

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Garbage bags help Stop Hunger

JULIA CARDENUTO
Asst. News Director

FIU students can help Stop Hunger by taking out the trash with the Biscayne Bay Campus Wish Givers.

The BBC Wish Givers is a student organization that raises funds throughout the year for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Now, the group have partnered with Stop Hunger Garbage Bags, a non-profit company, to sell garbage bags to raise funds for Stop Hunger Inc.

One box of 20 trash bags, sufficient for a month, costs \$5, while one case with 12 boxes, equivalent to a year's supply, costs \$60. From the profit of each box sold, \$1 goes to BBC Wish Givers and \$1.15 goes to Stop Hunger.

Stop Hunger Inc. is a South Florida non-profit food bank and food pantry founded over 28 years ago. It feeds over 27,000 low-income families and individuals in South Florida monthly, according to a business profile at www.city-data.com.

Even though the company - Stop Hunger Garbage Bags - is only 60 days old, they have been successful, according to Bruce Goldstein, a member of Stop Hunger's board of directors.

"It is unbelievable. You can't imagine the success. Nobody says 'no,'" Goldstein said.

But the fund raising doesn't stop there.

BBC Wish Givers will also hold Casino Night complete with roulette, card games and Mardi Gras theme. There will be auction items, free food and music.

"It is not a gambling event," said Joe Mintz, treasurer of the BBC Wish Givers. "It is a fun activity where we are raising funds for the [Make-A-

Wish] foundation."

"The more you win, the more you donate," said Zach K. Trautenberg, BBC Wish Givers' founder and current advisor, emphasizing that there will be no prizes.

Casino Night will be held July 16, in the Ballroom on the second floor of the Wolfe University Center, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Anyone can buy a VIP or regular pass either at the door or by contacting BBC Wish Givers.

"It has been very successful," Trautenberg said. "It is going to be a fun night, with lots of free food and we'll be helping a wonderful cause."

BBC Wish Givers is also planning a Dunk Tank day, but the exact date is yet to be announced.

Founded in 1980, the Make-A-Wish Foundation is a worldwide, non-profit organization that relies on fund raising, donations and sponsoring to grant wishes to children with terminal medical conditions.

"We are not going to ask you to give us money without giving you a little fun," Mintz said. "Come, support us and have fun, and know that you are supporting a good cause."

For more information, contact Zach Trautenberg at 786-837-5144 or e-mail info@bbcwishgivers.com.

SO YOU KNOW

A VIP pass for the Casino night will cost \$20 for students and \$25 for non-students.

The pass includes one chocolate cigar box, \$30 in chips and \$5 auction credit.

A box of dark or milk chocolate cigars will cost \$2.50.

STEP UP



PAMELA DUQUE/THE BEACON

SKIP TO THE BEAT: Lilian Garcia's class follows her lead during her Beginner's Dance Aerobics class at the BBC Recreation Center. The class is held every Monday, 5 to 6 p.m. and Wednesday from 4 to 5 p.m. Classes are open to all FIU students with a valid Panther ID.

Garden, art meet at BBC

DAINELYS MARTINEZ
Contributing Writer

A new piece from artist Florencio Gelabert was added to the BBC sculpture garden on May 6.

The sculpture, "Column Trees 1," is part of Gelabert's series "Column Trees." It is four feet wide by 10 feet tall and is made from aluminum, steel, tree trunks and polyester gel coast resin.

"Florencio Gelabert's work is the ideal fit for our sculpture garden, which draws attention to the connection between art and the environment," said former Interim Vice Provost Damian Fernandez, who is personally acquainted with Gelabert, in an April 2008 press release on BBC's Web site,

The piece was donated by Marc Routh from his private collection, the Remy-Toledo Collection, and is estimated to be worth over \$10,000.

The Florida Art and State Building program paid \$4,000 for the installation.

"The artist felt that this campus was a unique set-

ting for his art," said Julissa Castellanos, director of academic support services and operations.

The sculpture garden is located just outside the new recreation facility and already features four stainless steel sculptures by environmental artist Ross Power.

Gelabert was born in Cuba and received his bachelor's degree from San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana in 1981. He left Cuba in 1991 and lived in Miami before moving to New York, his current residence.

Gelabert will present a solo exhibition at FIU's Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum later this year.

Neither Gelabert nor Routh was available for comment.

Visit our Web site for BBC Student Government Council notes and Senator profiles.

www.FIUSM.com

Alumna Magaly Estrella becomes a 'hotdogger'

WILMA HERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

After singing the Oscar Mayer jingle and passing a second round of interviews in Madison, Wis., FIU alumna Magaly Estrella "cut the mustard," as the company's saying goes.

"We get the best of the best, and Magaly really stood out," said Ed Roland, mobile marketing manager for Oscar Mayer.

Estrella, 24, was part of the 14 students selected in February to be spokespersons for Oscar Mayer. She will show off the new MINI Cooper Wiernmobile around the Midwest during the first half of her one-year assignment.

"I will be traveling the country, granting wishes and taking people's pictures as a wiener," Estrella said.

"Fresh off the grill," as Estrella describes herself, she has been on the road for about three weeks and has vis-

ited Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota. During this time, she has done some grocery stores appearances, been in parades, festivals and golf tournaments. "No two days are alike.

I remember on my first week on the road, a woman literally had tears in her eyes because it was her lifetime dream to see the Wiernmobile," Estrella said. For the second half of the year, she will drive the regular sized Wiernmobile, but her exact itinerary is yet to be determined.

According to Roland, the primary responsibilities of a spokesperson, or "hotdogger," are to show the Wiernmobile, meet the media and take pictures. He said "hotdoggers" are true brand ambassadors for the company.

Roland, who was in the group of the six managers responsible for hiring Estrella, said the "hotdogger" position is highly selective. For Roland, Estrella's education, bilingual skills,

charisma, adventurous spirit and trustworthiness got her the position.

"Magaly is energetic, adventurous and social. She definitely helps us spread miles of smiles," Roland said.

The "hotdogger" tradition started

in 1988, and Oscar Mayer has done most of its recruitment at state universities since then. Estrella, who according to Roland has a "contagious smile," is part of the 21st group of "hotdoggers."

Oscar Mayer offers "hotdoggers" a one-year benefits package worth

\$50,000. The position pays a basic salary of \$26,500, and the remainder is spent on other benefits and hotel expenses.

"It is a very competitive package," Roland said. "We give them money for clothes, their laundry, their meals and public transportation."

In addition to the benefits and

the excitement of driving across the country, "hotdoggers" also make a lot of beneficial job connections while on the road.

Estrella graduated in the spring of 2008 with a bachelor's in liberal studies and a minor in communications. She now plans on gaining experience in public relations through her "hotdogger" role, and eventually work for a well-known public relations or advertising agency. Estrella's future goals are to earn a master's degree in business administration and start her own family.

"I'm fun to be around. I love kids and hot dogs," Estrella said. "But I'm also very responsible and dependable; you have to be if they give you the keys to an American icon."

Oscar Mayer will return to FIU in February of 2009 for recruitment. For more information, visit <http://www.kraftfoods.com/oscardmayer>.

I will be traveling the country, granting wishes and taking people's pictures as a wiener.

Magaly Estrella, alumna and "Hotdogger"

in 1988, and Oscar Mayer has done most of its recruitment at state universities since then. Estrella, who according to Roland has a "contagious smile," is part of the 21st group of "hotdoggers."

According to Roland, applicants to this position must have a bachelor's degree, preferably in communi-

\$50,000. The position pays a basic salary of \$26,500, and the remainder is spent on other benefits and hotel expenses.

"It is a very competitive package," Roland said. "We give them money for clothes, their laundry, their meals and public transportation."

In addition to the benefits and

THE BEACON | Editorial

Review of potential donors needed to avoid lost payments, embarrassment

Following the trend of other local event venues who cannot hold onto a name, the complex at University Park formerly known as the Pharmed Arena has been renamed to FIU Arena.

The blue building located on the west end of UP campus which holds various sporting events such as basketball and volleyball, high-profile comedy shows, and other community-related functions (such as the somber funeral for a slain Miami-Dade police officer) was originally christened with the Pharmed name in 2004 when the medical supplies company entered into an agreement with FIU to pay \$1 million to the Athletics department.

It all came crashing down several years later, when in 2007 the Pharmed Group filed for bankruptcy, getting out of their financial obligation to the University before having completed the final of the phased-out payments originally agreed to between both parties.

The exact amount of money that FIU received from Pharmed was not disclosed due to a confidential agreement meant to protect donors, however a Feb. 3, 2008 article in *The Miami Herald* reported that about one-third of the \$1 million was paid.

This situation underscores a larger issue of the background check process that is involved when the University is considering potential donors.

Due to massive shortfalls in public funding, degree programs are being cut, institutes are being shut down and operational hours of certain offices are being shortened.

As a result, the University is shifting from a focus on enrollment growth to enrollment caps, as part of what President Modesto Maidique has described as "FIU 3.0," an institution more conservative in its growth spurts.

This increased reliance on private funding warrants a greater scrutiny toward those

who we are receiving these funds from.

Donations from questionable sources could not only end up not being collected in full, such as the case with the Pharmed Group, but attaching a name to a building at FIU that brings along with it the potential for a public relations dream...or nightmare.

For a bit of an exaggerated example, School of Journalism and Mass Communication students may find it hard for their degree to be taken seriously if *The National Enquirer* made a donation in order for the SJMC to bear its name.

Naming part of a school after an individual or company implies at least a certain level of endorsement of that brand, which will reflect badly back on the University if the donor ends up in legal woes.

Though Pharmed's most recent legal and financial troubles occurred after the naming of the arena, the company has been embroiled in controversy as early as 1987 when they were accused of improperly obtaining drug discounts and throughout the 1990s when another company sued Pharmed for not paying for shipped goods.

It is worth pointing out that both of these lawsuits were settled out of court.

Pharmed was not ruled against, and therefore FIU administration cannot be totally faulted for accepting the purported \$1 million in exchange for the arena naming rights.

The issue in question here is whether these legal factors were even looked at or considered before we took the cash.

The Beacon has been unable, through interviews with the Athletics and Media Relations departments, to glean any details regarding any concrete policy for viewing the legal backgrounds of, or potential controversial activities of potential donors. We will continue to look into the donation approval process and provide clarifications.

FREE AT LAST



LANCE CHEUNG/AP PHOTO

HOSTAGES HOME: Those recently released from the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* arrive to the United States after five years of imprisonment.

Captives recovered from FARC

JAIME RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

On July 2, the course of Latin American and world politics severely changed course.

This after a miraculous mission in which the Colombian military freed a group of high profile hostages that prelude the end of Latin America's oldest terror group.

On the afternoon of July 2, Colombian army commandos rescued Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt, Americans Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes and Keith Stansell along with 11 other hostages by posing and infiltrating as their Guerrilla rebel captors and flying them out into safety.

This saga began when Betancourt, campaigning for president in 2002, was kidnapped and later three American contractors were captured in 2003 by the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, when their aircraft went down in the rebel-infested Colombian jungle.

The international effort to bring freedom to the hostages, who had been held captive by FARC for as much as 9 years in some cases according to Bogotá's newspaper *El Tiempo*, has been an arduous process.

The FARC is Latin America's oldest left-wing insurgency that has financed itself by drug trafficking and kidnapping.

In the span of these years, the international community has given support to Colombian President Alvaro Uribe in many ways.

The United States govern-

ment has been the main ally of the Colombian government and intelligence partner of the rescue operation.

Starting out with Bill Clinton's terrorism and drug fighting program, Plan Colombia, which was continued under George W. Bush, the Colombian government has

Tribune article last week.

The number of FARC rebels has been in a downward spiral thanks to the outstanding efforts of the Colombian government and international community.

The morning after the news came out was not a normal one for the Latin student body at

"The FARC is Latin America's oldest left-wing insurgency that has financed itself by drug trafficking and kidnapping."

been able to almost diminish the FARC altogether, this rescue being their latest.

Other international leaders such as Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and French President Nicolas Sarkozy have tried to mediate - mostly unsuccessfully - a hostage release between the FARC and the Colombian government.

Before the high profile kidnapped victims were in captivity, the FARC had already been struggling.

The hierarchy atop the FARC has been disappearing, after its two main commanders Manuel Marulanda and Raul Reyes were killed in battle during the past year.

Motivated by a government protection program, the FARC rebels have been abandoning the group and thousands have deserted according to Colombia's minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos and confirmed in a *Chicago*

University Park.

"Today, I feel love for the human race," said Venezuelan sophomore Jesus Villa. "This is a triumph to freedom and incredible news for Colombians."

Senior Hector Cortes feels the rescue helps the Republican Party and the perception of Bush.

"For all the pain that Bush has caused, this is a bright spot in his resume," he said.

FIU should be beaming with joy for what is shaping up to be a turning point in Latin American political history.

After a year that has brought mostly bad news, talk of recession and pain at the gas station, one afternoon turned the entire course of the year around.

The day that not only was 13 people given their right to be free, but a message from the world that unity, love and hope will always be in our hearts.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor can be sent to opinion@fiusm.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words and include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.

Local wine bars offer inexpensive tastings

SHANON FALLON
Staff Writer

The intimate restaurant is dimly lit with candlelight. Bottles of wine from Italy, Australia and Spain stand on shelves from ceiling to floor as the pungent smell of aged cheeses and olives fills the air.

Guests occupy tables with multiple empty wine glasses while discussing a strong Argentinean Malbec.

A waiter appears to uncork a variety of both white and red wines, pouring a little into each glass and describing the night's selection.

That's a common scene at local wine tastings, which are held weekly all over South Florida.

The affordable pricing is making these tastings a cheap date and a popular night out.

"Restaurants are beginning to include a bigger collection of wines and are offering designated nights to give people a chance to try out wine - without the pressure of being familiar with wines in general," said Mario Ramirez, an avid wine taster. "It makes drinking wine fun."

Tastings range from free to \$30 per person. Promoters pour smaller portions of various wines, as they provide a little instruction and information on what the tasters are

sipping.

At some tastings, restaurants will even provide some food such as cheeses, olives and other *tapas*. Here's a list of some local hangouts that host weekly tastings:

THIRSTY THURSDAYS AT JAGUAR CEVICHE SPOON BAR & LATAM GRILL
(3067 Grand Avenue, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)

This Latin American theme restaurant offers \$15 tastings every Thursday night with wine connoisseur, Barry Albert.

The mood is set by the house band's smooth Latin jazz, and tasters can enjoy a casual evening of six different glasses of Spanish wines tastefully paired with ceviches, meats and chicken straight

off the skewer, with an assortment of delicious sauces.

"I never knew I could eat and get drunk for less than I would pay for the drink at the bar," said restaurant regular Jorge Luis Perez.

BIN NO. 18
(1800 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL 33132)

Hang with the Midtown locals every Thursday night from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for free wine tastings in this hip, industrial-themed restaurant.

Its intimate and glamorous settings along with its first-rate dining set the mood for the night. Bin No. 18's staff offers food recommendations for those who don't know much about wine

to go along with a vintage wine selection.

COPAS Y TAPAS
(98 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables, FL 33134)

With the scenery set like a basement wine cellar with bottles on shelves all over its walls, Copas y Tapas is an intimate wine bar on Miracle Mile in Coral Gables.

As an alternative to happy hour cocktails, Copas y Tapas offers a two-for-one happy hour on wines every day between 4 to 6 p.m. To get the weekend started early, Friday night's wine tastings are free and, menu items, featuring an array of cheeses, meats and olives, start at \$6.95.

"I'm obsessed with the Bocata Chorizo and Manchego Cheese in Gallega Bread with a glass of red wine or sangria. It always ends my workday on a good note," said local regular Krizia Gonzales.

SCHNEBLI WINERY
(30205 S.W. 217th Ave, Homestead, FL 33030)

When looking for the full wine tasting experience - but not the flight to California or Italy - Schnebli Redland's Winery in Homestead is the place to go.

Schnebli's is an actual winery, but with its own Miami twist. Grapes aren't used in this family's wine making recipes.

Instead, they use tropical fruits including guava, mango and passion fruit. Tastings are available seven days a week and the cost is \$5. Five different glasses are presented to you in a recommended order, and visitors can take a tour and view the winery's facilities and the wine-making process. At the wine tasting, you receive a free Schnebli's glass, which you can bring in anytime after for other free wine tastings.

CHRISTABELLE'S QUARTER
(3159 Commodore Plaza, Miami, FL 33133)

This well-known restaurant in the Grove specializes in home cooked New Orleans cuisine and has a theatrical Bourbon Street setting. Barry Albert enlightens tasters of his knowledge in fine wines every Friday night with multiple wine tastings of both red and white wines, accompanied with a variety of Cajun appetizers, all for the low price of \$15.

Top Three Wines:



1. Clos des Papes
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2005
2. Ridge Chardonnay Santa Cruz Mountains Santa Cruz Mountain Estate 2005
3. Le Vieux Donjon
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2005

www.winespectator.com

South Florida's music scene gets a much needed reprieve

CHRIS TOWERS
Life! Editor

Unless you are a fan of Jimmy Buffett, South Florida isn't exactly the place to go for a great live music scene.

Sure, Parrotheads get their fill of "Cheeseburger in Paradise," but for the rest of us out there, South Florida's musical landscape can seem awfully bleak most of the year.

Luckily, every summer does tend to bring around some choice concerts, comedy shows and summer festivals to hold you through those cold Miami winters.

Here's a few of the concerts that will tide you over for the next month.

JULY 11-12, DAVE MATTHEWS BAND,
Cruzan Amphitheater

One of the more dependable bands to come to South Florida is Dave Matthews Band, making an annual appearance at the West Palm Beach venue.

While some might deride the stereotypical frat boy audience and the band's sleepy, world music-lite sound, it is hard to deny their talent as a live outfit.

If you can get past the guys in upturned visors passed out on the lawn, you'll be able

to catch a pretty entertaining show.

JULY 12, VANS WARPED TOUR,
Bicentennial Park

Thousands of sweating kids moshing and skanking in downtown Miami can only mean Warped Tour is back in town.

While it's pop/punk/emo lineup may not appeal to everyone, but this ultra popular touring festival is entering it's 14th year, so it certainly has it's fans.

Bands scheduled to perform at the all day event include Angels and Airwaves, Gym Class Heroes, Against Me!, Jack's Mannequin and Reel Big Fish, among hun-

dreds of others sprawled across numerous stages.

JULY 15, TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS,
BankAtlantic Center

While college students might not be the main demographic for Petty and his band, the Heartbreaker's music has proven to be timeless, with an appeal to listeners of all ages.

Despite Petty's legendary status as a rock musician, tickets for this show are reason-

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COURTESY PHOTOS

Vintage store promises a unique shopping experience

JADE LEONART
Staff Writer

Shoppers tired of seeing people in the street wearing the exact same outfit they're wearing or finding their friends' rooms decorated the exact same way as theirs will find relief and release in the vintage clothing store, Miami Twice.

Bird Road has numerous stores that hold historical significance. Everyone has, at one time or another, seen the huge sign and the statuesque mannequins modeling vintage clothing at the window of the shop.

The store opened its doors in May of 1985. The original owners, Mary Holly, Diane Kyle and Kim Smith, are still the owners today.

"You really can't ask for someone more lovely to work for than them," said Meggie Alea, former Miami Twice employee.

The vintage shop derived its name from two places - the popular 1980s show "Miami Vice" (which was at the height of its success at the time of the store's opening) and the fact that it also sells items that have been bought once before.

"We sell vintage clothing, as well as new clothing. Furniture, designer handbags, accessories, costumes. For Halloween, we turn the entire store into a costume shop," said Dina Figarola, sales manager.

The vintage clothing that the store sells comes from lots of different people. A lot of the time, when someone passes away, a loved one will bring in their clothing. Elderly people also donate their old outfits, accessories and furniture to the shop. Miami Twice also sells new, designer clothing. Some of the brands they offer are Sky, miss me and Stop Staring!

"I love the cute, new dresses and the jewelry is absolutely amazing," Alea said.

Miami Twice attracts a large and diverse crowd.

"Lots of tourists come here. We have our loyal customers that always come. A lot of

different people shop at Miami Twice, it's not just one type of person," Figarola said.

The fact that most of the items in the store are about to be owned a second time around when bought does not bother customers.

"I love retro things. Most of the time, I can't find anything I like at the mall but when I go to Miami Twice, I always want to buy the entire store. I can find pretty, unique things that no one else has," said Amber Komatz, Miami Twice shopper. The store's Halloween transformation only attracts more shoppers.

**I love retro things.
Most of the time, I
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Amber Komatz, Miami Twice shopper.

"I've bought my Halloween costume there for the past two years," Komatz said. "If someone goes into Miami Twice once, there is no way they will never return. Whenever I talk about Miami Twice with anyone, they always include 'awesome' or 'really cool' in the same sentence."

Miami Twice is a distinctive place to shop in a world of sameness.

"I guarantee that between the amazing vintage brand name shoes that are 20-years-old, the latest beautiful brand name purses, the neat, tiny knick-knacks and the interesting pieces of colorful furniture around the store, there is going to be that one thing that each person will fall in love with," Alea said.



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

VINTAGE WARES: Mary Holle, owner of Miami Twice, and Diane Kyle watch the store as Melissa Pedesco looks through the racks (above). Some of the store's items are on display at the front (below).

Past acts add modern twists to some old school hits

CONCERTS, page 5

ably priced, starting at 29.50, which comes out to about \$1 for every hit that Petty has had on the Billboard Hot 100, so it's one of the better bargains from that end this summer.

JULY 22, ZAPPA PLAYS ZAPPA,
Club Cinema

Dweezil Zappa, eldest son of legendary rock musician Frank Zappa, has taken his father's show on the road collecting a variety of musicians as a travelling tribute to his father and his eccentric discography.

The band recently garnered rave reviews

for a performance at the Bonnaroo Music and Arts festival in June, and is a can't miss for fans of the elder Zappa's eclectic style.

JULY 26, BROOKS & DUNN,
Cruzan Amphitheater

Sure, just about everyone on Facebook describes their music taste along the lines of "I like everything but country," because everyone knows that liking country is totally uncool.

Still, it's hard to ignore a group with as broad appeal as Brooks & Dunn, whose 13 albums have sold over 27 million copies in the U.S. alone - not to mention they did a totally not terrible version of "Nobody Told

Me" on a recent John Lennon tribute album, so they've got that going for them.

JULY 26, JERRY SEINFELD,
The Fillmore Miami Beach at Jackie
Gleason Theater

For the few of you who won't be attending the Brooks & Dunn show on this night, the star of one of the most successful TV shows ever will be doing a double feature of his standup at 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. at the newly redesigned historic Miami Beach venue.

Expect the same humor that has made Seinfeld one of the most beloved comics in the country, with many of the jokes based

around observations of the mundane parts of everyday life.

**JULY 31, JOURNEY WITH HEART AND
CHEAP TRICK,**
Cruzan Amphitheater

Alright, so this paper is definitely not going to the right demographic for this show, but who among us can truthfully say they've never rocked out in a car to "Don't Stop Believin" or "Surrender."

Sure, it's one of the more ridiculous bills to come down here in recent years, but these were three of the most popular bands of their time for a reason, so there's no reason to expect anything negative.



COURTESY PHOTOS



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First baseman aiming for major league career

CASTILLO, page 8

Q: How do you feel about the fact that even though you were drafted, you didn't graduate with a degree from FIU?

A: Oh, I don't care. Baseball was always my dream and school will always be there. I need only 20 more credits, and I could still get my degree in the fall if things don't work out. I'm actually taking an online class right now too.

Q: What are your immediate plans in terms of your baseball playing career?

A: Right now I'm playing rookie ball up here in Bristol. I'll be here till the end of August when our season ends. Afterwards I have no idea; it depends on how well I play, what they need at the other levels and if there are any injuries.

Q: How do you feel about FIU's team in the future with Turtle Thomas at the helm? In other words, what are the positive and negative areas that you see with this team?

A: I would say that a positive was that our hitting was consistent and a negative was our pitching. We didn't have that much pitching and every game always seemed as if it had to be a hitter's duel. Even though we had some good pitchers like Corey Pollizzano and Jorge Marban, everything seemed to be about the bullpen. I do think that next year will be a totally different year for FIU once Turtle gets his recruiting class

and settles down. They also already have a lot of people that know the system.

Q: Who taught you the most about baseball? Who has taught you the most about life?

A: My grandfather was my inspiration because he played for the Cuban national team, and my father because he was always the one right there pushing me saying things like "you got this, you got this" and "come on your right there."

Q: Have you spoken to any former FIU players who play in the MLB now?

A: (Laughs) Like Mike Lowell? No not yet. I definitely want to one day though.

Q: Now that the season has ended, what was the difference playing for the University of Louisville as opposed to FIU?

A: I really liked playing for both coaches; they just were different. Turtle Thomas was about working hard and being persistent. He always told us that if you work hard, good things are going to happen to you. Coach [Dan] McDonnell had a different coaching style. He liked to play more players in a game and there wasn't really that much consistency in that sense, even though we made it to the College World Series in 2007.

Q: How did playing for FIU possibly prepare you for the Minor leagues?

A: I just worked hard every day to prepare. I tried to be both persistent and consistent at FIU. I just kept working and work-



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON FILE PHOTO

CLAP IT UP: Jorge Castillo celebrates with his teammates after scoring a run against the University of Little-Rock Arkansas.

ing and when I got here (Bristol), the minors seemed like cake because of it.

Q: When did you feel that you were skilled enough to make it to a level higher than college baseball?

A: I always felt that I knew, but I also knew that I had to make some adjustments. When I got to FIU, Turtle Thomas and the

coaching staff helped me to make those adjustments.

Q: What round do you think you should've been drafted in? Why?

A: I think the Top 18. I saw some players that were picked ahead of me that I thought I was better than, but I'm just happy I made it.

FIU graduate shows promise playing with San Diego

WASCH, page 8

their Minor League system, and placed him in the bargain bin for a team in need of a starter. Banks has been worth every penny. In his first 22 innings pitched for the Padres, Banks allowed 0 earned runs including a complete game win against the San Francisco Giants in his first official start on May 31.

"Dazzling." "Tremendous." "Composure." "Impressive." Padres' coaches and journalists around the country have used these words to describe Banks this season. From what this writer sees, Banks can be described in one word: versatile. With an eight-pitch repertoire, Banks can start a batter off with a fastball, fool him with a changeup and then strike him out with a knuckler.

"The more things the hitter has to think about, the better. There have been times where I've gotten a 'what was that?' look from a hitter. I struck out [Cubs outfielder] Matt Murton on a knuckleball last season at Iowa and got that look," Banks told Bill Center of *signonsandiego.com*.

The last time we saw Banks in a Golden

Panthers uniform, in 2003, he was a first-team all-Sun Belt selection going 8-3 in 15 starts. Even more impressive, the right-hander tallied 114 strikeouts through 105.1 innings and walked just 25 batters that season.

Banks was the highest Golden Panther ever taken in the MLB Draft, going to the Toronto

Bank was the highest Golden Panther ever taken in the MLB Draft, going to the Toronto Blue Jays in the second round with the 50th overall selection.

Blue Jays in the second round with the 50th overall selection. To put that in perspective, former Golden Panther Mike Lowell was taken in the 20th round by the New York Yankees in 1995.

However, Banks had a long, winding road in the Minor Leagues. Hundreds of ballplayers, many of whom were as highly touted as Banks

if not more so, get high draft ratings and jump onto the prospect lists. How a player looks on paper sometimes can be vastly different than actual production on the field. This was the hurdle that Banks has successfully cleared. In his first Minor League season, Banks quieted the few critics that he had with impressive

numbers: 2.43 ERA and an 8.1 to 1 Strikeout-to-Walk Ratio over 15 starts. Banks started the 2004 season at High-A Dunedin and picked up where he left off his prior campaign with a 1.80 ERA out of the gate, Banks was promptly promoted to Double-A. Prone to giving up the long ball, Banks struggled with a 5.03 ERA in his final 18 starts of 2004 in Double-A. After a

successful 2005 season with the Double-A New Hampshire Fisher Cats, Banks was promoted to the highest level of Minor League Baseball. Triple-A, however, is close, yet so far away, from making it to the Big Show.

Banks pitched two full seasons (2006 and 2007) with ERAs of 5.17 and 4.63 respectively, and he made his MLB debut for the Blue Jays as a relief pitcher on September 11, 2007. Banks proceeded to retire Yankees hitters Robinson Cano, Melky Cabrera and Johnny Damon in order.

After the Padres claimed Banks off waivers on April 23 and promoted him to the Major Leagues on May 22, Banks found himself once again facing the Yankees and his "counterpart," Joba Chamberlain at Yankee Stadium.

Joba bested "Jo-Ba" that afternoon in a 2-1 pitching duel, but after five starts apiece, both hurlers are sporting All Star-caliber ERAs and both show a strong command of the strike zone. To date, Banks is sporting a 3.08 ERA with two wins, 21 strikeouts, and only 12 walks in 49.2 innings pitched.

The nickname "Jo-Ba" may not stick, but Banks should stick in the Major Leagues for years to come.

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White Sox draft FIU star player

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

Former Golden Panther senior third baseman Jorge Castillo was selected in the 26th Round (780th overall) by the Chicago White Sox and was the 97th Golden Panther overall to be drafted on June 6.

Castillo had a 30-game hitting streak and was one of FIU's more consistent hitters in his only season for the Golden Panthers. He hit .367 with nine home runs and 58 RBI and is currently playing rookie ball in Bristol, VA for the Bristol White Sox. Through July 5, Castillo was leading the Sox in batting average (.385) and was 20-for-52 with a home run and 9 RBI.

He was able to share his thoughts on his accomplishments with *The Beacon* through a cell phone interview.

Q: How do you feel about being drafted and having the opportunity to play in the big leagues?

A: I feel amazing. I was so happy when I got selected, and I was so excited. It was my dream.

CASTILLO, page 7

CAMP WADE



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

SWEET STROKE: Miami Heat guard Dwayne Wade shoots 3-pointers during the inaugural Old Spice D. Wade All-Star Camp held from July 1-3 at the FIU Arena.



JIM McISAAC/GETTY IMAGES NORTH AMERICA

BANKING: San Diego pitcher Josh Banks has a 2.33 ERA with two wins and 12 walks in 4.2 innings this season.

Former Golden Panther pitcher belongs in majors

ADAM WASCH
Staff Writer

With the hype surrounding Yankees starter Joba Chamberlain this season, many of people may have overlooked the fact that another "Jo-Ba" is tearing up Major League Baseball.

This "Jo-Ba" is former Golden Panthers starting pitcher Josh Banks.

Unfortunately, nobody in Major League Baseball circles is confusing the two pitchers. Joba Chamberlain is a media

machine and has the golden arm to back it up. Banks certainly has the tools to be a quality starter for years to come, but he has struggled at times on what some might call a rocky road to the Majors. Regardless, as a Golden Panther fan, you should be excited that there is a new kid on the block representing our school and our baseball program.

Picked up off waivers by the San Diego Padres for only \$20,000, Banks, 25, has been a nice surprise for the team's injury-depleted starting rotation. Twenty thousand dollars for a starting pitcher in Major League Baseball is an absolute steal, especially considering the fact that the Blue Jays shelled out the \$650,000 signing bonus for Banks, groomed him in

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Donor faced bankruptcy, several legal controversies

PHARMED, page 1

-closed that Hospital Corporation of America, owners of KRMC, paid the

Pharmed Group \$5.4 million in medical supplies it never received.

The hospital employees were charged with falsifying purchasing orders for the Pharmed Group; they plead not guilty.

The issues in the HCA case are under federal investigation.

Gonzalez-Levy says that the Pharmed Group's recent legal issues occurred years after it made the donation to FIU.

Before the 2004 donation, Pharmed was involved in two separate lawsuits.

In 1987, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals sued the de Céspedes brothers over allegations of improperly obtaining drug discounts.

After nine years, the case was settled out of court in a confidential agreement, *The Miami Herald* reported on Feb. 3.

In the 1990's, AmerisourceBergen, a large medical supply wholesaler, sued the Pharmed Group for not paying \$1.2 million worth of shipped goods the February article stated.

During the years the Pharmed Group was supposed to be making payments to the University, the company continued running into legal troubles.

In January 2005, four months after the donation to FIU, Johnson & Johnson stopped

providing its supplies to the Pharmed Group and accused Pharmed of fraud and "unjust enrichment" in collecting \$22 million, according to the same article.

Pharmed in turn sued J&J for "reprehensible, intentional, malicious" defamation.

A judge sent the case to arbitration. J&J refused to comment.

In 2006, with the company struggling financially, Commissioner Jose Diaz co-sponsored an ordinance requiring Jackson Memorial Hospital to give preference to local suppliers, including the Pharmed Group the same article noted.

Jackson administrators said the ordinance gave no new edge to Diaz's private employers, the Pharmed Group founders.

Because the policy favored the Pharmed Group along with other local suppliers, Commissioner Diaz

was not breaking the law, according to the same *Miami Herald* article.

FIU's criteria for accepting donations are contingent on the information retrieved by the research department and the potential donor's interest in the University, according to Director of Media Relations Maydel Santana-Bravo.

Executive Director of Stadium & Facility Development Joe Velasco, who is responsible for contacting potential donors to rename the arena, was unavailable for comment.

FIU is still actively seeking donors to rename the FIU Arena.

There was an agreement in place and [Pharmed] did not finish paying the amount.

Sandra Gonzalez-Levy, Vice President
Community Relations

COMMENTARY



ADAMA WASCH
STAFF WRITER