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Prepare for the big night with Oscar predictions

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Women's basketball loses in final seconds

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SPOTLIGHT

OPINION PAGE 4



The people of Puerto Rico have spoken: The island should become a state.

SPORTS PAGE 7

Complete 5-on-5 basketball intramural standings.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3



You can still have a fun weekend, with only \$20!

SPORTS PAGE 8

Israeli tennis player denied visa amid Gaza conflict. Jewish community feels discrimination was a factor.

OPINION PAGE 4



The new Marlins stadium would certainly benefit South Florida's economy and provide a solid home for our baseball time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Prunk TV interviews Marilyn Manson, Feb. 20, All Day event. Watch the surprisingly talented and well-spoken Marilyn Manson get interviewed about his art today at the 101 Exhibit.

Revolution Fighting Championships, Feb. 20, 8 p.m.: Enjoy a testosterone induced event today at Gusman Center for the Performing Arts.

Good for the Jews, Feb. 21, 9 p.m.: Hear this hilarious band sing about the infamous J Date and having Chinese food for Christmas at Sweet Records.

South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Feb. 22, 11:30 a.m.: Prepare to have an amazing night's sleep by eating and drinking wine at the Delano Hotel.

Oscar Night America SoBe Style, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m.: Watch as actresses get to enjoy the fruit of their labor by finally fitting into those gowns after many weeks of starvation at the Paris Theatre.

For the complete calendar, please see page 5 or visit FIUSM.com/calendar.

WEATHER

FRIDAY
Mostly sunny
LOW: 49 HIGH: 72

SATURDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 59 HIGH: 74

SUNDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 53 HIGH: 71

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HAZARDOUS

Campus security fights toxic thefts

CHERYL MALONE
Staff Writer

The Department of Public Safety is currently dealing with growing numbers of a specific form of theft that may affect both the victims and the thieves.

The University has documented 11 cases of catalytic converter theft, according to Public Safety.

A catalytic converter is located beneath each vehicle and converts exhaust emissions to a safer gas to be released into the atmosphere.

Converters have been stolen from beneath vehicles while parked at both University Park and Biscayne Bay Campus parking lots and garages.

The converter is a valuable item that can be sold to dealers for cash, according to mechanic Bill Barlow, owner of Barlow's Auto Service Inc. for 35 years.

Converters are somewhat simple to remove with a wrench and a battery-operated saw but are extremely dangerous to those removing them, explained Barlow.

"For years we would go in and clean the converter out and throw it away. Then we found out it's hazardous and stopped doing it," Barlow said.

The dust from within the converter can block oxygen airways to the lungs and, later, result in emphysema, he explained.

Aside from the dangers facing the individuals removing the converters, those who unknowingly attempt to drive the vehicles without converters are also facing potential health hazards.

While heavy pollutants are being released into the air, it is also illegal to drive without a converter.

The obvious detection of their removal is the loud "growling" sound the engine will make while driving, Barlow explained.

Nearly no security measures have been made at the University in preventing future theft of catalytic converters, according to Public Safety.

"The main security measure the police took was making the officers aware of these thefts and how they

were committed," said Assistant Director of Media Relations Madeline Baro. "Those thefts are hard to prevent because the thief steals from underneath the car."

Parking Lots Two, Three, Four and Six have accumulated seven cases; BBC Parking Lot 4N had one case; BBC Central Receiving had one case; the Panther Garage and Red Garage each had one case.

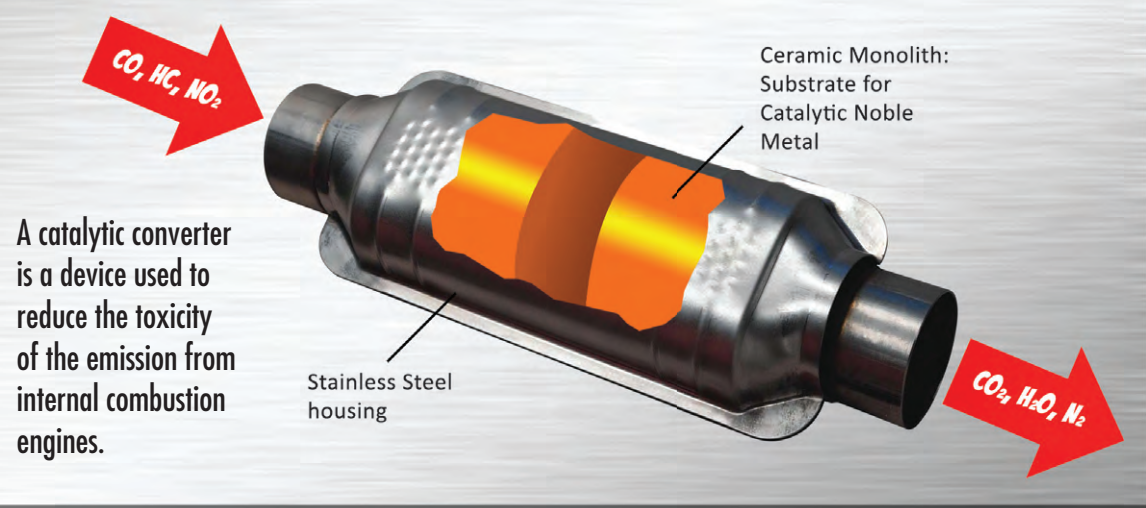
Faculty and students can report any suspicious activity, although it is difficult to determine whether an individual is stealing or making repairs.

One other issue associated with finding the person(s) responsible for the theft is the lack of camera security. None of the parking lots have security cameras and the garages have minimal security.

The cameras have poor quality and cover very limited ground, Baro explained.

"Students can report suspicious individuals or behavior they observe in parking lots and document plate numbers," she said.

WHAT IS A CATALYTIC CONVERTER?



College of Law begins search for new dean

FRANCISCO MARADIAGA
Contributing Writer

Founding law school Dean Leonard Strickman retired last summer. The law school, which achieved full accreditation by the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools, had been under construction for nearly a decade.

The dean for the College of Law Search and Screen Committee has been trusted to find his replacement.

"It's time, every decade, to bring

in new leadership," said Strickman. "It was the most exciting job of my life."

Strickman foresees that the coming years will be less fun with a budget crisis looming.

The next dean will have to maintain the quality of the school with the precarious formula of more students plus less money.

"I hope that the financial situation is not too scary for good people to be intimidated," Strickman said.

The Search Committee is made up of nine members, four of which were appointed by Provost Ronald

It's time to bring in new leadership ... I hope that the financial situation is not too scary for good people to be intimidated.

Leonard Strickman, dean
School of Law

Berkman.

The appointees include the Chair, Dean John Rock of the medical school and College of Law faculty members Scott F. Norberg, Manuel A. Gomez and Associate Dean and Faculty Administrator

for the dean's office, Michelle D. Mason.

Elected faculty members include Joelle Anne Moreno and Stanley Fish.

LAW, page 2

SGC-UP

Campus expansion spreads to Sweetwater

DAVID BARRIOS
Senior Staff Writer

The city of Sweetwater is looking into uniting with FIU to transform the city of almost 14,000 residents into a college town focused around the University Park campus.

The future of Sweetwater and a possible partnership with FIU was discussed during the Feb. 18 Student Government Council at UP meeting.

The meeting, a joint session

We foresee us as becoming a college town ... What we are looking to build are mixed-use facilities.

Frank Largo, chief of staff
City of Sweetwater

between the executive and legislative branches, was held at the Council Chambers at Sweetwater City Hall.

"We foresee us as becoming a college town," said Frank Lago, chief of staff for the city. "With the construction of the new law school, medical school and the stadium, it seems that FIU is almost out of space to construct anything in their bound-

NEWS FLASH

FIU

Law School panel discusses diversity in America

The Black Law Student Association will host a panel discussion entitled “My President is Black, So What!” on Feb. 20 at the Rafael Diaz-Balart Auditorium.

Topics will include the future of affirmative action, the role of women in politics, education in America and whether Dr. Martin Luther King’s dream has been realized, according to an FIU press release.

The event will start at 7 p.m. For more information contact Valquisha Morris, president of the Black Law Students Association at valquisha.morris@fiu.edu.

FIU

UN Chairman comes to university

A United Nations chairman will give a lecture at the University on Feb. 20.

Ambassador Rafael Rivas Posada, the chairman of the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights, is being brought to the University by the Latin American Caribbean Center and the College of Law. He will present his lecture, “Monitoring Human Rights: Obligations of the State.”

Posada holds a doctorate in political science from Princeton University, served as the president of the *Universidad Nacional* in Bogota, Colombia. He has also served as the special representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations for the study of human rights in Cuba, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The event will take place in the College of Law’s Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall, Room 1000 at the University Park campus. The presentation is free and open to the public, but those who wish to attend are encouraged to RSVP.

For more information, call the Latin American and Caribbean Center at (305) 348-2894.

LOCAL

State senate approves tuition hike

A Florida Senate committee approved a bill on Feb. 18 that would allow public universities to increase tuition 15 percent a year.

The Senate Higher Education Committee unanimously voted for the bill for the increase to bring Florida’s tuition rates closer to the national average.

Gov. Charlie Crist introduced the new tuition plan in November. He said Florida schools must increase tuition, one of the lowest in the nation, to maintain and improve quality.

The current national average for tuition was about \$6,585, according to the College Board.

- Compiled by Jonathan Davila

Former provost seeks candidacy

SGA, page 1

aries, so they had to look elsewhere.”

That’s where the city of Sweetwater stepped in.

“What we are looking to build are mixed-use facilities – buildings that would have retailers on the first floor, several floors of parking – depending on the amount of residential units per building,” explained Lago.

The area between 109th and 107th Avenue from Flagler Street to Seventh Court would become a downtown leading to FIU. Retailers would include coffee shops, restaurants and businesses built to cater to the University.

No franchises or businesses have been approached at this time with plans still in their early phases and no specific building plans have been made yet.

“We’re in the process of altering our zoning areas at this time,” Lago said. “Once we take care of that, we’ll start moving forward with FIU.”

Other plans discussed during the meeting included construction of a pedestrian bridge across S.W. Eighth Street into Sweetwater to make the town more accessible to students and an elevated bike path extending from UP to the Engineering School campus on 107th Avenue and Flagler.

This movement toward integration with FIU follows the announcement of Sweetwater’s intentions to annex the area of Dolphin Mall, a three-square-mile area north of the city that lands between Northwest Seventh to 25th Streets and Northwest 107th Avenue to the Florida Turnpike extension.

The Metropolitan Center at FIU has been hired by the city for \$10,000 to investigate the city’s possible budget if the annexation occurs, as reported in *The Miami Herald* on Jan. 9.

“This is a groundbreaking day. This is the birth of a relationship between



JAVIER DE LA VEGA/THE BEACON

LEADERS TALK: Sweetwater Mayor Manuel M. Marañón (left) and Arthur A.J. Mayer, president of SGC-UP (right) at the Feb. 18 joint meeting held in the Sweetwater City Hall.

our University and Sweetwater,” said Arthur J. Meyer, president of SGC-UP.

LEGEND REFUNDS

Also discussed at the meeting was the cancellation of musician John Legend’s performance that was set for Feb. 11. Questions about refunds for students who purchased tickets are floating through the Student Government Association.

“We’ve been in contact with Legend’s agency and they’ve already cut us a check for the refund. We’re still coordinating how to hold the refund but I hope that by this time next week, refunds will be going through,” said Jose Toscano, SGA advisor.

Full refunds will be given to the student body.

Legend canceled his lecture/performance, “An Evening with John Legend,” following the death of his

grandfather last Monday. Tickets for the event sold for \$25 for floor seating in the U.S. Century Bank Arena and \$20 for bleacher seating.

The total cost of bringing Legend to the University was \$50,000.

ROSENBERG SPEAKS

Former Chancellor of the Florida Board of Governors, Mark Rosenberg, was among guests at the meeting. Rosenberg, who was also provost at FIU from 1998 to 2005, has been cited as a possible candidate for the FIU presidency.

“There’s a process that’s very important for the University. The University needs to get a strong pool of candidates and I hope that I am in that pool,” Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg is on sabbatical at the moment but will be returning to FIU as a political science professor this Fall.

Search committee off to a late start

LAW, page 1

Representing the community at large is CEO of Greenberg Traurig, Cesar L. Alvarez.

Faculty Senate Representative Deanne Butchey of the Business College and College of Law Student Body President Mayowa Odusanya are also in the committee.

R. William Funk and Associates was brought in to help find ideal applicants.

The search firm is widely known for its recruitment of upper-level positions in higher education including presidents, provosts and deans.

Despite the help from R. William Funk and Associates, the committee can recommend and nominate any candidate they feel is worthy.

Each committee member have their own criteria, but he or she must build agreement with the rest of the committee.

In their Feb. 18 meeting,

the search committee debated what kind of philosophy the new dean should have toward the College of Law, whether it should have a local or national focus.

The matter was dropped as the college’s own mission is ambiguous on the subject.

“I try to gain a consensus for what students are looking for in a new dean,” Odusanya said. “A couple of things always come up – who can bring more money to the school and who can get us jobs?”

The group of nine sifted through applicants’ resumes and discussed the merits in various public meetings, leading to some complications with reports from local media.

The Miami Herald and the *Sun Sentinel* both published stories that indicated U.S. Attorney R. Alex Acosta was the leading candidate for the deanship.

The Miami Herald suggested that the candidates had been whittled

down to 10. They had not, however, those 10 were a primary list.

The author of the story, Luisa Yanez, told *The Beacon* that the confusion stemmed from an editing error that took out words like “initial list” from the final story.

This prompted a response from the committee.

“We have and continue to receive applications from throughout the country to lead this young and promising law school,” Rock said through a press release. “We will not settle on anyone until we are absolutely certain that we have chosen the right candidate.”

Rock said he did not feel rushed to find a replacement by the summer, when the current dean is set to step down on July 1.

“The search got started too late,” said Strickman, as he would have liked it to have started around September of last year instead of November. “I’m a little bit concerned.”

Strickman added that he was nevertheless optimistic and that despite the late start the committee seems to be chugging along.

The search committee is set to present the provost with the primary findings of their initial interviews Feb. 28.

CORRECTIONS

In the Feb. 16 article titled “Panel talks Obama, religious unity abroad,” the man on the picture is not Minister Muhammad. He is a member of the mosque.

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

THE BEACON

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SGC-BBC

Chief of staff to work on attendance

BARBARA QUIJANO
Asst. News Director

As the person responsible for supervising the involvement of cabinet members and their attendance at Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus meetings, Alejandra Salgado herself has had a tough time meeting those requirements due to a tight schedule managing school, a job and an SGA position.

Salgado, a sophomore majoring in health services administration, has been SGC-BBC chief of staff since Summer 2008. She had been an intern for that same position from Summer 2007 until Spring 2008.

Born and raised in Ecuador, Salgado came to Miami in 1999 when she was nine.

After moving a lot, she finally graduated in 2007 from Michael Krop High School in the top 18 percent of her class.

Today, as the person responsible for cabinet members and keeping track of their timecards, Salgado's duties include e-mailing SGC-BBC members to remind them of their duties and putting timecards in their mailboxes every two weeks.

"She is part of the Executive Board of SGC-BBC and she helps President Ana Maria Silva

monitor and manage the cabinet," said Kenasha Paul, SGC-BBC vice president. "She is very committed and reliable; she's a wonderful asset to the team."

While senators work for a specific school, cabinet members generally attend to student and faculty needs. Other cabinet positions include intern coordinator, executive assistant and special events director.

"Usually we have eight positions open, but they are currently all filled and I look over what they do," Salgado said.

When a student is hired for an SGC-BBC position, Silva and Paul are in charge of informing them of their biweekly timecard. SGC-BBC members are then required to hand in their timecard to Salgado, along with a report entailing their goals and details of what they have accomplished for the term.

"I look over it and make an evaluation and give it to both the president and vice president," Salgado said. "I only do a part of it, I can't do the whole thing."

Executive cabinet members set and maintain a minimum of five weekly office hours, three of which must be in the office itself, according to the SGA Constitution. Despite her enjoyment in the position, Salgado has not been

LOVE THY 'BROTHA'



SERGIO MONTEALEGRE/THE BEACON

MIDTERM MESSAGE: Alvaro Rivas, psychology major senior, gets a five-minute massage from Myrtede Alfred, human resources management and history major senior and president of Black Student Association at the Brotha's Appreciation Day event hosted by the BSA in Panther Square, Feb. 10.

able to meet this requirement and some SGC-BBC staff members believe it is because of private issues.

"For various personal reasons [Salgado] hasn't been seen for the past three months," said Sholom Neistein, speaker of the Senate.

However, according to Salgado, it is a tight schedule what has caused her to not meet the three-hour-per-week requirement.

"I'm only here on Wednesdays because of the general meet-

ings, that's why," Salgado said. "It's nothing personal. All of my classes are at night and I work during the day. This semester has just been difficult for me."

The constitution states that the SGC-BBC president, if deemed necessary, after consultation with the executive board and chief of staff, may also remove an executive cabinet member.

"If you don't show up to a certain amount of meetings, you're fired," Salgado said. "But

that's not enforced."

Despite her current minimal involvement, one of her goals is to make sure cabinet members have their goals met and fulfilled before the term ends.

"SGA has made me more assertive and experienced. It's more responsibility because I'm held accountable in doing what I have to do," said Salgado. "Even though people don't do what they are supposed to do, it's a job and I take it seriously."

WEEKENDS WITH PARADISE

A tight budget need not deter a fun-filled weekend

This weekend I was planning on going out to a bar or a restaurant or two.

Unfortunately, things didn't really go that way because my debit card was stolen while I was getting my eyebrows threaded.

After I went through the motions of canceling it, I realized the repercussions of losing a card during a weekend, when all banks are closed.

It turns out, Walmart will give you up to \$20 cash back if you write a check for \$20 more than your total bill.

While that money was a blessing, it was a major limit on what I could and couldn't do over the weekend.

I mean, honestly, how much fun can anyone have with only \$20? A lot, as long as they know how to play it cheap.

Most of the time when I want to perk myself up, I buy a new book. Unfortunately, I didn't have enough cash for one, so I did something I rarely do: I went to the library.

I don't use this resource often because I always forget to return my books, but I promised myself that this would not happen this time.

On Saturday, I headed over to the North Miami Public Library (835 Northeast 132 St., North Miami) and picked up a library book for the first time in a while.

I got *Memoirs of a Geisha*, by Arthur Golden.

Now, I am not going to lie, my favorite thing

to do at any library – or any place where there are a lot of books – is to sit in a random section and read. It's so relaxing and makes me feel like I am somewhere secluded.

Renting the book saved me close to \$15.

Like some of you reading this already know, there are few things I love more than eating breakfast for lunch or dinner.

When I was little, my dad used to always make my brother and me breakfast for dinner when my mom would work late.

So now, whenever I eat breakfast at odd times, it takes me back to sitting in the living room with him, eating eggs with toast.

Memories aside, breakfast is not only the most important meal of the day, it is also the cheapest meal of the day.

I went over to the Big Apple Deli (14432 Biscayne Blvd., North Miami Beach), a New York-style deli.

I officially love this place for one reason: friendly service.

As soon as I walked in, the owner of the restaurant came right up to me and said, "You want something to go, don't you?" as he handed me a menu.

I told him that I was eating alone and, after exchanging a few jokes about lonely eaters, I sat down and started reading my book.

I ordered the Big Apple Special, which

"I mean, honestly, how much fun can anyone have with only \$20? A lot, as long as they know how to play it cheap."

consists of two eggs, home fries and either toast or a bagel for only \$3.95.

The food was out quickly and really good.

I never had home fries with onions before, which was different, but very good nonetheless.

The only complaint I have is that the coffee is not strong enough to wake an addict like me up in the morning.

But I have yet to go to a restaurant that has coffee worth raving about, so I won't hold it against them.

After eating brunch, I was down to only \$13.

On Sunday, I went over to Town Center Park, at 7200 Collins Ave., Sunny Isles Beach.

This is a great place to spend a quiet weekend and to have a small picnic with a friend.

To save money, my friend Beth and I came to this park with sandwiches we made at home and a couple of bottles of water.

The park is really cute, with tons of open

space and a playground for those of us who want to re-enact our childhoods.

I am normally not the type of girl who wants to spend a single second outside more than I have to, but if I could tolerate this place, anyone can.

One downside is that if you are like me and curse a lot, be careful at this park. There are little kids at the playground, so watch your mouth.

I managed to spend the whole weekend having fun and spent only the \$7 I spent on breakfast. Shocking, right?

Hopefully I won't lose my card again anytime soon, because there are still plenty of places around here that I need to spend money to enjoy.

Read Weekends with Paradise every other Friday for more tips on places to go in the North Miami area. If you have any suggestions, e-mail paradise.afshar@fiusm.com.



PARADISE AFSHAR

THE SOAPBOX: An Op-Ed Column

U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico eagerly demand statehood

**WILLIAM-JOSE VELEZ
GONZALEZ**
Special to The Beacon

Since 1898, Puerto Rico has been a United States unincorporated territory subject to the powers of Congress. Ever since, the question of Puerto Rico's status remains an issue.

We at the Puerto Rico Statehood Students Association seek to solve this issue, using an educational approach for U.S. citizens both in the states and in Puerto Rico.

In our quest, it has become evident that statehood is the permanent solution, as well as the one preferred by the majority of Puerto Ricans.

The statehood movement garnered a historic victory in the 2008 elections and support

**The U.S. citizens
of Puerto Rico are
making a call for
statehood. ... Con-
gress must respect
this democratic
mandate and act.**

for statehood has reached unprecedented levels.

Puerto Rico is the oldest colony in the world, with four million Americans having long struggled to define its political status, as either a colony or as the next state. In our local elections, we do not decide whether the government should be Democratic or Republican, with our main political parties being defined by the status preference they champion, either the colonial status quo or statehood for Puerto Rico.

In November 2008, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico hailed a pro-statehood platform in a landslide, with a 54 percent to 42 percent margin.

This platform included a call for a new federally-mandated referendum that would give Puerto Ricans an opportunity to decide the island's political

status.

The people also rejected a platform that called for Puerto Rican national sovereignty.

The pro-statehood victory was near absolute. The New Progressive Party, which supports statehood, won the governorship, Puerto Rico's sole congressional seat, a majority of mayoralties, all state district senatorial seats and more than 70 percent of state representative districts.

It was the most crushing defeat for the colonial status quo in the island's political history.

Furthermore, the island's main newspaper released a poll in May 2008 which showed that 57 percent of voters would choose statehood in a new plebiscite, eclipsing the 34 percent support for the colonial status quo and 5 percent for independence. The people would favor statehood over independence 77 percent to 12 percent in a two-way plebiscite. The newspaper noted that this level of support for statehood is unprecedented.

The U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico are making a call for statehood. Accordingly, they look to Congress to resolve Puerto Rico's status dilemma through a federally-mandated referendum. Congress must respect this democratic mandate and act for the betterment of democracy and equality at home.

While in the past and even to this day it seemed as though the issue is one in which we are evenly divided, this is not the case.

The trend in recent years has been clear and absolute, one which the PRSSA supports, using it as the platform for our grassroots and educational approach to finally make the archipelago of Puerto Rico the next state of the American union.

The author is a graduate student in history at Florida International University. He is the national vice president of the Puerto Rico Statehood Students Association.

HOME BASE

Marlin stadium plan too pricey

ALEJANDRO DIAZ
Contributing Writer

As another page has turned in this epic saga of delays and doomed financial plans, it seems talks of a new stadium for the Florida Marlins are not going to come to an end any time soon.

On Feb. 13, the Florida Marlins won the supposed final vote by the city commission to approve the new \$515 million retractable roof stadium to be built by 2012 on the proposed site of former Orange Bowl stadium. This money should first be spent on other ventures that have better chances of turning a profit for taxpayers.

The best part of the deal is that it's going to be a gift. According to *The Miami Herald*, the city plans to pay around \$400 million of taxpayer money, close to 70-75 percent of the total cost, to help fund the dream of a baseball-only stadium in the heart of Miami, securing the Marlins right where some think they belong.

"I'm in favor for the city of Miami to build the new stadium," said graduate student Tanya Acevedo, who's working toward a degree in social work. "I believe the stadium will push Miami's economy for the better and will help keep the Marlins in South Florida rather than having them look for a new home."

According to the *Sun-Sentinel*, the final vote did not come out in favor for the Marlins as the city commissioners split down the middle on two different fiscal plans. What this means is that the already long and drawn out

chronicle between the Marlins and Miami will get a little longer.

A new vote will take place on March 12 to supposedly allow fans, the Marlins and the city to work out their differences.

This isn't anything new to Miami and the Florida Marlins. I've seen talks about a new stadium since the Marlins were inaugurated into Major League Baseball back in 1992.

As a born-and-raised citizen of Miami-Dade County, I would hate to see the Marlins go. But this possibility is growing bigger in the horizon, making it seem almost as destiny in a strange and tragic way.

What's really at the core of this situation is what type of taxpayers' money will be used. Instead of using any money for the stadium, the city plans on using "bed taxes," or the money we receive as a city from tourist spending.

This is appalling if you're a hotel owner. A local group of hotel owners and politicians in Miami Beach disagree with the building of a new stadium and the allocation of community capital.

What they appear to differ in is the wrongful apportionment of economic resources of the close to \$400 million that could be used on other things in Miami Beach.

Here's what's at hand: Instead of building a stadium from public funds for private profit, this local group in Miami Beach feels that some \$30 million should go to the convention center for a much needed face-lift.

The proposed money would be used for renovating the building,

adding another ballroom for more events and a kitchen to support culinary affairs.

The plan seems to work out, since most of the revenue made at the convention center will help profit city funds through means of Miami's largest industry: tourism. People from all over the world come to see and take part of events held at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Now what about the stadium? Compared to the revenue generated by the convention center, the Marlins will keep most of the profit and the county will see a little, or close to none, of any money.

The county did strike a deal: The Marlins will have to pay half of the profit produced if they hold over 10 non-baseball events in a year.

In other words, as soon as that 11th concert or festival comes up, the Marlins will have to consider whether they would want to go through the trouble of losing some substantial income.

This idea keeps me on the ropes. I would love to see the stadium get built yet at the same time I hate seeing tax money constantly being spent irresponsibly.

The new stadium does have its upside. It will create over 2,000 permanent jobs, from janitorial maintenance to grounds keeping, while also raising the land value of a somewhat slummy neighborhood, which is Little Havana.

But this won't happen unless the city realizes that an MLB team is a luxury and will go elsewhere if it is not taken care of.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Traveling campus preachers shouldn't be lumped together as 'crazy men'

The decidedly un-politically correct tone of Matthew Ruckman's recent opinion piece, "Campus Preachers, Necessary Evil," on Jan. 16, is so egregious, especially in this era of tolerance and respect, that it begs for rebuttal. Speaking of a lone open-air preacher, referred to as a "crazy man," the agenda-driven piece seeks to inform the FIU community of a "much larger network of open-air preachers" targeting college campuses around the nation.

Calling the network of preachers "the new trend in Christian evangelism," the writer ignores groups like Campus Crusade for Christ, founded by Bill Bright in 1951 for the sole purpose of evangelizing American college campuses. While ignorance about historical matters

can be forgiven, the writer's rhetoric cannot.

Ruckman says "an open-air preacher is somewhat different from a bag lady, once removed from the common charlatan and a small step away from the grand wizard." Is this an example of hate speech? Imagine the fire storm of controversy these vile words would bring upon our campus today if used to describe a Jewish rabbi or a Muslim imam!

Traditionally, university campuses have been a safe haven for this type of personal expression for Christians, Jews, Muslims and atheists alike. Historically, evangelists of today are linked with open-air preachers like John Wesley, Charles Finney and Billy Graham in fulfilling the words of Jesus Christ

who said "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

While the writer is wholly within his rights to question the motives and manners of this particular preacher on campus, weighing the honey of love against the vinegar of a negative diatribe, Ruckman errs in besmirching this group; and the use of alarmist language that equates the actions of this preacher with other preachers on other college campuses, a Christian college conspiracy if you will, is reprehensible. Itinerant preachers rarely have anything in common with one another other than the commission they received from Christ.

J. Franklin Jennings
Graduate student, History

STEP ONTO THE SOAPBOX

Officer of a student organization?

Student government member? University official?

Have something to say?

Contact us at opinion@fiusm.com and we'll give you 500 words to share your opinion with the FIU community.

OSCARS

THE CINEMATIC

Academy delivers accolades to its brightest

The award season comes to an end on Sunday night when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences present the 81st Academy Awards. The famous faces of the film industry will come to find out who will become the new recipients of the little golden man known as Oscar.

While I still feel that the Academy is out of touch since the best film of the year, *The Dark Knight*, was not nominated for most of the major awards, here are my predictions on who will go on to win the Academy Award on Sunday night.

2008 became the year of the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The first major award that the movie will receive on Sunday will be for achievement in directing. Danny Boyle has been receiving endless awards for directing *Slumdog Millionaire*, including the Director's Guild of America award. I believe there is no chance that any of the other nominees will receive the Oscar here.

Slumdog Millionaire is about a young man named Jamal Malik (Dev Patel) from the slums of Mumbai who is on the verge of winning 20 million rupees on India's "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?"

When he is suspected of cheating, he is taken to a police station and interrogated by a police inspector. Jamal reveals how he got the answers as he tells

the inspector that each question he answered on the show was a key element to his life story.

Slumdog Millionaire has managed to win every major award for best film from the Golden Globe, Critics Choice Award and the National Board of Review. There is no doubt that this movie will receive the Academy Award for Best Motion Picture of 2008.

Moving on from *Slumdog*, we have the Best Supporting Actress category, which is definitely a toss-up between all five nominees.

In the first place, all of the candidates are worthy of the honor of being nominated. While Amy Adams and Viola Davis were truly amazing in the film *Doubt*, their nominations will all but cancel each other out.

This will make it a three-way race to the Oscars. Oscar-winner Marisa Tomei turns in an amazing performance in *The Wrestler* as a stripper who falls for a broken-down professional wrestler.

Taraji P. Henson has an amazing turn in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* as Benjamin's (Brad Pitt) adopted mother and manages to keep her performance top notch when she ages from 18 to 80.

I believe, however, the Oscar will go to Penelope Cruz as the suicidal and hot-headed wife of a Spanish painter in Woody Allen's latest film, *Vicky Cristina Barce-*

lona. Her performance is truly outstanding and she manages to steal every scene from her co-stars.

No disrespect to any of the other nominees for Best Actor in a Supporting Role, but Heath Ledger absolutely deserves and will get the Oscar. Some say that Ledger will get the award out of pure sympathy because this was his last completed film role and the Academy wants to give it to him posthumously.

However, Ledger still would have deserved the Oscar because he managed to become the best part in the biggest movie of the year. He was dark and unpredictable with a wicked sense of humor. Oscar night will be the night that Ledger will rightfully earn his first Oscar.

In the Best Actress category there is a battle of the old school vs. new school. You have an established Oscar-winning Meryl Streep facing multiple time nominee but never winner Kate Winslet.

Streep is a veteran who has been honored with Oscars wins for both Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress, as well as being nominated for several other roles. She manages to command the screen with her performance in *Doubt* as a strict nun at a Catholic school who accuses a priest of molesting a young boy.

Despite her great performance in that film, I believe the Oscar will finally go to Kate Winslet.

Since being nominated for the first time in 1995 for her role in

Sense & Sensibility, Winslet has gone on to receive six nominations, but has yet to win.

I thought she would have been nominated for her role in *Revolutionary Road*, but instead she was nominated for her role in *The Reader*, where she plays a woman who has a relationship with a man half her age and is put on trial for committing war crimes as a Nazi.

Two men who started their careers in the 1980s face off in the Best Actor category, historically the main event of the Oscar ceremony.

In 2003, Sean Penn finally got his first Oscar as a grieving father looking for justice in Clint Eastwood's film, *Mystic River*.

This year, Penn is nominated again as Harvey Milk in *Milk*, the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in the United States, who was tragically gunned down by a disgruntled supervisor after a falling out occurred between the two men.

His main competition is Mickey Rourke, whose career had gone off the tracks along with his personal life in recent years.

However, he has made an amazing comeback with his role as a retired professional wrestler looking for redemption in *The Wrestler*.

With this showdown on the horizon, I think Rourke will come out on top as the Best Actor.

The Cinematic is a weekly column about all things movies. Look for it every Friday.

COLUMN



STEVE MESA



NOMINEES AND PREDICTIONS

Best Directing	Benjamin Button Frost/Nixon Milk The Reader ★ Slum Dog Millionaire	Best Lead Actor	Richard Jenkins Frank Langella Sean Penn Brad Pitt ★ Mickey Rourke
Best Supporting Actress	Taraji P. Henson ★ Penelope Cruz Marissa Tomei Amy Adams Viola Davis	Best Lead Actress	Anne Hathaway Angelina Jolie Melissa Leo Meryl Streep ★ Kate Winslet
Best Supporting Actor	Josh Brolin Robert Downey Jr. Philip Seymour Hoffman ★ Heath Ledger Michael Shannon	Best Picture	Benjamin Button Frost/Nixon Milk The Reader ★ Slum Dog Millionaire

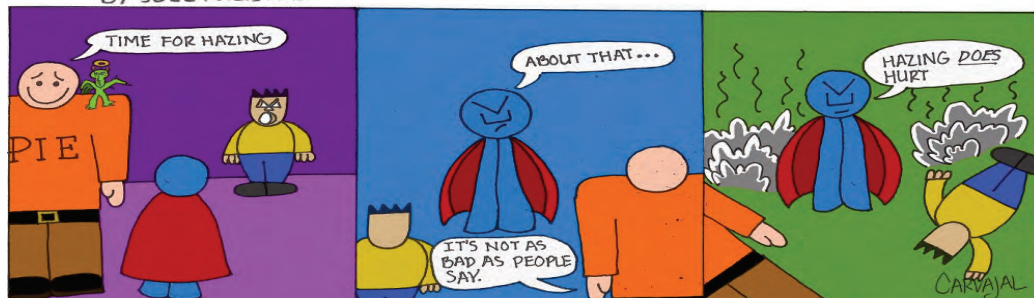
THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 20	SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 21	SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 22
WHAT: Hall & Oats WHEN: call WHERE: Mizner park Amphitheatre CONTACT: 561-750-1668	WHAT: Good for the Jews WHEN: 9pm WHERE: Sweat Records CONTACT: 305-758-5862	WHAT: Oscar Night America SoBe Style WHEN: 6:30pm WHERE: The Paris Theatre CONTACT: 305-672-5117
WHAT: Prunk TV interviews Marilyn Manson WHEN: All Day Event WHERE: 101 Exhibit CONTACT: 305-573-2101	WHAT: Kivikwy WHEN: 10pm WHERE: Wallflower Gallery CONTACT: 305-579-0069	WHAT: South Beach Wine & Food Festival WHEN: 11:30am WHERE: Delano Hotel CONTACT: 305-672-2000
WHAT: Revolution Fighting Championships WHEN: 8pm WHERE: Gusman Center for the Performing Arts CONTACT: 305-374-2444	WHAT: Miami Heat vs. Philadelphia 76ers WHEN: 3:30pm WHERE: American Airlines Arena CONTACT: 786-777-1000	WHAT: "Las Artes de Mexico: From the Collection of the Gilcrease Museum" WHEN: 10am WHERE: Lowe Art Museum CONTACT: 305-284-3603
WHAT: D.L. Hughley WHEN: 9pm WHERE: Miami Improv CONTACT: 305-441-8200	WHAT: Washington's Birthday Regatta WHEN: 5:30pm WHERE: The Barnacle Historic State Park CONTACT: 305-442-6866	WHAT: A Woman Called Truth WHERE: The M Ensemble Actor's Studio WHEN: 8pm CONTACT: 305-895-8955
WHAT: Liberty City WHEN: 7:30pm WHERE: Arshat Center for the Performing Arts CONTACT: 305-949-6722	WHAT: The Steadfast soldier WHEN: 8pm WHERE: The Playground Theatre CONTACT: 305-751-9550	

diversions

Frat Ploys

BY JOEL MALISKAS



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MICHAEL COSTA/THE BEACON

FRAT BALL: Pi Kappa Alpha plays against Pi Kapha Phi on Feb. 11 during a 5-on-5 intramural basketball game.

SPRING INTRAMURAL BASKETBALL STANDINGS

MEN'S OPEN # 1		MEN'S OPEN # 4		SORORITY/WOMEN'S #2	
TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL
We Love Shones	4-0	Rig City	3-0	Aaaahh-sssss	3-0
Operation Repo	2-1	Underestimated	1-1-1	Alpha Omicron Pi	2-1-1
Lakeview Goons	2-1	DSU	0-1-1	Phi Mu	1-1-1
Mickey Mouse Club	0-3	Undrafted	0-1	Sigma Kappa	0-3
Gamma Phi Gamma	0-3	Chaos	0-1		

MEN'S OPEN # 2		MEN'S OPEN # 5		CO-REC	
TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL
ESPN	3-0	Miami Lakes Legends	3-0	Air Jordan	4-0
I Don't Know Dawg	1-0	The Other Guys	1-1	Cleveland Steamers	2-1
ArichiBallers	0-1	Hustlin'...Like Rick Ross	0-1	IHOPness	1-2
Army ROTC	0-1	Here Snowflake	1-2	FIUSM	0-4
Sammy A. S. S.	0-2	Nemesis	0-2		

MEN'S OPEN # 3		SORORITY/WOMEN'S #1		FRATERNITY	
TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL	TEAM	OVERALL
No Dumbish	3-0	Ballin'	4-0	Pi Kappa Alpha	3-0
Ballers	3-0	Delta Phi Epsilon	2-2	Sigma Alpha Mu	3-1-0
Dark Knight	2-1	Alpha Xi Delta	2-2	Phi Sigma Kappa	2-1-1
Tenacious D	1-2	Phi Sigma Sigma	0-4	Kappa Alpha Psi	1-0-1
The Ninja Turtles	0-3			Lambda Theta Phi	1-2
Good Ol' Days	0-3			Tau Delta	1-1
				FIJI	0-3
				Sigma Phi Epsilon	0-3

All standings for intramural basketball leagues are up to date as of Feb. 18.

Point guard shows desire to win; rest of team fails to follow suit

A friend of mine once told me that basketball is a game about desire.

I want to win this more than you and my desire will overcome yours.

On Wednesday night, point guard Michelle Gonzalez had that desire as she knocked down four clutch, contested three-pointers in the final minutes of a 62-61 Golden Panthers loss to the Trojans.

The rest of her team, though, didn't seem to have that appetite.

Taking a double-digit lead into the second half, the Golden Panthers went stale, at one point going without a field goal for more than eight minutes. Forward Jasmine Jenkins, who scored seven points in the first half on 3-for-5 shooting, got an

invisibility cloak thrown over in the second half as she was shut down by Troy's center, Alyce Shearing.

Once Shearing was assigned to lock her down, Jenkins took one shot the rest of the game. And she missed it.

Forward Monika Bosilj, the Golden Panthers' leading scorer, was bullied by Brittne Davis and Kirsten Smith on her way to a 2-for-12 shooting night. At one point, Bosilj chucked up three straight airballs from three-point land in the second half. She attempted zero free throws in the game, while the Trojans got to the line 28 times – more than double the times the Golden Panthers did.

Nonetheless, the Golden Panthers had a chance to win the game with just four

seconds remaining. Gonzalez sunk a three to bring the Golden Panthers within one point, but they let the clock wind down instead of immediately fouling the Trojans and putting them on the free-throw line.

The girls looked over at the referees, wondering why a foul wasn't called as some of them grabbed Kylie Morrissy's jersey. The foul wasn't called because they needed to knock Morrissy to the ground or wrap their arms around her, not feebly grab her jersey. They needed to grind it out, take the ball to the basket without fear of being hit and get to the free-throw line. They needed to show that toughness, that desire it takes to win basketball games.

Gonzalez showed her team how bad she wanted to win. Sadly, the rest of the Golden Panthers didn't follow suit.

COMMENTARY



JONATHAN DAVILA

SUN BELT BASKETBALL STANDING (W) EAST DIVISION

	OVERALL	CONF	PCT
Middle Tennessee	21-4	13-0	.840
South Alabama	18-8	9-6	.692
Western Kentucky	14-10	8-6	.583
Troy	12-13	7-8	.480
Florida Atlantic	10-15	7-8	.400
FIU	6-19	4-10	.240

*All records up to date as of Feb 12

SUN BELT BASKETBALL SCORING (W)

	G	PTS	AVG/G
Middle Tennessee	25	1872	74.9
Western Kentucky	23	1593	69.3
North Texas	24	1614	67.2
South Alabama	25	1669	66.8

*All records up to date as of Feb. 12

Israeli tennis star kept out of country during tourney

JEWISH, page 8

to express its dissatisfaction and urge it to allow Ram, one of the world's top doubles players, into the country.

If Ram is kept out, the group has asked the Association of Tennis Professionals, which runs the men's tour, to cancel next week's tournament. The ATP already has said the UAE must "make the right decision."

Ram was competing in a tournament in France on Wednesday and could not be

reached for comment. But his agent, Amit Naor, told The Associated Press that his client is hoping to play and has already booked a ticket to Dubai for Sunday.

The controversy has trapped the UAE between its desire to host big-time global sporting events and its stance on Mideast politics. The country sees itself as a guardian of the Palestinians.

The Peer incident already has hurt the country's reputation. The Tennis Channel canceled plans to televise the women's tournament, and the Wall Street Journal

Europe withdrew as one of the sponsors of the Dubai Tennis Championships.

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor condemned the UAE, but said there is little the government can do, because the countries don't have diplomatic relations.

Israel's Gaza offensive killed nearly 1,300 Palestinians, including hundreds of civilians, before ending on Jan. 18. The operation was heavily criticized around the world and sparked a public spat with the leader of Turkey, war crimes alle-

gations and broken ties with Venezuela, Bolivia and Qatar.

In new fallout, Swedish authorities said Sweden and Israel will play their first-round Davis Cup tennis match in an empty arena next month because of security concerns.

Several anti-Israel demonstrations are planned during the March 6-8 event.

Michael Klein, chairman of the Israel Tennis Federation, said it was a shame that political demonstrators could force Sweden to keep fans out.



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TROY 62, FIU 61

CAN'T HOLD THE LEAD

Golden Panthers let first-half lead slip; last-second mistake costs them game

ANDREW JULIAN
Sports Director

A furious second half-rally by the Troy Trojans sent the Golden Panthers into the loss column for the 20th time this season.

Despite a career-high 27 points from point guard Michelle Gonzalez and holding an 11-point halftime lead, FIU (6-20, 4-11 Sun Belt) lost 62-61 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena on Feb. 18.

The Golden Panthers are now out of the running for a game in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

FIU jumped out to an early 9-4 lead on the two field goals apiece from Jasmine Jenkins and Gonzalez.

From there, Troy (13-13, 8-8) was able to fight back and tie the contest at 11.

Just after the 11-minute mark of the first half, the two teams traded baskets until the game was tied at 20 and that's when FIU made its move.

FIU hit three shots from beyond the arc and got four points from Marquita Adley, who finished with eight for the fame, over the last 6:27 of the half to close on a 15-4 run.

Over that span, the Golden Panthers forced four turnovers and allowed Troy to make just two of six field goal and FIU took a 35-24 lead into the break.

The tide turned at the intermission, as the Trojans came out on fire with a 24-4 run over the first 12 minutes of the second half and FIU trailed by nine.

Alyce Shearing scored 11 of the 24 points in that span and Kylie Morrissy added seven on the run.

For the game Shearing finished with 21 and Morrissy with 19.

FIU would trail by as many as 11, but

with 2:08 remaining, Gonzalez warmed up in a hurry.

In the waning moments of the game, the point guard nailed 5-of-5 three-point attempts to pull the team within one with four seconds to play. But the Golden Panthers could not manage to foul and the clock expired.

"Clutch, that's what was in my mind. I had to score and nobody was scoring," said Gonzalez, who set a new career-high for three-pointers in a game and tied the single game school record, set by Gergana Slavtcheva in March 2001, vs. New Orleans.

FIU had an opportunity to put Troy on the free-throw line after Gonzalez's final three but were unable to do so.

"We hit [Morrissy] everywhere, but the referee didn't call anything, so we don't have control of that," Gonzalez said.

FIU got balanced scoring in the first half, but Gonzalez was the only Golden Panther in an offensive rhythm in the second half. The other four starters for FIU combined for just five second-half points and the bench added just two, while shooting 36 percent as a team in the second stanza.

This game marks the first time in head coach Cindy Russo's coaching career that a team of hers has lost 20 games in a single season. It's also the first 20-loss season in FIU's history.

The Golden Panthers return to the hardwood on Feb. 22 to take on Western Kentucky on the road before returning home for their final two games of the regular season.

First they will face No. 25 (ESPN/USA Today) Middle Tennessee on Feb. 25 and senior night on Feb. 28 vs. Florida Atlantic.



VICTORIA LYNCH/BEACON FILE PHOTO

FLOOR GENERAL: Despite scoring 27 points and going 7-for-10 from beyond the arc, Michelle Gonzalez couldn't help the Golden Panthers (6-20, 4-11) top the Trojans (13-13, 8-8).

CONFERENCE STROKE



SAMUEL LEWIS/FIUSPORTS.COM

SENIOR LEADERSHIP: Senior Sara Giovannoni (above) and the FIU swimming team head to the Sun Belt Conference Championships held from Feb. 18-21.

Jewish leaders: Punish UEA for banning player

JOSEF FEDERMAN
AP Wire

A prominent group of Jewish American leaders urged the Women's Tennis Association on Wednesday to punish the United Arab Emirates for barring an Israeli player from entering the country for a tournament this week.

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations also called on international tennis authorities to cancel a related men's tournament in Dubai next week unless the UAE allows another Israeli player, Andy Ram, to participate. Ram is still waiting to receive a visa.

Organizers of the Dubai Tennis Championships have said Shahar Peer was denied a visa last weekend due to security concerns. They said they feared riots could break out over Israel's recent military offensive in the Gaza Strip.

The Jewish umbrella group, which is

holding meetings in Jerusalem this week, called the decision "offensive, discriminatory and unacceptable."

In an interview, the conference's executive vice chairman said his group had urged WTA tour chief Larry Scott to cancel the women's tournament next year if Dubai did not change its policy.

"There has to be some price," Malcolm Hoenlein said. "History teaches us if you let a thing like this go, it grows, and if people perceive it as a license to discriminate, there will be no limit."

He said Scott was "very responsive" but offered no immediate promises. Scott has said he will consider dropping Dubai from the tour's calendar. The WTA is expected to discuss the matter at an upcoming board meeting.

Hoenlein said his group planned to contact Dubai authorities later Wednesday

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