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Students fast for 30 hours to stop hunger

PAGE 5



Fresh face brings life to winning team

PAGE 8



SPOTLIGHT

AT THE BAY PAGE 3



Spring Fling promises to give students a break before finals week with local and nationally-known artists.

OPINION PAGE 4

The sixth anniversary of 'Black Spring' — the crackdown on over 70 Cuban journalists — was marked on March 18.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3

SGC-BBC hosts a Day on the Bay to pick up trash and announce this year's elections winners.

LIFE! PAGE 5

COLUMN: Eddith Sevilla looks at death and bereavement in the latest installment of Pulse.

OPINION PAGE 4

SGA elections have revealed campaigning messages eerily similar to "the real thing": filled with fluff.

SPORTS PAGE 8



Amid rain delays, baseball team loses series finale against Louisiana.

AT THE BAY PAGE 3

Emmy award-winning journalist Byron Pitts comes to campus to share his most personal stories.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Music Saves Lives – General Meeting, April 1, 3 p.m.: Don't just listen to music to save your sanity, listen to it to save a life at GC 305.

Italian Club – Films, April 1, 5 p.m.: Can't afford a trip to Italy? Take your broke behind to this event at GC 314 for the next best thing!

Worlds of Fantasy - Disney on Ice, April 1, 7:30 p.m.: Relive your childhood, on ice at American Airlines Arena.

Heineken Transatlantic Festival, April 2, 8 p.m.: Enjoy international sensations and vibrations at the News Lounge.

Anything Goes Anime – Movie, April 2, 8 p.m.: Indulge your animated side at GC 150.

For the complete calendar, please see page 6 or visit FIUSM.com/calendar.

WEATHER



WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 72 HIGH: 85



THURSDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 74 HIGH: 85



FRIDAY
Isolated t-storms
LOW: 72 HIGH: 85

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PUBLIC SERVICE



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

LET'S CLEAN: Jonathan Leiva picks up trash around campus, along with other members of Campus Crusade for Christ, in an effort to clean up the grounds.

Legend refunds still to be set, students may get cash back

DAVID BARRIOS
Senior Staff Writer

Almost two months after the cancelation of one of the semester's most-highly anticipated events, "An Evening With John Legend," several students entered the Student Government Council at University Park offices, all of them with one question in mind: Is there any word on refunds?

The event, canceled on Feb. 9, just two days before the planned lecture and acoustic performance by the five-time Grammy winner, cost students \$20 for bleacher seating or \$25 for floor seating in the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

However, no official refund policy or date has been officially announced yet.

"It's really simple. When do I get my money back? I paid \$25 to see Mr. Legend

and he didn't come. It's been two months now. And I work for a living, by the way. I need this money," said Christopher Rodriguez, sophomore.

Legend was to perform during a half-hour lecture followed by a 45-minute acoustic performance Feb. 11, but canceled following the death of his grandfather.

Planned by SGC-UP, the event was to be part of their lecture series, held once a semester.

"We are currently working between other parts of the University to get back the funds to students as soon as possible," said Jose Toscano, SGC-UP advisor.

"The refund check from Legend's representation came back to us in late February,

but because there are several layers on how to refund and departments to deal with, including the University's comptroller's office, we've

had a delay in redistributing the funds."

Toscano said that students could be expecting a cash-back policy.

"Students paid \$20 to \$25 in cash. It only makes sense that students should get back cash from their University," said Eric Arneson, director of Campus Life.

According to Arneson, it's typical University policy to credit students' accounts with the refunds rather than return the money in cash.

"We are disappointed that this process has taken so long. We certainly understand and appreciate our students' concerns — \$20 to \$25 is a significant amount of money," Arneson said.

He said he hoped that within the near future, a refund policy would be established.

Group helps Third World businesses start up

OLGA VELEZ
Staff Writer

In an effort to help low-income people in developing countries, a new group is being formed at FIU and its first meeting will take place April 3.

The group will allow students to improve the lives of workers who don't have enough income to borrow money from banks and start their own business, or simply upgrade their homes and lives.

This group, FIU Micro-Lender, will allow students to make a difference through a partnership with a non-profit organization known as Kiva.

Kiva is the "world's first person-to-person micro-lending Web site, empowering individuals to lend directly to unique entrepreneurs in the developing world," according to its Web site.

"Kiva is a lending non-profit that allows anyone to put money to give to Third World country branches who facilitate the finance part of it," said Rose-Marie Nuninga, a College of Business Administration student. "It empowers the poor entrepreneurs who also want to try to better

MICROLENDING, page 2

Abuse victims speak out at annual event

AMY RAMIREZ
Staff Writer

A stand will be taken to bring awareness to issues of abuse, rape and assault to the University community.

Take Back the Night is an annual event that is organized in many college campuses to remember victims who have been affected by violent demonstrations and gives a voice to the survivors who speak out for freedom.

"Take Back the Night's purpose is promoting awareness and allowing people to heal," said Suzanne Onorato, director of the Women's Center and one of the main organizers of the event.

It will be organized by more than 15 University offices and student organizations, including the Women and Leadership class, the National Pan-Hellenic Council and the Inter-fraternity Council.

Last year, almost 300 men and women assembled and marched through the Graham

WOMEN, page 2

NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Identity thieves target children

Jake LeGette is a recent victim of identity theft. What makes him different is that he is 11 years old.

LeGette's mother, Laurie LeGette, a police officer, noticed the crime when she took her son to get his first bank account, only to discover that his identity had already fallen into the hands of criminals.

Laurie LeGette is now taking action by notifying credit companies and trying to clear her son's name.

NATIONAL

Biden shoots down plans to end Cuban embargo

Vice President Joe Biden said March 28 that the United States does not plan to lift the embargo against Cuba.

According to NBC 6, both Biden and President Barack Obama "think that Cuban people should determine their own fate and they should be able to live in freedom," Biden said after taking part in the Progressive Governance Summit in Chile.

However, Biden stresses that the White House is still committed to the reason.

Stocks fall as fear for the auto industry surface

Stocks fell 254 points on March 29 as the markets react to the news of the auto industry's instability.

President Obama turned down the reorganization plans of both Chrysler and General Motors, claiming that the companies need a fresh start in order to proceed with their restructuring plans.

According to CNN Money, both companies were given deadlines to construct restructuring plans in order to obtain more tax payer money. Chrysler had 30 days to close a deal with Italian automaker FIAT and GM was given 60 days to orchestrate a "turnaround" plan. However, neither of the companies have met their respective deadlines.

Obama said that the federal government will continue to honor the warranties of both these companies' funds with a special fund.

Obama signs bill to protect wilderness lands

President Barack Obama signed legislation setting aside 2 million acres of wilderness as protected land.

According to the Salt Lake Tribune, "Obama said 'the most valuable things in life are those already possessed' as he signed a massive public lands management act at the White House."

The law, made up of 170 separate measures, will protect the land, water and shorelines for future generations. Some of the lands included are California's Sierra Nevada and Virginia's Jefferson National Forest.

The measure will also expand efforts to protect wildlife.

- Compiled by Jorge Valens

Student-funded micro-loans aid abroad

MICROLENDING, page 1

their lives."

Nuninga added that the income of these entrepreneurs in developing countries is around \$20 a month, making it impossible for them to go to a bank to get a loan.

"Someone of that capacity still wants to be an entrepreneur and have their own business. This will allow them to have the opportunities that we have here," she said.

Kiva partners with micro-finance institutions that approve loan applications from low-income entrepreneurs.

These micro-finance institutions make sure that the people to whom the loans are given are capable of paying them back.

Some of these micro-finance institutions are the Christian Rural Aid Network in Ghana, Africa, Apoyo Integral in El Salvador and Norwegian Micro-credit LLC in Azerbaijan, Asia.

Once the loans are approved, they are posted onto Kiva's Web site for funding. Internet users, such as the FIU Micro-lenders, can then choose an entrepreneur they would like to lend to and choose how much they would like to lend, with a minimum loan of \$25.

The Web site also informs FIU Micro-Lenders about the progress being made in

the repayment of the loan.

Once the loan is repaid, FIU Micro-Lenders will receive the amount of money they originally loaned the entrepreneur and then either withdraw the money or reloan it to someone else.

"[Kiva] has a family who needs to replace a washing machine for their business," Nuninga said. "The family gets the money from Kiva on a loan. They then pay the loans back. The money is paid back to Kiva and goes back to all of the people who contributed to the loan."

The idea for creating the FIU Micro-Lenders group originated as a community service project in the Business in Society course, part of the College of Business Administration's BBA+ Weekend program.

The students involved in the project asked for students to donate used books.

They then sold the books on Amazon and used those funds to loan money to help entrepreneurs in a developing country start their own business.

The chance to help these entrepreneurs is now being spread to the entire FIU community in the creation of the FIU Micro-Lenders group.

"I think it's a good thing because it helps people who can't get bank loans, but are capable of starting a busi-



COURTESY OF ROSE-MARIE NUNINGA

HELPERS: (Left to right) Emily Espinal, Dr. Robert "Bob" Hogner, Rose-Marie Hernandez-Nuninga, Keturym Viana, Linda Henderson, Jacqueline Nasreddine, Sandra Macchi, Bernardo "Bernie" Guerra, Vanessa Gonzales, Luis Gonzales, Claudia Perez, Guy St. Louis. Not in photo: Millerlandy Badillo.

ness," said Karin Vallega, a sophomore. "It helps those people make a living through their own work instead of just receiving charity."

Some students, however, are concerned that the loans might be risky because they feel that the low-income business owners might not be able to pay the loans back.

"I think that the idea of lending money to entrepreneurs in Third World countries is a good way of nationalizing and increasing the flow of money," said Stephanie Peredo, a freshman. "Yet it can be very risky on behalf of the lenders because the possibility of them getting a consistent payback is pretty low – in addition to the risk of loyalty."

Kiva, nonetheless, stated that the loan might take from six to 12 months to be repaid and, through the Web site and constant updates, lenders can not only keep track of what is being done with the money they contributed, but also witness the effect that money has on the people borrowing it.

The first FIU Micro-Lenders meeting will take place in the Ryder Business Building, Room 130, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

In the meeting, more details concerning the Micro-Lenders will be provided and elections, as well as a gift-card raffle, will take place. The group will also be serving sodas and snacks at the meeting.

Event generates assault awareness

WOMEN, page 1

Center reading stories and poems centered on assault awareness.

Take Back the Night will give people the opportunity to listen to motivational speakers who have made the transition from being a victim to being a survivor.

It will also allow participants to educate themselves through an array of creative exhibits.

"These hands won't hurt" was one of the exhibits last year. The exhibit had students paint their hands and make a pledge against violence.

The NPHC will be organizing the event this year.

Take Back the Night started in England during the latter part of the 19th century when women protested the violence common on late-night London streets.

Many traditions manifested during this event, such as candlelight vigils, empowerment marches and survivor testimonials.

These have evolved

throughout the years depending on place and circumstance.

Take Back the Night first came to the United States during the 70s and since then has had an impact on college campuses across the nation.

Ashley Rodriguez, majoring in accounting, participated in the event last year and summarized her experience:

"I learned a lot about the violence that goes unmentioned not only in our society but within our very own college campus. Being part of Take Back the Night made me feel like I was part of something that is going to be remembered for generations to come," she said.

The fifth annual Take Back the Night will take place at 7 p.m. on April 7 in Wolfe University Center, Panther Square at Biscayne Bay Campus, and on April 8 in Graham Center at University Park.

POLICE NOTES

March 23

An FIU student contacted police after identifying a red paint marking on his silver 2006 Hyundai. Retracing back to the original parked location, both the victim and police made a clear match of paint transfer between the victim's vehicle and the red 1996 Ford F-150 which was parked beside the Hyundai.

While away for 10 days over Spring Break, an FIU resident fell victim to burglary. Stolen items came to a \$2,519 loss. It is unknown if the suspect(s) entered the room via window or door.

March 24

An unknown suspect(s) removed a temporary paper tag from a parked 2005 Toyota Station Wagon while parked in Lot Six at University Park. The tag was entered in the Florida Crime Information Center and the National Crime Information Center.

A University police officer reported that while on patrol, an unknown person gave him a license plate, which was then identified as being stolen from the Miami-Dade jurisdiction on Jan. 17. The tag was placed into a property locker and given a case number.

March 25

After leaving the Graham Center cafeteria, an individual left behind \$2,150 worth of goods in a laptop case. Upon his return, the victim was informed that the case was given to the cafeteria's front desk. The victim soon learned that all property was missing from the front desk. Unknown person(s) had removed the property and left the area.

- Compiled by Cheryl Malone

THE BEACON

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Award-winning reporter to speak

LORENA ESTRADA
Staff Writer

Emmy award-winning journalist Byron Pitts will share his life with students, and the perseverance and strength he acquired from his experience as a network correspondent.

As part of Communications Week and the Hearst Lecture Series, Byron Pitts, a “60 Minutes” correspondent, will be the keynote speaker at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s 19th Annual Student Celebration and Awards Ceremony April 2 in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

“Pitts will focus on his personal story – his early childhood struggles with reading, overcoming a stuttering problem and the other details of a journey that ultimately led him to the pinnacle of the broadcasting profession,” said David Berry, an SJMC marketing coordinator. “It will have an inspirational tone because it coincides with the awards ceremony, in which most of the students in attendance will be graduating.”

Raised by a single mother in a working class neighborhood in Baltimore, Pitts was illiterate until the age of 12 and had a stuttering problem.

With a desire to play football, he maintained good grades in school, eventually learned to read and went on to attend Ohio Wesleyan University.

He graduated in 1982 with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism and speech communication.

In January 2008, Pitts was named the chief national correspondent for the “CBS Evening News with Katie Couric” and a contributing correspondent on “60 Minutes,” the renowned CBS News magazine program.

He was one of the lead reporters at ground zero for CBS’s news coverage of the Sept. 11 attacks, and



PITTS

won a national Emmy for individual reporting. Pitts was also recognized for his coverage of the Iraq War.

Other major stories covered by Pitts include Hurricane Katrina, the war in Afghanistan, the military buildup in Kuwait, the Florida fires, the mudslides in Central America and the refugee crisis in Kosovo.

Pitts has received a national Emmy Award for his coverage of the Chicago train wreck in 1999, a National Association of Black Journalists Award, four Associated Press Awards and six regional Emmy Awards.

Although Pitts will speak at the awards ceremony, an annual end-of-year celebration of student achievements throughout the academic year, the event is also free and open to all students and the public from 5 p.m. to about 7 p.m.

“A number of students will be awarded scholarships, as well as awards for Outstanding Alumnus and Outstanding Graduate Student. [There will be] an award for Outstanding Student from each main course of study: advertising, broadcasting, journalism and public relations,” Berry said.

The student celebration and ceremony is sponsored by the Gannett Company, Inc., Kappa Tau Alpha and the Hearst Lecture Series.

For more information, contact David Berry at (305) 919-4411 or e-mail him at berrzyd@fiu.edu.

Pitts will focus on his personal story – his early childhood struggles with reading, overcoming a stuttering problem and other details.

David Berry, marketing coordinator
SJMC

STUDYING IN THE SUN



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

TAKING A BREAK : Jorge Rossell, a senior sociology and anthropology major, relaxes after a sunny study session with Jessica Alarcon, a junior nursing major, in the grassy knoll outside Panther Square, on March 30.

Relax: Spring Fling brings fun

PARADISE AFSHAR
BBC Life! Editor

With final papers due soon and exams coming up, many students are looking for ways to unwind during this stressful time of the year.

The 10th annual Spring Fling, hosted by the Student Programming Council, is designed to provide the much needed break.

“It’s a good way to get your mind off the stresses of school,” said Petra Haven, SPC-BBC president. “It’s a fun event that everyone should attend.”

The Spring Fling will take place April 3 in front of the Hospitality Management patio, located in front of the bay, at 8 p.m.

Although planned as an outdoor event, it would be moved to the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms in case of rain, according to Haven.

This year, R&B and hip-

hop artist Ryan Leslie, who has written songs for Britney Spears and JoJo; R&B artist Pleasure P, formerly of R&B group Pretty Ricky; R&B singer Shonie and rapper Brisco, will headline the event.

Local artists COA Legacy, Black DaDa, NMB Stunnaz, Jube, Get Fresh Crew and others will perform as the opening acts. DJ Skip, will emcee the event.

Spring Fling will be held on both campuses and rapper Ludacris will headline the event at the University Park campus.

“I’m looking forward to seeing that musical genius, Ryan Leslie, go to work. He’s an amazing artist,” said junior Melissa Binns, a public relations major.

“I’m also looking forward to the opening acts because a lot of them are a part of the new Miami dance movement.”

During last year’s event, about 800 students attended and

watched rapper Fat Joe and R&B singer Mario. SPC members are expecting about the same amount to attend this year.

Although final figures are not available yet, according to Haven, SPC spent more than \$35,000 on this year’s event.

In addition to music, Spring Fling includes free refreshments, including hot dogs, hamburgers and iced lemonade.

Binns said that she cannot wait for the event because “it’s going to be one big party that night.”

Admission is free for University students, and non-students can either pay \$15 on the day of the event, or pay \$10 during the pre-sale, which started March 30 at both the information desks and offices of Campus Life at UP and BBC.

For more information about Spring Fling contact SPC-BBC at (305) 919-5280.

Day on the Bay takes spring cleaning to new heights

BARBARA QUIJANO
Asst. News Director

Picking up the trash on the bay will be the assignment of more than 100 middle school students at the end of the week. For University students, however, it will be something completely different.

The Day on the Bay, an event that promotes a “go green” initiative, will also be the day students at the Biscayne Bay Campus meet the Student Government Council-Biscayne Bay Campus winners for the 2009-2010 elections.

This event, which will take place April 3, is held once every semester for students, community and friends to come together and clean the bay.

Craig Cunningham, director of Campus Life & Orientation, will announce the new SGC-BBC members on that day.

“It’s an environmental initiative that started last year and it’s been extremely successful,” said Ana Maria Silva, president of SGC-BBC. “We’ll be providing food and drinks at 12 p.m. and also at this time we’ll be announcing the winners of SGC-BBC.”

SGC-BBC candidates have been campaigning since March 23, and will continue their campaign through election day, which will take place April 1-2 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Students can vote through their Panthersoft accounts on any available computer. There will also be designated computers in the Academic

I building where students can vote.

“Elections will choose who your next campus leaders are going to be, so if you care about FIU and your campus and about making this University better, cast your vote,” said Silva. “Know who you’re voting for, pick up fliers, read their goals and what candidates want to accomplish, and make your decision based on most qualified goals, not on popularity.”

Day on the Bay is sponsored and hosted by SGC-BBC, partnered with the Office of the Vice Provost, where they reached out to David Lawrence Jr. K-8 Center, a Miami-Dade County public school located next to BBC, to participate in the green initiative.

According to Silva, Day on the Bay will

also host 150 middle school students.

“Any student is more than welcome to participate at any point between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. We’re providing gloves, trash bags, food and a DJ,” said Silva. “It’s basically just showing up and supporting the ‘go green’ initiative.”

Day on the Bay is a collaborative, where students and volunteers are separated into groups. Each group will be designated a certain section to clean, so the entire bay is covered.

Funding for this event is coming from the Community and Environmental Affairs account, which is funded by SGC-BBC.

“I hope we have students helping and supporting this cause,” said Silva. “It’s our campus.”

READ THIS NOW!

Call for a better SGA

We all know the challenge that it is to avoid the blood drive staff and environmental activists while trying to get to class, but I felt thankful for them when campaigning began for Student Government Association elections. I realized the skill I had acquired would come in handy at avoiding the candidate fliers shoved in my face every three feet walking through Graham Center.

Don't get me wrong, I'm a sap for democracy-in-action, but sometimes I cannot help but feel SGA elections serve to create the corrupt, priority-devoid political types that make up real government.

Some of the issues are pretty glaring. How much money do you think students spend on the postcards, campaign signs and T-shirts all around campus, stamped with their logos and mug shots (usually posing in a suit in front of the Green Library fountain)?

Compare that to the money that is spent by a student candidate, who only has the means to print out his platform in black-and-white on computer paper, with no shirts.

The advantage is cash, and lots of it (or at least connections to someone with plenty).

As any regular readers of mine may know, I am pledging into FIU's Greek system and feel that most criticisms of Greek life are unfounded. But the one place that Greeks do have an outright unfair advantage is in student government elections.

It's not a deliberate evil plan by Greeks to shut out everyone else, but people, of course, do support those from their own organizations, so some candidates already come with a couple hundred guaranteed votes.

SGA candidates are also experts at what George Orwell would say is "newspeak," or what I would describe as using a whole lot of words to say a whole lot of nothing.

"Improve campus security. Improve campus involvement." These are two statements from one candidate's Facebook page that offer no suggestions on how this would be done, while oddly suggesting that there are some candidates who would want poor security and low involvement.

School spirit seems to be a unifying theme between most campaign platforms.

Another candidate's platform list reads, "Increase school spirit by finding general interests around campus."

I am not entirely sure what this actually means. Now, I'm

not asking to be in control of the Activities and Services Fee that every student pays with every credit hour. Candidates wishing to be in charge of that huge pool of money should have to be even more clear and specific than I.

I don't want to paint an unfair, negative picture of candidates. Many of them do have specific ideas of what they want to accomplish (including the candidates whom I got the above statements from), but for a half-decent idea, there are two or three pieces of fluff and filler.

This might have been acceptable for high school student government, where students make shirts with paint, but not here, where the same candidates are spending hundreds of dollars on glossy handouts with cool logos, but no substantive information on them.

This might have been OK for high school student government, where the main responsibility was raising money for prom, but not here, where the senators control more than \$9 million in funds.

I just want SGA to be better. The millions that they control comes straight from our pockets and how it is spent directly impacts our campus experience.

Despite the importance of this, even mildly following the goings-on of the SGA chambers provides a lot of embarrassing moments and unnecessary drama.

The previous elections commissioner, who disqualified a presidential candidate for grades, was himself shortly after removed from office for not fulfilling his job duties, which in and of itself is controversial if you do not want unqualified people deciding who can run for office. What ensued was a three-hour power struggle between the executive and legislative branches of University Park's Student Government Council over who has the right to appoint the new commissioner.

The debate got so heated that one senator, Jeffery Molinaro, exclaimed on-the-record, "This is ridiculous. This is politics run f**king rampant!"

It seems to me that this mirrors national government, here the leaders who claim they are looking out for you can't seem to stop the infighting long enough to begin to think about you.

I may be a tad cynical about all this, but I will certainly log onto my.fiu.edu to vote in the elections today and tomorrow, and you should too.

Only \$9 million is at stake.

COLUMN



ERIC FELDMAN

HOW MUCH LONGER?

Cuba continues its suffering

JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ
Staff Writer

March 18 marked the sixth anniversary of the crackdown of 75 dissidents and journalists in Cuba, which notoriously became known as "Black Spring."

Their only crime was to protest the government and demand human rights on the island. They were charged with treason against the government and disrespect against the revolution.

After brief trials weeks later, the dissidents received prison sentences of up to 28 years.

Most of the dissidents were organizers of the Varela Project, a referendum that called for democratic reforms and human rights inside the island.

Cuba took advantage of the Iraq war serving as a distraction to create a climate of fear of the government. The imprisonment of the dissidents served as an intimidation technique against present and future political opponents.

Unfortunately for the regime, the European Union condemned the actions and broke off some diplomatic relations with Cuba, according to *Reuters*.

Of the 75 imprisoned, 55 still remain in prison under deplorable conditions. Mario Enrique Mayo, a lawyer and journalist, arrived in Miami on March 18 as a political refugee.

"I am very happy but at the same time when we arrive here we remember those that remain there; it is a mixture of joy and sadness, because the fact that one escapes from the inferno does not mean the end. There still remain those that are behind the bars," Mayo said in an interview with *The Miami Herald*.

According to *The Miami Herald*, he was released due to his delicate health conditions. The Cuban government has released 20 prisoners for humanitarian reasons. Among the beneficiaries is Mayo. Miguel Valdés Tamayo died in La Habana in January 2007 after a heart attack.

"Prisons in Cuba are like commentaries of living men. It is worse for political prisoners because they oppose the regime and they insist on telling the truth," said former prisoner Bertha Antunez. "They are tortured physically and mentally. They are given medicine to make them fall asleep and many times the guards allow them to be raped. They leave the prisons malnourished and with respiratory problems."

It is also common knowledge

It is repulsive every time Central and South American presidents visit the island ... they have turned a blind eye to the Cubans' tragic reality.

that every time human rights organizations visit the island, they are taken to special prisons that are painted and mattresses are put in the prisoners' cells.

Bertha Antunez is no stranger to the Cuban government treatment of political opponents. Her brother, Jorge Luis García Pérez, spent 17 years in prison where he survived torture, humiliation and hunger. He was arrested in Placetas for screaming during a demonstration that communism was "an error and a utopia." Since this was considered "oral enemy propaganda," he was arrested.

It is repulsive every time Central and South American presidents visit the island to legitimize the government. Presidents Michelle Bachelet (Chile), Cristina Kirschner (Argentina), Alvaro Colom (Guatemala) and Hugo Chavez (Venezuela) have been among the most recent visitors to the incarcerated island. They have refused to meet with dissidents and have turned a blind eye to the Cubans' tragic reality. These leaders send the message that the past five decades of oppression and human rights violations are acceptable.

The most shocking of these relationships is of President Oscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for his Central American peace plan. Be it out of pure ignorance or intentional wrongdoing,

these presidents are only extending the suffering of an entire nation.

This past March 18, Cuban exiles met at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables to commemorate the tragic event. They created the *Asamblea de la Resistencia* (Assembly of the Resistance), whose primary goal is to not cooperate with the dictatorship. The organization aims to promote unity of all Cubans, spread the word at an international level about the tyranny that Cubans are suffering and effectively coordinate the internal resistance inside the island. The assembly is made up of representatives of more than 40 organizations like MAR for Cuba and Free Cuba Foundation from FIU.

Cuba has suffered the longest standing dictatorship ever recorded for the past five decades. Fidel Castro consistently ignored the international declaration of human rights in which Cuba was the initial proponent. His brother, Raul Castro, took over power in July 2006 after Fidel had major surgery.

Despite rumors that positive changes were on the way, Cubans are consistently denied their human rights and oppressed whenever a critique of the revolution is raised. Raul Castro promoted criticism of the government in a constructive manner. It was later clarified that it was allowed to criticize the transportation system and other issues, but not the government itself.

COMIC RELIEF



IRIS FEBRES/THE BEACON

HUNGRY? WHY WAIT

Community outreach, global poverty and hunger concerns behind student fast

RACHAEL CONGDON
Staff Writer

What would you do to end world hunger? Would you be willing to go without eating for 30 hours?

A group of FIU students have come together to do just that in conjunction with World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children and their communities to overcome poverty.

Motivated by Jesus Christ's love for his neighbors, Leonard Goenaga had the inspiration to bring World Vision's idea of a world without starving children to FIU with "FIU 30-hour Famine."

"We live in supreme comfort as college kids in Miami, and there is no class at FIU that could teach compassion," said Goenaga, a senior majoring in political science and religious studies.

The 30-hour famine will take place April 15 and will consist of 30 hours of not eating, feeding the homeless and doing other outreach and awareness projects. The famine will end with a "Break-FAST" on April 16.

To hammer the point across, "you will be eating the porridge [that the children eat] for 'Break-FAST,'" said World Vision Child Ambassador Desiree Kameka.

According to World Vision "as

many as one in five children will die before reaching their fifth birthday," and "26,000 children younger than age 5 will die because of hunger, disease and poverty."

Alarming as the numbers may be, the question becomes: What can you do about it?

If you don't want to fast, there are other opportunities for students to get involved.

Students or anyone else interested, can sponsor someone participating in the 30-hour famine or they can donate to the World Vision Web site.

Although there is no set amount to raise, individuals will

have the opportunity to set their own fund-raising goals such as feeding a child for \$30 a month or \$360 a year.

"Any college student can find a dollar," Goenaga said.

For the next two weeks, World Vision representatives will be tabling on campus with awareness stunts and information.

"Awareness is [also] important seeing as the numbers are staggering," Goenaga said.

If you think you don't have a

dollar to donate, think again.

Consider foregoing one movie every month. You could donate those \$10. Next time you go out, think about feeding the hungry before you order that \$9 drink at a club, or you decide to "super-size" your combo meal, Goenaga said.

For more information, visit www.worldvision.org or tinyurl.com/FIUFamine or e-mail Leonard Goenaga Lgoen001@fiu.edu.



We live in supreme comfort as college kids in Miami, and there is no class at FIU that could teach compassion.

Leonard Goenaga
senior, political science and religious studies

Pulse

Dealing with death while maintaining mental health

EDDITH SEVILLA
Staff Writer

Last week as I drove into my neighborhood, six police cars were parked in front of a neighbor's townhouse. As I drove by, I saw a familiar face with tears running down her cheeks. But it was not until 30 minutes later when I was discussing the scene with my mom and her sister, that I remembered who's face that was.

A family friend of many years passed away of heart failure in his home last week. It was his daughter-in-law's face whom I had recognized that early afternoon.

As his wife gripped my mother and me in their living room, I thought of her sorrow, how she and her kids would recover from this, but, most of all, I wondered how she would deal with his death after every-

thing was done and silence and emptiness settled in.

Death – ironically enough – is a part of life. Most likely, the death of a loved one is not something we experience everyday, and for that reason we may not give death too much thought. However, the reality is that we're all going to die, and at some point in our lives we will all be affected by death.

But how do we deal with death when it strikes close to home?

The National Cancer Association is one of the best – in my opinion – resources for bereavement.

It describes bereavement in four phases: shock and numbness; yearning and searching; disorganization and despair; and reorganization.

I've never lost anyone immediately close to me, but I've lost friends and extended family members to illness and accidents. I'll

never

forget the way I felt when I found out a friend had lost his life in a car accident or when my aunt died of health complications.

Real as death may be, "family members find it difficult to believe the death; they feel stunned and numb," according to the NCA.

The yearning and searching phase involves survivors "experiencing separation anxiety and cannot accept the reality of the loss. They try to find and bring back the lost person and feel ongoing frustration and disappointment when this is not possible."

If you have ever felt completely hopeless

easier. For others, coping with death may be little more difficult and perhaps grief counseling or grief therapy may be necessary, according to the NCA.

There are many goals involved with grief counseling including "helping the bereaved to live without the person who died and to make decisions alone; and helping the bereaved to separate emotionally from the person who died and to begin new relationships," according to the NCA.

Grief therapy on the other hand, helps survivors get back on track by "helping them develop a healthy self image, and reestablish relationships and understanding

Death – ironically enough – is a part of life. The reality is that we're all going to die, and at some point in our lives we will all be affected by death.

about something, then you may know what disorganization and despair feels like, albeit not as intense as when it involves death. In this phase, survivors "feel depressed and find it difficult to plan for the future. They are easily distracted and have difficulty concentrating and focusing."

For some people, the support from friends and family makes coping a little

that others may have difficulty empathizing with the grief they experience."

Death is very difficult to deal with and the days and weeks that follow may be even harder. But no matter how hard or difficult coping with it may become, remember there's always a light at the end of the tunnel.



EDDITH SEVILLA

TO THE RAFTERS



CHARI ADAMES-SMITH/THE BEACON

SONGSTRESS: Jennifer Snyder (piano) and Theresa Sparbel (soprano) perform March 26 in the FIU Departmental Recital in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

Corporate sponsorship reaches new, absurd level

No matter where you go or what you buy, somehow, some way, you are supporting sports.

Just look at the packages.

It seems more and more like there is an official “something” of a sport. Whether it’s the official beer of the NFL, the official insurance provider of NASCAR, or the official credit card of the Olympics, you are in some way supporting a major sports team or sporting event.

It almost seems random when initially looked at.

However, when closely examined, sports sponsorship is a very important aspect of modern advertising.

Given that sporting events consistently attract thousands upon thousands of spectators, and millions more in television and radio audiences, it would make sense to sponsor a team or event.

The amount of television exposure potential is enormous.

For that simple fact, many companies have decided to use sports as a method of advertising.

Take auto manufacturer Audi for example. They recently announced a deal with the New York Yankees to be the team’s official luxury vehicle.

“As our brand continues to grow nationally, and in New York especially, a relationship with the Yankees makes perfect sense,” said Scott Keogh, chief marketing officer, Audi of America, in an interview with *Marketing Daily*.

“Opening up the Audi Yankees Club was a great opportunity to get Audi front and center with one of America’s greatest franchises and to give Audi fans a terrific place to enjoy the games.”

The partnership includes a suite box with a members-only restaurant at Yankee

Stadium.

Another company that has used sports effectively is Target. Using auto racing as a medium, Target has formed an alliance with team owner Chip Ganassi to form Target Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates, the team’s co-owner.

The team fields cars in the NASCAR Sprint Cup series, IndyCar Series and the Grand American Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16.

Target has enjoyed a lengthy relationship with the team, winning the Indy 500 multiple times, the Daytona 24 hrs and numerous NASCAR races.

Pepsi Co. would be another shining example. The NFL has been using Diet Pepsi for years as an official diet soft drink.

This relationship includes Pepsi products being exclusively sold at NFL games as well as at numerous pre-game hospitality parties.

Trek Bicycles is a new, seemingly random sponsor.

IndyCar Series driver E.J. Viso has recently signed a deal with the company to be a personal sponsor.

Viso is also a frequent participant of international bike races and marathons, providing a great avenue for the company to take advantage of an international market.

To be fair, not everyone follows every single sport. That in mind, companies have selected specific products to market through specific sports.

Soccer Locker has latched onto numerous united soccer leagues and Major League Soccer teams, exponentially growing their brand.

It may indeed all look random at first, but there is a method behind the madness.

COMMENTARY



CHRIS GREEN

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY •
APRIL 1

WHAT: McDonald’s All-American All-Star Game
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: American Airlines Arena
CONTACT: 786-777-1000

WHAT: World’s of Fantasy
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: American Airlines Arena
CONTACT: 954-523-3309

WHAT: NOW Presents: Take Back The Night
WHEN: 6 a.m.
WHERE: GC Chapman Plaza
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Music Saves Lives - General Meeting
WHEN: 3 p.m.
WHERE: GC 305
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Italian Club - Films
WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

Compiled by Mariana Ochoa

THURSDAY •
APRIL 2

WHAT: French Club - Meeting
WHEN: 3:30 p.m.
WHERE: GC 343
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Carribean Student Association
WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Anything Goes Anime - Movie
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: GC 150
CONTACT: 305-348-1069

WHAT: Evening under the Stars at Viscaya
WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: Viscaya Museum & Gardens
CONTACT: 305-250-9133

WHAT: Heineken Transatlantic Festival
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: The News Lounge
CONTACT: 305-672-5202

JOIN OUR STAFF!

The **BEACON** is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.

HOME COOKING



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

ANOTHER WIN: Maria Spenceley swats a ball against Louisiana Lafayette during the Golden Panthers 5-2 victory on March 28. The team is undefeated at home.

Personable outfielder cultures teammates

BERMUDEZ, page 8

hole, and although he hit just one his senior year, he has shown the ability to hit the ball hard for the Golden Panthers.

Wittels has seen Bermudez make big plays since before they were teenagers.

As members of opposing travel teams, the two faced each other in a close meeting between their respective teams. Wittels remembers his team winning by a run late in the game, and Bermudez stepping to the plate. After battling his way to a full count, he banded a double to opposite field to tie it, and then stole third base en route to scoring the winning run.

"He's the type of guy you want at the plate with a man on second," Wittels said. "He can drive in the winning run."

VIBRANT

More than his polished offensive prowess at the plate and his range in the outfield, Bermudez has also been a presence in the locker room and the dugout. Often seen sporting a grin a mile wide, Bermudez is enjoying his new surroundings as much as Golden Panthers fans have enjoyed watching him play.

"I have had a good family environment with other team's I've played with but with this team I have had the most fun," Bermudez said.

"Everybody has love for each other and we have fun a lot."

The rookie sensation's diversion has been contagious.

"Sometimes he dances, and he's one of the only black kids on the team so he cultures us and teaches us a lot of new dances that come up, like the stanky leg," Wittels laughed. "I don't know, you always see him talking to kids about different dances sometimes."

Hilton, who is Bermudez's friend, sees more than athleticism as a similarity between the two.

"When I was with him he was the funny guy that liked to joke around," he said. "I see he's doing the same thing for the baseball team like I did for the football team."

In college football and baseball, a player must wait three seasons to declare for their particular draft, so there will be time to measure their careers next to each other. Despite that, Hilton already has an opinion when you try to compare their ability in their own sport.

"Me and him always talk about it," Hilton laughed. "I think he's better."

The Rookie Report is a five part series on the most impactful freshmen and their influence on the Golden Panthers impressive start this season. Next up: infielder Raiko Alfonso.

Offensive production cannot bail out porous pitching

BASEBALL, page 8

28 runs in three games. In two of those contests, they reached double figures.

The Golden Panthers' record dropped to 17-6 overall and 6-3 in Sun Belt Conference play.

Still, the team has won eight of its last 10 games. During that stretch, Ryan Mollica hit four home runs, scored 13 runs and had 19 runs batted in.

He also hit .465 during the 10-day span.

The middle of the lineup could not

produce as well as the previous teams for the Golden Panthers.

Only one player obtained more than one hit.

Junior Arrojo went 2-for-3 from the plate with two runs.

Ryan Mollica provided fireworks the night before going 3-for-5 with three RBI. He started the season with three hits in his first 26 at bats.

"I've been out here in the batting cages with Junior Arrojo till 1 in the morning," Mollica said.

He also mentioned how hitting behind

Tyler Townsend in the lineup has benefited him.

"I'm definitely getting more pitches to hit hitting behind him," Mollica said.

But not even Townsend, who leads the conference in hitting, could make a dent on Wilson's performance. Townsend went 0-for-3 with one RBI.

The Ragin' Cajuns' starting pitcher Greg Wilborn contained the Golden Panthers' offense that came into the series rated the third best offense in the Sun Belt Conference.

Wilson allowed just four runs through

eight innings when the Golden Panthers scored 11 runs the previous two games.

Weather forecasts pushed up the game to 11:30 a.m. rather than 1 p.m.

For the Ragin' Cajuns, Scott Hawkins hit 2-for-4 RBI. He also scored three runs to lead his team.

The Golden Panthers will face the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers next on April 3-5. They are one of the top contenders in the Sun Belt Conference with a 17-7 overall record and an 8-1 conference record.

WKU leads the conference in hitting as a team.

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Football lands big- time recruit

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

When the Golden Panthers landed Larvez "Pooh Bear" Mars, the football team had its most coveted recruit in program history,

Now, Mars has another four-star recruit alongside him.

Head coach Mario Cristobal announced tight-end Dudley LaPorte gave FIU a national letter of intent on March 26.

La Porte is listed at 6-foot-5, 250 pounds.

"He is a very large, explosive athlete with good body control," Cristobal said. "He is a great line of scrimmage blocker as well as a guy you can detach from formations and use as a wide receiver."

LaPorte is a four-star recruit, according to *Scout.com* 2007 Junior College ranking.

He was named all-state wide receiver during his senior year in high school.

He will be coming into the most explosive offense in the program's history.

Last season the offense scored 24.7 points per game.

Wide receiver T.Y. Hilton was the team's most prolific offensive target.

He caught 41 passes for 1,013 yards and 12 touchdowns. Erick Kirchenberg was the leading receiver from the tight end position last season.

He caught 14 passes for 157 yards and two touchdowns.

LaPorte led all junior college tight ends in the nation with 35 receptions, 500 yards and eight touchdowns at Santa Barbara.

He had offers from other Football Bowl Subdivision schools such as Utah, Oklahoma, San Diego State and Iowa State.

Cristobal said LaPorte's letter of intent is attributed to the coaching staff's recruiting ability.

"We recruit as hard, or I would say we work harder than any staff in the country," he said. "I think for the first time ever FIU not only got an Army All-American but get's the highest-ranked player at any position from a junior college. He's the complete package at tight end."



JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

A standout freshman from Miami Springs Senior High School has had an invaluable impact to his team. The athlete has brought excitement to the field and become a lethal weapon to its offense. The player has been a spark for a head coach in his second season trying to validate his first full recruiting class.

Actually, there are two.

Wide receiver T.Y. Hilton might be recognized as the most prolific athlete on campus after rewriting the Golden Panthers' brief record books and making the All-Sun Belt Conference first team.

But center fielder Pablo Bermudez is making a case for himself as a transcendent first-year player as well for a baseball team that is off to a 17-6 start. Bermudez has hit .288 with a .367 on base percentage in 52 at bats, and has filled the leadoff role ably for the Golden Panthers.

"I know whenever I came to the games last season, Tyler [Townsend] and Ryan [Mollica] always hit in the middle of the lineup but they never really found anybody to lead off and get on base," said third baseman Garrett Wittels, who is also a freshman. "Pablo did a great job at the

beginning of the season by getting on base, starting rallies and scoring runs."

Bermudez, who is listed at 180 pounds, brings pop to the top of the order, and may move down in the lineup with time.

"This year he'll be leadoff, but then you kind of judge each year what you have on your team and where he fits in," said head coach Turtle Thomas. "See how much bigger and stronger he'll get because he needs to be a 195, 200 [pound] type of guy."

VERSATILE

During the first pitch of a March 4 win against Central Florida, Bermudez launched the first offering from UCF pitcher Jaeger Good past the right field fence to give FIU 1-0 lead after one pitch. Prototypical leadoff hitters do not have the dynamic ability to drive in themselves.

The former All-Dade first team performer has hit two home runs early in the season, and even he is surprised at his ability to hit for power this early in his college career.

"I'm very comfortable, I mean I've been leading off since I was little so it's natural to me," Bermudez said. "This is the first year I have hit for power like this, I'm more of a singles guy."

ROOKIE REPORT: PART 1 OF 5

LEADOFF SPARK

Pablo Bermudez has brought pop to the top of the order and more

"When I was with him he was the funny guy that liked to joke around. I see he's doing the same thing for the baseball team like I did for the football team."

T.Y. Hilton
FIU, wide receiver



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

STEADY: Bermudez has fought off a leg injury to return to the lineup recently.

His words don't tell the whole story, however. As a junior at Miami Springs, Bermudez jacked six home runs in the fifth

BERMUDEZ, page 7

BASEBALL: UL 11, FIU 4

Bullpen loses control; Golden Panthers drop finale



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

SLIP AND SLIDE: Starting pitcher Corey Polizzano pitched over six solid innings on Sunday, but a trio of relievers gave up a slew of runs in the seventh period.

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

Two seasons ago, Golden Panthers fans cringed when the baseball team's bullpen entered the game. The bullpen could not hold two leads vs. the University of Miami.

Against the University of Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns on March 29, the bullpen was up to its old tricks.

With a 4-3 lead headed into the seventh inning, the Golden Panthers could not get Ragin' Cajuns out. They allowed eight runs, and the Golden Panthers could not complete the three-game sweep as they lost 11-4 at University Park Stadium.

In the seventh inning, the Golden Panthers

used five pitchers to obtain three outs.

Corey Polizzano pitched 6 1/3 innings and he gave up four earned runs. He left the game with the score tied at four. However, Mason McVay, Aaron Arboleya and Mike Martinez could not get one batter out. The three pitchers combined to give up six runs.

Eric Berkowitz finally closed out the inning.

McVay was tagged with the loss, and Polizzano's record stayed at 2-1.

Coming into the series the Ragin' Cajuns were last in the conference in hitting while the Golden Panthers boasted the team's best earned run average. Yet, the Ragin' Cajuns scored

BASEBALL, page 7