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Florida International University

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WELCOME BACK

SPOTLIGHT

AT THE BAY PAGE 4



Living Single: Our new dating columnist Sabrena Johnson debuts by telling how she found out the hard way who really pays on the first date.

AT THEY BAY PAGE 5

Cirque du Sol-Bay: Butterfly Garden Dedication, Circus Day and Late-Day Latte are among the events during our Week of Welcome calendar.

EDITORIAL PAGE 6

Student government is in plans to bring back the marching band for the 2010 school year – questions arise as to who is really funding it.

OPINION PAGE 6

Soapbox: Members of the College of Law discuss Haitian immigration rights in the United States and a case they are currently involved in.

LIFE! PAGE 7



How to make and keep a New Year's resolution, popular resolutions and why people fail in their efforts.

LIFE! PAGE 9

Popular TV series that are starting up again in the spring.

SPORTS PAGE 12

Hofstra transfer Rakia Rodgers finally makes her debut for the FIU women's basketball team.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fast Food Nation, Jan. 4, 7 p.m. Come in and watch this SPC sponsored movie for free in GC 150.

National Student Exchange Program, Jan. 5, 10 a.m. Join in on this free orientation in GC 314 and find out how to become an exchange student.

Local Folks Artists, Dec. 6, 9 a.m. For \$5, you can listen to the local sound of Sam Friend, Arboles Libres and Uncle Scotchy.

—More events can be found in our Monday and Friday issues of Life!.

WEATHER



MONDAY
Sunny
LOW: 49 HIGH: 63



TUESDAY
Partly Cloudy
LOW: 43 HIGH: 61



WEDNESDAY
Partly Cloudy
LOW: 51 HIGH: 64

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WEEK OF WELCOME

SUPER START

Week of events gets students back in the swing of things

ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

It's the first week of school and you're feeling the winter break blues kick in already. You are in desperate need of some FIU school spirit being pumped back in to your veins to kick off the new semester. Week of Welcome has just what the doctor ordered.

The Student Programming Council at Modesto Maidique Campus commits itself to planning an array of events to keep the student body entertained and active in campus life year round.

At the beginning of every semester, they bring us WoW.

"Week of Welcome, or WoW, is a week of events at the beginning of both the Fall and Spring semesters. It is run by The Office of Orientation at MMC in conjunction with other organizations, such as the Student Programming Council," said Cristina Rodriguez, senior public relations major and president of SPC-MMC. "WoW is a big kick-off for each semester. It raises hype about being an FIU student and allows students to enjoy

WOW, page 8



SGC-MMC

Rionda discusses return of band

FRANCISCO MARADIAGA
Staff Writer

University leadership has approved a preliminary plan to bring back the marching band with student government as a major financial backer, according to Anthony Rionda, president of the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus.

Rionda told Student Media that a viable option emerged after he, University President Mark Rosenberg and University Chief Financial Officer Kenneth Jessell partook in numerous meetings that discussed the logistics and funding of a marching band, and that an official announcement is expected sometime in early January.

"Our goal as of now is a new band with a new image," Rionda said.

Rionda declined to go into details on how the marching band will be funded, saying that specifics would come with the official announcement.

He did however state that some of the funds were strung together from one-time pockets of money. This money he explained, came from roll-over funds, auxiliary accounts, or from extra money the university may have had after purchases.

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Microsoft Office now free for students

LAEBONY LIVINGSTON
Staff Writer

Thanks to the suggestions from FIU faculty and students, the Division of Information Technology has decided to offer free Microsoft Office 2007 and McAfee-Antivirus Software to students.

University Information Technology security officer Cheryl Granto submitted this proposal.

"Students will enhance their learning with the ability to use these software programs to work on common class projects, sharing documents, and improve the performance of their personal computers," said Granto in the

proposal.

Marketing coordinator John Cabarga stated that this is "the first big project" the IT department is implementing. Although the benefits won't be available till January 2010, the idea for the project was first proposed in September 2009.

MS Office and McAfee will be available to owners of both PCs and Macintosh, and once everything is complete students will be able to download the software right off the IT Web site.

Current students are not the only ones that will be offered MS Office and McAfee, those that have graduated in Fall 2009 as well as future alumni will also be able to take

It is a great opportunity for students who may not have been able to get [Microsoft] Office before.

Samantha Rivas, student
Journalism major

advantage of this deal.

"I think it is good that they are offering it to students but it would have been more useful if they had offered it in the Fall," said Judith Perez, a freshman Asian studies major.

"We always offered MS Office and McAfee, as well as other software, at a discounted price so those

who shopped through us always got a deal," Cabarga said.

Cabarga has also added that this offer will extend to any upgrades in the future; students will be able to download the newest version of MS Office for free even if they could not take advantage of the

MS OFFICE, page 3

NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

6-year-old shot on New Year's Eve

A 6-year-old boy was injured during New Year's Eve celebrations in Miami's Design District.

According to *The Miami Herald*, the boy who was not identified was shot in the chest by a stray bullet. Police were unclear as to which direction the bullet came from.

The boy, who was visiting Miami from Italy, was taken to Jackson Memorial Hospital where surgery was performed on him. He is expected to survive.

NATIONAL

TSA lifts subpoena against Internet bloggers

The Transportation Security Administration lifted subpoenas it had filed against two Internet writers to determine a source who had leaked to them an airline security directive.

According to The Associated Press, the agency no longer needed the information from the two bloggers as their investigation was "nearing a successful conclusion."

The leaked directive spelled out the extra steps that TSA employees would take after the Christmas Day attack that occurred on the Detroit-bound Northwest flight.

WORLD

Blackwater case dropped by federal judge

Iraqis lashed out on Jan. 1 as they learned that a case against five Blackwater Worldwide security guards who opened fire on a group of Iraqi civilians was dropped.

According to the *New York Times*, the attack, which occurred on Sept. 16, 2007, killed 17 Iraqis and wounded 27. Blackwater guards were escorting American diplomats when they opened fire on a busy traffic circle with automatic machine guns and sniper fire.

The decision was made by a federal judge citing misuse of statements collected in the case. The decision impacted the Justice Department's case, halting it altogether.

Aside from the five guards accused, a sixth guard plead guilty to killing one Iraqi civilian and wounding another.

– Compiled by Jorge Valens

Honors College recruits athletes

Campaign aims to emphasize academics

MELISSA CACERES
Staff Writer

The Honors College and the Athletics Department are launching a partnership that will bring together sports and academics for students who seek the best of both worlds.

With nine of their students currently playing for various teams at the University, the Honors College is seeking to recruit more athletes to their school through this long-term campaign which

will offer benefits such as scholarships, smaller classes and flexible course scheduling.

"We really want to help [student athletes] develop into well-rounded students where they're not just valued by their athletic ability but for how good they are in class," said Cecile Houry, the Student Enrichment coordinator for the Honors College. "And it looks like right now we're at the time and have the right people in place in terms of athletics to really

make this happen."

The college has since been contacting coaches from the volleyball, track & field and women's basketball team individually in order to encourage those students who meet the 3.3 GPA requirement to apply to the Honors College during this Spring semester.

Hoping to eventually encompass every sport on campus, representatives from the school have been reaching out to players through their presence at games with events like pizza parties, football tailgates, and golf scrambles.

"Athletes are generally not driven to that part of academics and if they know

that they're going to go somewhere important then it's hard to motivate them," said freshman volleyball player Chanel Araujo, who is currently a student at the Honors College.

"Coming in, I wasn't at the top of the pack athletically so I knew that I needed academics as something to fall back on just in case it didn't work out," Araujo added.

By becoming members of the Honors College, the student athletes will have benefits that will include not only smaller classes but some that span an entire school year.

This will give them the

HONORS, page 3

GROWTH SPURT



ABOVE: The construction for Parking Garage 5, behind the Chemistry and Physics building and next to the Red Garage, began at the end of the Fall 2009 semester. It will add 2,000 parking spaces, 1,500 of which will be available to students. The structure will contain 30,000 ft of retail space and will be the new headquarters for the FIU Police. The garage is set to open in August of 2010.

LEFT: The Nursing and Health Sciences building is nearing completion. It is located directly behind the Chemistry and Physics building and across from the future site of Parking Garage 5. The building is the first on campus to be certified by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. According to the University, some of the "green" features the building will have are a self sustaining grass roof that will not only lend to aesthetics but also help insulate the building, and light sensors both inside and outside the building to better power.

BELOW: The School of International and Public Affairs building began construction in Fall 2009. According to SIPA's Web site, the building is expected to be completed in November 2010.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS ADAMS/THE BEACON

THE BEACON

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Classes scheduled around practices

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opportunity to develop professor-student relationships that will not be significantly affected by the scheduling of games and meets.

"I know there are a lot of girls on the volleyball team who could make it into the Honors College," Araujo said. "But I think it's just what people say about it like 'I have to do all of this extra work and I don't need that' which kind of makes them feel like not wanting to join."

Various courses will be implemented that work around practices and trainings so that students will not have to be penalized for their established schedules.

"It's important that scholar athletes get a good education as well as their athletic opportunities and we [the Honors College] do offer something special for them," said Lesley Northup, dean of the Honors College. "This goes especially for athletes who aren't going to be in sports that are going to pay them at a pro level."

According to Northup, the Honors College offers a class that may be of athletic interest, which is centered on the act of walking. The course studies the kinesiology, sociology and history of walking.

"It included literature on historical pilgrimages and readings on hiking the Appalachian trail," Northup said.

"And it was also at 8 a.m. which didn't interfere with anybody's practice schedule so we're thinking of instituting another course that would be at a good time like that," Northup added.

Through the partnership, the Honors College is able to offer Honors College Athletic Scholarships to its students as well as opportunities for community service.

A sports-oriented project is being developed within the Honors College partnership with the City of Sweetwater that would allow students to work with elementary school girls in an athletic program.

With the College hoping to bring in more athletes to the Fall 2010 semester, the number of applicants continues to grow as the Honors program makes itself known to the current 130 FIU athletes.

"There are always these stereotypes about how athletes aren't smart or that they're not good in school because all they do is sports," Houry said. "Those nine students that we have are doing excellent in their teams and are doing great academically, so we want to recognize that."

For more information on the Honors College, visit honors.fiu.edu.

A&S fees to help fund band

SGA, page 1

Student Media was unable to reach Jessell for comment during the break.

Rionda also mentioned that SGA will contribute \$130,000 from Activities and Service fees students pay in tuition to help fund the marching band.

That amount was brought up in the October meeting of the University-wide Council, which is made up of student government leaders from both campuses, where they passed a motion to bring back the band. There is a possibility that SGA will have to dip into its monetary reserves to back up any incidentals that might creep up like a bowl game.

In that is where this new incarnation of the marching band differs from its predecessor, the majority of the funding will come from A&S fees controlled by SGA.

From what Rionda told Student Media, the Athletics Department will not have a funding role with the band, and the College of Architecture and the Arts, where the band will be stationed under, shall have a significantly lesser contribution than it had in the past.

The marching band was eliminated last fiscal year amid a wave of budget cuts. The College of Architecture and the Arts was unable to meet the reported \$237,000 it set aside to fund the band. The figure amounted to more than half of its operating budget, the rest was supplied by SGA and the Athletics Department, and dealt a fatal blow to the previous marching band, the Band of the Sun.

Stressing that he did not have the numbers in front of him, Rionda's interpretation of CARTA's contribution would be to pay the staff members that would be beyond the scope of student government, and Student Affairs.

"We are not in the business of funding

PEPSI CHALLENGE



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

Over winter break, the University switched all the vending machines on campus from Coca Cola to Pepsi. Pepsi branded vending machines and signs have been distributed throughout campus. The signs read "Pepsi, the official beverage of FIU."

faculty," he said.

Funding the faculty involved will fall on the doorsteps of CARTA's Director of Bands Catherine Rand.

It is also expected that CARTA will provide a class that band members would be required to take. The money would in turn go back into the program.

"It's a lab fee," Rionda said.

The \$130,000 SGA has pledged represents the indispensable lifeline student government will now be for the marching band.

Future bodies of SGA will have to put up an equivalent amount of student money. It would be completely within SGA's prerogative to decide not to fund in the future, but the loss might prove insurmountable for the marching band. Rionda is betting that no student government will have the audacity not to fund the marching band.

"Something is missing ... It is in the best interest of students to have a band," Rionda said. "We have all seen what happens when you don't have it."

University uses tech fee funds to bring Office, antivirus software to students

MS OFFICE, page 1

immediate MS Office 2007 download.

IT is currently preparing for the launch of its Web site and expects it to be ready in January 2010 for a mass download. Students will only be able to download the software one time.

McAfee Anti-Virus Software ranges from \$30 to \$40 according to the company's Web site.

Microsoft Office also varies in price, ranging from \$150 to \$500, depending on

the version, according to the Office Web site.

The version offered by the University will be the Enterprise version, a mass volume-license version of Microsoft Office 2007 Ultimate Edition. This version includes all Microsoft Office products including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and OneNote.

The Technology Fee Advisory Council, lead by Vice President and Chief Information Officer Min Yao, approved \$545,966 on Nov. 10, 2009 to be used to make the

proposal possible.

Currently, the technology fee for undergraduate and graduate students is \$4.42 and \$14.05 per credit hour respectively.

"It is a great opportunity for students who may not have been able to get MS Office before," said freshman journalism major Samantha Rivas.

Those who have questions about the offer can visit fiu.edu/techfee for more information about this proposal as well as other proposals that are in the process of being approved and implemented.



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LIVING SINGLE

Love may conquer all, but it will not pick up the tab

It has been said that the 20s are the best time of a person's life – and why wouldn't it be? That is the time when you just start to fully grab hold of your independence and take your place in this world.

For me, the best part about being 20 is dating. I know a lot of people get married in their 20s, but for me I love living the single life. I figure, I can play around in my 20s, then settle down and get married in my 30s. That way, when I do get married, I don't feel as if I'm missing out on something I never had.

We all know that college life already presents itself with wild adventures and experiences; when you combine that with dating in Miami, you end up with quite a story to tell. This column will give you, the FIU students, an opportunity to share some of your dating horror and success stories. I'm going to start off by telling a horror story of my own.

While pumping gas one day, a very attractive guy came up to me and said hi. Usually I don't speak to strange men at gas stations. But he was really cute, so I made an exception. After talking for about 15

minutes, we exchanged numbers.

He called me that evening around 10 p.m. and we talked on the phone until midnight. Before we hung up, he asked me out on a date and I said yes.

For our date, we went to T.G.I. Friday's. I really like the food there and the drinks are delicious. When it was time to order, I found it strange that he didn't order anything to eat.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "Why didn't you order anything?" I was confused.

"I had a big lunch and I'm still full," he replied.

"We could've gone to the movies instead. Now I feel awkward."

"It's not a problem; I'm fine just being in your presence. You go ahead and eat."

I still thought that it was strange but I went along with it. I had the fried shrimp and fries, and he had water. We started talking but I couldn't help but notice him staring at my food. So I offered him some.

"I can't eat all of this by myself, come on and help me out," I said, trying to play it cool.

To my surprise, he didn't object. He dug right in as if to say, "I thought you'd never ask." It got to the point where he was eating

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At The Bay Asks: What Is Your New Years' Resolution?

"I would like to accomplish all the goals that was set out from the year before."

-Sholom Neistein, SGC-BBC President

"I'm going to work on becoming a better person, spiritually, physically, and mentally. I have a problem with controlling my temper and I know that's not the right way to live. For the New Year, I will be working on keeping calm in all situations."

-Michael Stewart, Freshman, Computer Science

"I'll be turning 30 this year, so one of my resolutions will be to lose 25 pounds before my birthday in July. That way, I can start 30 off right."

-Sandra Harden, Second-Year Graduate Student, Social Work

For more New Year's Resolutions, turn to page 5.

Strained economy turns Miami boatyard into yacht parking lot

SCOTT ANDRON
AP Wire

Merrill-Stevens Dry Dock Co., possibly Florida's oldest business and a fixture on the Miami River for more than 80 years, has mothballed its boat-repair operation. The problem, say the owners: the weak economy.

For now, the yard that once serviced yachts for Malcolm Forbes and Ivana Trump will be used only for boat storage.

"We have been hit pretty hard by the economy," said chairman Hugh Westbrook, who owns the company with his wife, Carole Shields Westbrook. "As we wrapped up big jobs, there were no new jobs to replace them. If business presents itself, we'll call back the staff, but we're not seeing a fast turnaround in the yacht business."

Staff at Merrill-Stevens has been shaved to fewer than 20, down from 160 employees a few years ago. When the repair business closed earlier this month, the company had about 40 employees.

Launched in Jacksonville more than 140 years ago, Merrill-Stevens opened its Miami River location in 1923, according to Jimmy Merrill, whose family started the firm and owned it before selling it to the Westbrooks in 2004. For almost 50 years, until 1989, the company also kept a Coconut Grove outpost inside a former Pan Am hanger; today a Fresh Market

sits on part of those grounds.

That history makes the company unique, said Paul George, a local historian who teaches at Miami Dade College. "It's just got this continuity that few business in South Florida have." Only Burdine's — opened in Miami in 1898 and now part of Macy's — has operated in Miami longer.

Westbrook, a retired United Methodist minister, co-founded VITAS Healthcare in 1976. He and his wife sold their majority interest in February 2004 in a deal valued at \$406 million and 10 months later purchased Merrill-Stevens.

Merrill-Stevens' woes are sadly common in South Florida's marine industry.

During the real estate boom, marinas and other boat businesses faced pressure to sell their land for condo development, and states like Georgia and North Carolina tried to persuade companies to take their businesses and jobs to those lower-cost states.

Since the economic downturn began 2007, spending on luxury items including boats has plummeted as vessel owners found more urgent needs for their money.

"Boats are purchased with discretionary income," said Frank Herhold, executive director of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida.

Customers have delayed repairs, said Westbrook, making only those

too urgent to postpone. The owners of two 150-foot vessels in storage — each in need of \$1 million in repairs — decided to lay off the crews and wait, he said.

The company faces additional challenges, said Westbrook. Merrill-Stevens specializes in large yachts, up to 155 feet. But many of its wealthy customers now have yachts significantly longer.

"It's an old yard," Westbrook said. "It has not had much capital investment."

A yacht brokerage and management branch the Westbrooks opened after buying Merrill-Stevens was closed more than a year ago.

As the economy brightens and the boating industry picks up, Westbrook hopes to expand the yard to handle megayachts up to 250 feet, he said — making it the only yard in South Florida able to service yachts that size.

The tab: \$12.5 million — and banks won't lend the money right now, Westbrook said.

So he is looking for private investors.

"We are working with investment bankers to explore some options to expand the capacity of the yard," said Westbrook.

"South Florida is one of the yachting capitals of the world," he said. "Merrill-Stevens has a worldwide reputation and has for a hundred years."

EDITOR'S NOTE

New girl on the bay

Although 2010 marked the end of a decade, it still brings forth a wealth of change, advancement, and new possibilities for many of us — and I am no exception.

The departure of Pamela Duque as BBC Managing Editor of *The Beacon* opened up the opportunity for someone to fill her shoes.

To my delight — and surprise — I have been chosen to fulfill this position.

First and foremost, I am excited to be taking the reigns. As a journalism student, this is a dream come true, as I will be able to do what I love while gaining the education I need to make it in a post-graduate world.

Coming from MMC, I must admit that BBC is brand new to me and I have yet to fully adjust to the much smaller (and much quieter) atmosphere. Even so, I am looking forward to exploring the ins-and-outs of the campus.

I also hope to become better acquainted with my peers in order to do them justice and make our mark in their daily lives. BBC is such a close-knit community and I hope to

become yet another thread in the fabric.

In doing so, I hope to keep the student body informed regarding serious issues, new developments, and campus events that offer a break from the daily grind of classes.

However, change also comes with challenges and, yet again, I am no exception.

As I step into this new role, a serious question comes to mind: how can I not only maintain the quality of "At The Bay" section but also, dare I say, improve it?

This is where you, the students, come in. If there are any campus issues or events that need coverage in order to inform the student body, or if an article affected you in any way, feel free to send in your questions and concerns.

Several schools of thought are quick to say that traditional newspaper journalism is dead. In the case of *The Beacon*, I say that it's alive and kicking and I will do my part to make sure that it stays that way.

-To contact me, send an e-mail to jasmyn.elliott@fiusm.com.



SABRENA JOHNSON

BBC MANAGING EDITOR



JASMYN ELLIOTT

Students hike to DC to fight for immigrants

LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ
AP Wire

While their fellow college students recovered from the night's revelry, four South Floridians celebrated the New Year with a more active — and activist — approach.

The group set out Friday to begin a 1,500 mile journey they are calling the "Trail of Dreams," from Miami's historic Freedom Tower to Washington, D.C.

The goal is to raise support for legislation that would include a path to citizenship for eligible illegal immigrants.

The four, all immigrants themselves, plan to walk the entire distance, no matter the weather.

They expect students and other supporters to join them along the way and plan to arrive in the capital May 1, which has become a day of immigrant rights rallies in recent years.

"I'm tired of coming back to school each semester and hearing about another friend who was picked up and deported," Juan Rodriguez told a group of supporters during a recent gathering.

An RV will follow them to ensure they have shelter at night and a bathroom in remote locations, Rodriguez said.

The nonprofit Florida Immigrant Coalition is helping with logistics.

Rodriguez said after years of keeping his struggles to himself, he recently got up the nerve to talk about them with his mother, who stayed behind in Colombia.

"Now I'm trying to convince her not to come. If you don't have to, then maybe you shouldn't leave. There's value in staying in your country and helping to improve it," he said.

"I think sometimes I should go back to Colombia and try to help there," he said.

"But it's not my country anymore. This is my home. This is where I can help."

No romance without finance

SINGLE, page 4

more than me. After that we ordered drinks and continued to talk and laugh.

But when the check came, fun time was over. The waitress handed him the bill and he slid it across the table to me.

"Wait a minute, I know he doesn't expect me to pay the bill," I thought to myself.

I would like to say that

Here's a tip for the future: If you can't afford to date... don't.

I'm one of those women who don't mind paying on the first date, I really would. However, that would be a lie. I do mind, so much so that I didn't bring any money with me — a fact that I let him in on.

"I'm confused, it looks like you want me to pay," I said in a soft voice.

"I didn't order anything — why should I pay?" he replied.

"You didn't order anything but you ate most of my food. And besides, I don't have any

money on me," I said, very annoyed.

"Well, why not?" he said, raising his voice.

"Um, let me think. You came up to me, asked me for my phone number, called me and asked me out on a date. Gee, I don't know why I thought you were going to pay," I said sarcastically.

"If you knew you weren't going to pay, then why did you order all of this expensive stuff? I can't afford to pay for this."

"Expensive stuff"? What was he talking about? The bill was barely over \$40, and that included both of our drinks.

I had enough.

"Here's a tip for the future: If you can't afford to date... don't," I said full of anger.

I got up, dropped my napkin and marched right out of the restaurant, leaving him there with the bill. I might not have had money with me but I did have money at home, so I walked to a nearby store and called a cab.

After I made it home, I took out my Blackberry and deleted his number.

That's the thing about dating: sometimes you win and sometimes you lose.

That, my friends, is what I call living the single life.

-Look for our new column "Living Single" every other Monday in At the Bay.

At The Bay asks: What Is Your New Years' Resolution?

"I have to admit, I make the same resolutions every year: to lose weight, to be more organized and to get my finances in order. But to be honest, I never keep them past mid year."

-Cherie Pace, Fourth-Year Graduate Student, Social Work

"This year will be a big milestone for me. I graduate in the spring, and I'll be moving to a new state. So my resolution is to start preparing for my future. I will be focusing heavily on my career goals. I'm excited about 2010; I think great things are in store for me."

-Susan Innocent, Senior, English

"I vow to put my best foot forward in each and every one of my endeavours, whether that be in school, a job, helping and being an inspiration to others, or getting my name out and working toward my dreams."

-Stephanie Long, Sophomore, Journalism

-Compiled by Sabrena Johnson and Jasmyn Elliott

Cirque du Sol Bay

BBC Week of Welcome Events



Monday January 4, 2010	Tuesday January 5, 2010	Thursday January 7, 2010	Friday January 8, 2010
GOT QUESTIONS? WHEN: 9 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: ACADEMIC 1 BUILDING SPRING BBQ  WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: WUC FLAGPOLE AREA PEER ADVISOR ANNOUNCEMENT WHEN: 12:30 p.m. WHERE: WUC FLAGPOLE AREA	BLUE AND GOLD BREAKFAST WHEN: 9:30-11 a.m. WHERE: WUC PANTHER SQUARE Wednesday January 6, 2010 SGA OPEN HOUSE WHEN: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: WUC 301 CIRCUS DAY  WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: WUC 2 1/2 BALCONY SGA BUTTERFLY GARDEN DEDICATION WHEN: 2:30 p.m. WHERE: WUC FLAGPOLE AREA	SOC CLUB FAIR WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: WUC FLAGPOLE AREA LATE-DAY LATTE  WHEN: 4:30-6 p.m. WHERE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1	FUN DAY  WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. WHERE: ACADEMIC 1 BUILDING KAYAKING WHEN: 12 p.m. WHERE: BAY AREA WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE TEAM MEET  WHEN: 2 p.m. WHERE: POOL

THE BEACON | Editorial SGA to bring back the marching band, but who is really picking up the tab?

FIU's marching band was cut in June of 2009 due the College of Arts and Sciences not being able to fund their 65 percent, \$237,000, share used to run the band. The Student Government Association, which had to fund 21 percent of the budget, and the Athletics Department, who was funding 14 percent, pulled their funding due to budget cuts.

In the Spring of 2009, *The Beacon* editorial decided that though cutting the University's marching band would be a difficult decision, it was a decision that needed to be made in the midst of continuing economic and financial downturn within the University. A marching band can enhance school spirit at football games, rousing the crowd to cheer for their team. It's a time-honored tradition throughout the collegiate system.

Recently, University President Mark Rosenberg, Chief Financial Officer Kenneth Jessell and SGC-MMC President Anthony Rionda have discussed to bring back the band in 2010.

In a recent interview with *The Beacon*, Rionda stated that between \$125,000 to \$130,000 of the band's funding will come from students' Activities and Services fees, and other funding from "one-time pockets of money."

Yet the manner in which student government wishes to resurrect the now defunct marching band is without simple common sense. At first glance, this is a great move for student government, representing student interests and living up to their original purpose. With the band being brought back partially with "one-time pockets of money," what guarantee is there that this source pool of money will be available during the 2010-2011 fiscal year?

The next administration following Rionda's will face a lot of angry students. Bringing back a band under such precarious circumstances could let many students down if they are unable to foot the bill next year or if they choose not to. Rionda could potentially be leaving the marching band funding as a burden upon student governments back. In effect, this move is nothing more than just a bandage where stitches are needed.

Our athletics department, who has the highest paid athletics director and head football coach in the Sun Belt Conference, should aid in the cause to bring back the marching band – especially if student government is willing to contribute so much of students' money from service fees and auxiliary funds from other student events.

Students are already funding athletics through an athletics fee of \$14.51 per credit hour per semester for full time students – the second highest fee under tuition according to a recently filed Notice of Amendment by the Board of Trustees. Considering the large contribution by student finances, athletics should help out with the return of the marching band.

In perspective, the marching band would bring back more revenue to the Athletics Department before it would to the students: a good incentive for the department. In an editorial in November, *The Beacon* noted the disparity between FIU and Troy during their game last season at FIU Stadium. With no band to rouse the team, a major part of the crowd-going experience was lost. With attendance dwindling at games, Athletics is certainly looking to gain interest through this move.

Student government however is not protecting the student body's interest in this matter when Athletics is allowed to go off scott-free on what should be their obligation.

Cell phones don't cause cancer

JUSTIN JANS
Contributing Writer

If there is one thing I never leave my house without, it is my cell phone. It's the one thing that I need to keep in contact with friends and work. With the advent of Internet capable phones, I can manage my whole life from my device.

But now, a Maine legislator is proposing a warning label on cell phones in her state, claiming that the phones could possibly cause cancer, similar to the warning on a cigarette box.

MSNBC reported on Dec. 20, 2009 that Maine Representative Andrea Boland was proposing this legislation based on several scientific studies that she claimed indicate a high risk of cancer among cell phone users.

Boland herself has a cell

phone, but turns it off unless she is expecting a call. This is not only counter-productive to having a cell phone, but goes against the main purpose of the device, which is to allow people to contact you within a moment's notice.

The real question is simple. Is there a link between cell phone use and cancer risks?

According to a U.S. Food and Drug Administration study used by the National Cancer Institute, "studies suggest that the amount of RF energy produced by cellular telephones is too low to produce significant tissue heating or an increase in body temperature."

Many products and chemicals in the past were thought to be safe until later studies proved that they were harmful to people. One of the most famous instances of this is asbestos, which was a main component of construction

material until studies found that it caused cancer in people who were exposed to it.

We cannot rule out the possibility that this may happen with cell phones. Long-term effects have yet to be fully examined. If indeed cell phone devices are proven to be harmful to our health, we are in for a big reality check.

Scientists in Scandinavia conducted a 30-year longitudinal study of cell phone usage and any possible links to cancer. The subjects were the adult population of 16 million people from three countries, and they only detected a small percentage of people with brain cancer, (although not above the normal percentage of people with brain cancer). If there was a risk of cancer, that study most definitely would have proved something.

Since their introduction to the

market in the 1980s, these devices have gained massive popularity. Nowadays, almost everyone has one – even 10-year olds have gained the privilege that was once exclusive to the corporate elite. If they were indeed harmful, there would have already been overwhelming evidence against them. Instead there are only myths and stories, some of which may be pure coincidence.

One example of alleged evidence on the harmful effects of cell phone use involves OJ Simpson's former lawyer, Johnny Cochran. He died of a brain tumor, which was supposedly located on the side of his head that he put the cell phone to. This could just be a coincidence. There are two sides of the head, hence there is a 50 percent chance that it would be on the side he was accustomed to putting the cell phone on.

SAY WHAT?!: A Maine legislator wants to put a cancer warning label on cell phone boxes sold in the state. Thoughts?

"It is just an old-wives tale. If it is not proven that cell phones give cancer, why put a warning label on it? It may just cause people to panic needlessly."

Maite Morales
Junior, English

"It can't really hurt to put these labels on the boxes. In the end, people will ignore the labels because they will still use their cell phones. That's the way our generation has adapted."

Chris Rodriguez,
Junior, Criminal Justice

"Cell phones have been around since the 1980s. Cell phones have supposedly been improved with better technology. Why are we caring about possible cancer risks now?"

Michael Garrote
Sophomore, Biomedical Engineering

This is ridiculous. Then they should also put a label on other items like microwaves, which are also proven to mess with pacemakers."

Amaris Mier,
Junior, International Relations



Haitians face discrimination by U.S.

JUSTIN CRAMER
JULIAN GERACI
LASHAWN THOMAS
Special to The Beacon

As the torrential winds and pounding rainstorms of the Atlantic hurricane season subside, Haitians realize that the real threat of devastation this year came, in the end, in the form of the United States' discriminatory immigration policy.

In 2008, storms devastated the nation, claiming the lives of hundreds and leaving thousands homeless. During the last election, President Obama promised change and hope, and specifically pledged to address the immigration issues facing Haitians. A year later, Haitians continue to starve because the storms of 2008 decimated the agriculture and livestock Haitians rely on to live.

In 1998, following the devas-

tation of Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua and Honduras, the Temporary Protected Status was established. Honduran and Nicaraguan nationals who were living in the U.S. at the time the suspension of deportation were allowed to temporarily remain in the U.S., rather than forcing them to return to the inhumane conditions that existed in their home countries. It also allowed these nationals to work legally in the U.S. and send money to their families in their home nations.

Haitians have endured devastation of equal magnitude to that experienced in Honduras and Nicaragua, yet Haiti was continuously denied TPS by the Bush administration. Although the Obama administration promised change, the mere promise of hope does not feed the starving, nor cure the sick. Without real change and hope in the form of

TPS, Haitians are faced with a daunting prospect: return to a country devastated by natural disaster, or remain in the United States, unable to work legally.

Opponents of TPS argue that by granting TPS to Haitians, the U.S. will provoke a massive emigration from Haiti. This argument is groundless. Similar to the restrictions placed on the deportation relief granted to Honduras and Nicaragua, only persons who are already living within the U.S. will qualify for TPS. The cutoff date is the day that TPS is granted. This means that if TPS is granted on Dec. 1, a Haitian arriving to the U.S. on Dec. 2 would not qualify and would be deported if apprehended. The TPS cutoff date provides protection against a mass exodus from Haiti to the U.S.

In early December 2009, two groups of Haitians – one in the United States, and one in Haiti

– sued the Obama administration in an international tribunal, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. We are their lawyers, students and faculty at the FIU College of Law.

Our clients represent thousands of aggrieved Haitians, on both sides of the Florida Straits, who have been harmed by the U.S.'s discriminatory immigration policy toward Haitians, which violates binding commitments that the U.S. has made under international treaties. By drawing attention to the latest example of the U.S.' disregard for its responsibilities to the international community, our clients hope to pressure the Obama administration into granting TPS to Haiti, providing Haitians the relief they desperately need.

Justin Cramer, Julian Geraci and Lashawn Thomas are students at the College of Law.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials, send them to opinion@fiusm.com

WINNER/LOSER



James Cameron, director of "Avatar," with a budget of over \$200 million and 12 years of preparation made a film that is being hailed by many as ground breaking in its special effects, though his writing abilities are still questionable.



ChildAbuseWatch.net is attacking organizers of the Super Bowl for having The Who performing during the halftime show. This is in response to The Who member Peter Townsend's arrest in 2003 for possessing child pornography.

QUOTATIONATION

"Hey, it's Tiger. I need you to do me a huge favor. Can you please, take my name off your phone. My wife went through my phone."

Tiger Woods to one of his mistresses.

Resolution Solution

A new year means hoping for change

ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

It's that time of the year again where we pop out the champagne (sparkling cider for those under 21), count our 12 grapes, kiss the one we wish to be with forever and hope for the best with the turn of the year. With this hope lies the tradition of New Year's resolutions.

New Year's resolutions are commitments one makes to improve themselves with the new year and are advantageous to themselves and, usually, others too. Some of the more popular resolutions involve health or careers. For FIU students, they often

involve staying on track in school and bettering grades.

"My New Year's resolution is to continue doing well in school. It's pretty simple but that gives me a sort of guarantee that I will be able to keep it," said Maite Morales, a junior majoring in English.

Kathelyn Paz, a sophomore double majoring in English and journalism, has a more reflective resolution for the new year.

"My resolution is to let go of who I was and fully embrace the person I've become. I want to put behind all the petty things that have happened with people and accept that things change. Only time will tell if it's for the better," she said.

want better versions of ourselves and resolutions are the easiest way to promise ourselves we can get there. This is the perfect year - a new year, a new you. You've said it to yourself a bunch of times in years past, but what is it exactly about New Year's resolutions that are so intriguing to others?

"It's free motivation, in a sense. With a new year comes the possibility of change. I guess it's a *carpe diem* sort of thing. People want to get things started off with a bang so that the rest of the year will proceed smoothly," Paz said.

Eric Murias, a graduate student majoring in nutrition and a New Year's resolution skeptic, explains that New Year's resolutions don't work because "the idea of a New Year's resolution [means] people can have a fresh start when they usually don't even follow up on it."

Murias pokes fun at one of the more popular resolutions, weight loss.

"People use New Year's as a way to promise themselves that they are going to start going to the gym when you can just start going to the gym in the middle of the year. You don't need New Year's for that," he said.

"I think New Year's resolutions are intriguing because it gives people something, a goal, to dream about reaching. It's great to have a big goal and think that you have a whole

year to get there," Morales added.

Unfortunately, for the optimistic resolution makers, by the end of February the majority of resolutions burn out quicker than they were thought up.

According to Marcell Gonzalez, a junior majoring in business, the reason is simple.

"People don't really want to make New Year's resolutions, they just get thrown into a tradition they really don't care about so they don't keep it," Gonzalez said.

New Year's resolutions are no joke. If you want them to work, you need to put some effort into it.

"It's really easy to say you want something, but it takes effort to actually achieve it. All things worth-while require work. It's hard. People just get disheartened too easily and give up at the first sign of an obstacle. Drive is essential," Paz said.

If you're thinking of making a resolution this year, setting your sights on a realistic goal and making a plan for reaching it is a good way to start.

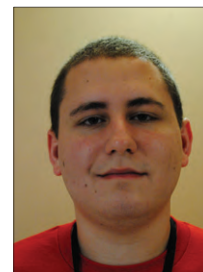
"People sometimes make resolutions that are not realistic or take longer than a year, so, they get anxious to accomplish them and end up giving up," Morales said.

To prevent that, she suggests making the same resolution every year.

"An aunt of mine used to make the same one every year so she wouldn't quit it."

Everyone wants something ...

Nicholas Khouri



"I would like to graduate by the end of the semester and hopefully find a job."

— Senior, Liberal Studies

Douglas Wartzok



"My New Year's resolution is that we have a successful SACS reaccreditation site visit for FIU this year."

— FIU Interim Provost

Will Ferrell



"My New Year's resolution is to get at least 13 hours of sleep a night, regardless of what sort of job or family or life commitments I have ..."

— Actor



No need to wake up early; end-of-the-year sales not as big as in the past

AMANDA BATCHELOR
Staff Writer

Every year, people wake up early on the day after Christmas to make it to the stores by 5 a.m. for those after Christmas sales. This year, perhaps due to the economy, the sales were not all worth waking up early for.

Most retail stores had sales from around 25 to 40 percent off for the entire Christmas season.

Many of the sales that started the day after Thanksgiving continued for the remainder of the season, and very few stores this year had sales as high as 75 percent off.

Some of the best sales were found at stores like Aeropostale, Bath and Body Works and Best Buy where I bought a GPS for about \$70 off.

The day after Christmas, most stores just had sales on their Christmas goods. But, surprisingly, most stores were only

taking 50 percent off when, in past years, it was common to see discounts on holiday merchandise as high as 75 percent off.

This could be a sign of retail stores hurting because of the economy, leaving retailers unable to offer steeper discounts.

However, Tatiana Kulhanjian, a sophomore and business major, did find some stores that had decent sales.

"I went to Macy's on Dec. 26 and they had awesome sales," Kulhanjian said. "A lot of items were 50 percent off and then the cashiers would give [an additional] \$25 off if you bought stuff worth \$100 or more so they would try to help you save even more."

I was one of those people at the stores starting at 5 a.m. at JCPenney's to see what sales I could find and they had barely any Christmas items left.

They did have sales on some of their other merchandise like luggage, clothing and shoes but the sales just didn't compare

to any of their Black Friday sales.

Pier One Imports had a large amount of Christmas decor left over, most of it was 50 percent off or more. They also had sales on some of their everyday items such as candles.

"Walmart, Target and Kmart had the best deals on Christmas decor the day after Christmas," said Ashleigh Nguyen, a senior and international business major. "You could find items from 75 percent off and up such as lights, wrapping paper and fake Christmas trees. It's a great time to stock up on Christmas goods for next year."

But not everyone was looking for just Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late to give gifts to those they are seeing after the holidays were looking for sales on gifts as well.

Kevin Rojas, a junior and criminal justice major was looking for gifts for some of the women in his life.

"Coach had really good deals with 20 percent off of their purses, but the worst deal I got stuck with was buying a friend a Juicy Couture bag for \$200 and some change," Rojas said.

Whatever the case may be, stores are definitely not offering some of the great sales they have offered in past years. So this year, in order to find a great deal, you may just have to dig around in the malls some more. Consumers, however, seem to be happy finding any sales they can get.

What some of us can look forward to is that most stores' sales are continuing until right after New Year's, such as Victoria's Secret's semi-annual sale.

Also, for those who still haven't made it to the store to exchange that frumpy sweater or whatever gifts you may not have liked, most stores are prolonging their return policy so you have until right after New Year's to finish your returns and exchanges.

Monsters, magic to make appearances at WoW

WOW, page 1

the many activities featured for free, with a Panther ID.”

WoW is not a tradition unique to FIU.

“Week of Welcome is a tradition for many universities across the nation. It is a way to raise school spirit, have students become engaged on campus and bring life to the university,” Rodriguez said.

The events are pulled off with the help of the National Association for Campus Activities. NACA provides SPC-MMC with the entertainment resources needed to pull off such events.

Vice President of External Affairs for SPC-MMC, Ana Casas, a senior public relations major, says SPC-MMC wants to make sure they touch base with all of the student body’s needs and wants with their events.

“We chose our events to make sure that we reach as much of the student body as possible. We surveyed the students last semester and are programming to fit their requests. After all, our main goal is to please as much of the student body as possible,” she said.

This semester, the committee has chosen to bring a mechanical bull-riding event to

take place in the GC pit on Jan. 5, a magic show performed by NBC’s “Phenomenon” winner, Mike Super, on Jan. 6 and, to finish off the week, a screening of the animated film *Monsters vs. Aliens* on Jan. 8.

Super’s show will take place in the GC Ballrooms and Rodriguez says the show is sure to “take [FIU students’] minds on a mini getaway.”

The committee chose a family friendly movie for Friday night’s screening to assure out-of-town families still in town that they, too, are welcome at WoW. Rodriguez does note that priority goes to students with an FIU ID.

The film will play in GC 140, Jan. 8 with showings at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Week of Welcome in Spring is significantly less action-packed than Fall’s, but Casas promises that the events will not disappoint.

“WoW is an opportunity to get the students excited about school again and build school pride. We understand that the spring WoW is not as big as the fall one, but we still want to make it something that students can look forward to,” she said.

SPC-MMC’s job does not end with WoW. The committee promises to uphold its reputation of providing students with new and entertaining events that appeal to everyone and their tight college budgets.

“Students can expect bigger events, more movies, new comedy acts, an awesome spring concert along with lots of giveaways that are all free for FIU students,” said Patricia Flor, junior finance major and marketing coordinator for SPC-MMC.

Rodriguez adds that they will keep staple events like comedy shows and movie screenings and their most popular event, UP-Roar. She says to keep a look out for the Dating Doctor in February in honor of Valentine’s and the big name concert reveal in March.



EXPLODING HEAD

Indie artists ready to fill 2010 with new sounds

Sadly, 2009 is long gone and memories of the year can only be seen through old blog posts. But, judging 2009 based on indie music releases and trends alone, I would say it was a more than a decent way to end the “decade from hell.”

Animal Collective released its most accessible album to date with a companion EP to top it off. Bands like Real Estate, Julian Lynch and Ducktails emerged onto the scene to create a new wave of droney, lo-fi.

The year proved to be the hallmark of genre-labeling with the birth of the blog-created “glo-fi” pinned to groups like Neon Indian, Washed Out and Delorean. And, of course, the sudden late fascination with southern rap remixes by abstract electronic musicians – i.e. Salem and Diplo remixes of Gucci Mane, the ATL RMX mixtape release.

So what can we expect from 2010?

Baltimore-bred Beach House will release its third album, *Teen Dream*, in late January from their new label Sub Pop. Beach House has already leaked the song “Norway” from the album, and judging from the tune, the band has moved toward more expansive sounds.

Beach House’s first self-titled album and second album, *Devotion*, had them crafting tuneful, slow pop songs with minimal synth and guitar arrangements. *Teen Dream* sounds like it will be more cacophonous and maximal. Even Grizzly Bear lead singer and Beach House friend, Ed Droste, has given the album a stamp of approval since his Twitter days. So it should be something to look forward to.

Those dapper Columbia grads Vampire Weekend will release their sophomore effort, *Contra*, in a couple of weeks. Based on the title alone, I figured they were either moving in a video game, 8-bit synth-electronic direction, or they were applying more Spanish-based percussion into the mix. Either way, Vampire Weekend is always a

band to keep an eye on because there’s no denying how catchy the quartet is.

They’ve leaked two songs from the album: “Horchata” and “Cousins.” “Horchata,” named after the Mexican, rice-based beverage, is a little boring and a step down for VW. But “Cousins” sounds like a bona fide Vampire Weekend-oriented punk song.

Multi-instrumentalist Chaz Bundick, aka Toro Y Moi, has been on the blog radar for the past year now. His *Blessa* 7-inch painted a nice portrait of R&B and psychedelic harmonies similar to the likes of Aaliyah and Panda Bear, respectively. His full-length debut, *Causers of This*, is set to release in late February off of Carpark records.

After making a huge impression at CMJ Music Marathon in New York late last year, South Florida natives Surfer Blood will release their full-length debut, *Astro Coast*, off of Kanine Records. Formerly known as Jabroni Sandwich, the best band name ever, Surfer Blood intend on touring more this spring, even making an appearance at South By Southwest. Their sound, a mix of surf rock and power afro-pop, has been well-received. The album should be out mid January.

Dum Dum Girls, a band essentially run by just one girl, Dee Dee, blends girl-band edge and distortion-heavy garage rock to make something that sounds like a noisy, punked-out version of The Go-Go’s. DDG started about a year ago, believe it or not, and have already been signed to Sub Pop Records. Judging from the *Longhair* 7-inch and the *Yours Alone* 12-inch EP from yesteryear, DDG are a supremely promising band. They’ve played only a couple of live shows, but they’ve already covered The Misfits, so I think they’re standing on good ground right now. Their debut album, *I Will Be*, will be released late March.

COLUMNIST



RYAN MOREJON

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY, JANUARY 4

FAST FOOD NATION



WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 150

CHOSEN GENERATION

General Meeting
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC Cafeteria Annex

OPEN MIND MONDAY



Live art and music for your Monday blues.
WHEN: 9 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Jazid

CAMPUS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

General meeting
WHEN: 11 a.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 314

MIAMI HEAT VS ATLANTA HAWKS



WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10
WHERE: American Airlines Arena

PREKSHA MEDITATION CLUB

Meeting and meditation
WHEN: 4 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 314

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

SPC WELCOME BACK



WHEN: 12 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC Pit

NIGHTDRIVE

Indie dance party with drink and food specials
WHEN: 10 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: American Legion 6445 NE 7 Ave.

LIVE SHOW



WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10
WHERE: Churchill’s Pub

NATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Orientation
WHEN: 10 a.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 314

DANCE MARATHON



Meeting
WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 305

SPC GENERAL MEETING

WHEN: 2:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GL 100

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6

COLLEGE DEMOCRATS



Lecture/reception
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC Faculty Club Lounge

MIKE SUPER

Magic and Illusion
WHEN: 6 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC Ballroom East

BLACK UMBRELLA BOOK CLUB MEETING

WHEN: 12 a.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: AE District 3852 N Miami Ave.

SHARLYN EVERTSZ

Singer/ songwriter
WHEN: 9 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$5
WHERE: Churchill’s Pub

BLACK STUDENT UNION

General Meeting
WHEN: 2:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GL 100

LOCAL FOLK ARTISTS



WHEN: 9 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$5
WHERE: Churchill’s Pub

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

CARIBBEAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION



WHEN: 5 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 150

ANYTHING GOES ANIME

WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 140

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION



Social mixer
WHEN: 6 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC Ballrooms

CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

WHEN: 3 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 140

SHAKE



Food, drink and bass-fueled high jinks
WHEN: 10 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10
WHERE: The Vagabond

DANCE MARATHON

Meeting
WHEN: 2:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 314

Big name sequels dominate 2010's game releases

ASHLYN TOLEDO
Life! Editor

With dozens of new titles on the way, in 2010, including blockbuster sequels and promising new IPs, it's going to be tough to find enough money and time to play them all. These are a look at some of the most anticipated titles on the way to help you plan ahead.

MASS EFFECT 2 - XBOX 360 (JAN. 26)

RPG fans poured countless hours into the first Mass Effect title. With an upgraded combat system, improved AI and new alien races, I don't see how BioWare could disappoint.

MAG - PLAYSTATION 3 (JAN. 2)

Zipper Interactive's Massive Action Game will live up to its name in the form of online matches where up to 256 players compete on a single map in objective-based matches. Aside from these massive battles, The game's main

campaign boasts an 8-player cooperative mode with customizable characters and an in-depth leveling system.

SPLINTER CELL: CONVICTION - XBOX 360, PC (FEB. 23)

Ubisoft is looking to reinvent the Splinter Cell franchise with its fifth installment. A powerful story line and an exciting new co-op mode will hopefully make this one of, if not the best game in the series to date.

FINAL FANTASY XIII - PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 360 (MARCH 9)

The next numbered installment in the Square Enix's famed Final Fantasy series takes place in the visually stunning cityworld of Cocoon and the outerworld of Pulse. The updated Active Time Battle System and in-game cinematics should keep Final Fantasy at the top of the role-playing pack for years to come.

GOD OF WAR III - PLAYSTATION 3 (MARCH)

The epic finale of Sony Computer Entertainment's best-selling hack-and-slash action game has stirred up a lot of hype already. There's almost no chance that this game will flop, especially after seeing the awe-inspiring trailer released at last year's Electronic Entertainment Expo.

STARCRRAFT II - PC (TBA, 2010)

In keeping with Blizzard's reputation for delaying games until they are absolutely perfect, Starcraft II has already been delayed several times. The game was announced in May of 2007 and is currently set to release some time this year. There's no doubt in my mind that, when it finally does release, it will be a perfectly balanced, real time strategy experience.

THE LAST GUARDIAN - PLAYSTATION 3 (TBA 2010)

The trailers for Team ICO's third game are some of the most graphically impressive things I've seen. The group's latest effort will likely bring more of the heartfelt story-telling seen in previous titles, Ico and Shadow of the Colossus, as the story of a young boy and his gigantic, furry guardian unfold.



Final Fantasy XIII

TV favorites return with spring's premieres lineup

LEONCIO ALVAREZ
Staff Writer

The Internet has actually made watching television easier than sitting on your couch and reaching over for the remote. Think about it. Anything from "Are You Afraid of the Dark?" to "Family Guy" can be found as long as you know where to go. This is why it's so easy to catch your favorites nowadays, making no excuse to miss the great shows starting back up this spring.

BURN NOTICE

Not a lot of shows are so action-

packed that they can have a mid-season finale and come back in a couple months. "Burn Notice" is one of those shows that really has no limits. The USA Network will finish off its third season starting Jan. 22 and some fans are still on the edge of their seats from how it ended. That's right, five months on the edge of your seat equals one really good show.

LOST

This story has become way more than just the stranded and the island. ABC's "Lost" is set to make a reappearance for its final season

on Feb. 2 with a two-hour opener. All the confusing time warping and disappearing acts aside, "Lost" is an intense show that epitomizes suspense. The finale of this one should be one to remember.

NURSE JACKIE

Showtime's dark yet extremely funny "Nurse Jackie" returns March 22. The show follows an extraordinarily hectic, work-obsessed Jackie (Eddie Falco from "The Sopranos") who is living a life full of love, lies and drugs ... more emphasis on the latter. If you've been following the drama

and shenanigans happening in this emergency room you probably think "Grey's Anatomy" is simply just a difficult textbook.

PARTY DOWN

Starz is mostly known for playing classic movies, but lately it has been airing a slew of original programs meant to give competing networks a run for their money.

One of these shows, "Party Down" revolves around a cast of crazy caterers who make any party a blast. Without Jane Lynch, who left the show for her role on "Glee," the show suffered a bit

toward the end of season one. But Megan Mullally's ("Will and Grace") addition is sure to fix the harm done by her departure. Rob Thomas and Paul Rudd, creators of this comedy, will be bringing back this party favor in April.

There are plenty of shows set to glue you to a screen this new year. On Jan. 14, "Project Runway's" second time around on Lifetime will begin as well as "30 Rock" on NBC. Fox's "24" brings daily action on Jan. 17 with a two-night premiere and "Damages" on FX makes a triumphant return on Jan. 25.

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Virginia Tech comes up big to end the season

CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Almost four months after opening its season with a loss to a Southeastern Conference team at the Georgia Dome, Virginia Tech returned to show how much it had improved.

The Hokies also showed they'll be a team to watch in 2010.

Ryan Williams capped a brilliant first season with a record-setting game, running for two touchdowns to power the Hokies past Tennessee 37-14 in the Chick-fil-A Bowl on Thursday night.

More than one Virginia Tech player mentioned the team's 34-24 loss to Alabama on Sept. 5.

"We started the season here, and we wanted to finish it strong here," Williams said.

Added receiver Danny Coale: "I was happy to get another chance at the SEC. We wanted to come out and prove something. It was very important that we got another chance on a national stage."

Quarterback Tyron Taylor completed 10 of 17 passes for 209 yards and ran for a touchdown, and Josh Oglesby and David Wilson combined for 67 yards rushing and a touchdown. Jarrett Boykin caught four passes for 120 yards.

All the playmakers are expected back next season. Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer couldn't hide his excitement about the Hokies' future.

"We've got some guys we're proud of," Beamer said.

The Hokies (10-3) took the lead with a field goal in the final seconds of the first half and outscored Tennessee 20-0 in the second half on their way to a sixth straight 10-win season.

The only team with a longer active streak is Texas with nine.

Williams, a redshirt freshman, had 117 yards rushing to become Virginia Tech's single-season leader with 1,655 yards. Williams also set ACC records with 21 rushing touchdowns and 22 total touchdowns this season.

"I just saw green," he said. "When I see green, I take advantage of it."

The Hokies outrushed Tennessee 229-5.

"Ryan was something tonight, particularly at the start of the second half," Beamer said. "We got after them good."

Tennessee's star running back, Montario Hardesty, could not keep up. The senior had 18 carries for 39 yards and a touchdown.

"We got gassed, we got tired," said Tennessee defensive end Chris Walker. "You could tell especially on defense we weren't making plays. ... Ryan Williams is a really great player."

Tennessee quarterback Jonathan Crompton was taken to a hospital after the game because of an undisclosed injury late in the game, a school spokesman said. He wasn't the only loss for the Vols; junior safety Eric Berry confirmed afterward that he will enter the NFL draft.

Tennessee (7-6) was hurt by two turnovers that led to 10 points for Virginia Tech, and a dropped pass that cost the Vols a touchdown.

"For whatever reason, we didn't play well today," Tennessee coach Lane Kiffin said. "I was surprised we weren't able to run the ball better."

Rashad Carmichael intercepted a pass by Crompton in the first quarter to set up Williams' first TD run. Crompton fumbled when sacked by Nekos Brown late in the fourth quarter. John Graves

recovered at the Tennessee 13 to set up Matt Waldron's third field goal, a 22-yarder.

Virginia Tech players dumped a cooler of water on Beamer seconds later. Virginia Tech fans in the sellout crowd of 73,777 cheered, and Beamer raised his fists in response. The Hokies, who won the Orange Bowl last season, have back-to-back bowl wins for the first time.

Williams sat out the fourth quarter with a left ankle sprain. Beamer gave the fourth-quarter carries to Oglesby and Wilson, who had a 3-yard touchdown run with 5:14 remaining.

Williams passed Kevin Jones' school-record record of 1,647 yards rushing set in 2003.

North Carolina's Don McCauley held the ACC records with 19 rushing touchdowns and 21 total in 1970. Clemson's C.J. Spiller matched the total touchdown mark this season. Georgia Tech's Robert Lavette also rushed for 19 touchdowns in 1982.

Williams was voted the game's most outstanding player.

Waldron, who had a 21-yard field goal at the end of the first half, added a 46-yarder — the longest of his career — to push the lead to 27-14 early in the fourth quarter.

Tennessee's had a chance to get back into it, but Denarius Moore dropped a deep pass from Crompton on the Vols' next drive. Kiffin said the play "really took the wind out of our sails."

Crompton was 15 of 26 for 235 yards passing with a touchdown and an interception.

Williams had two short touchdown runs to give the Hokies a 14-0 lead in the second quarter, then Hardesty ran through 301-pound defensive tackle Cordarrow Thompson for a 4-yard score that capped an 80-yard drive.

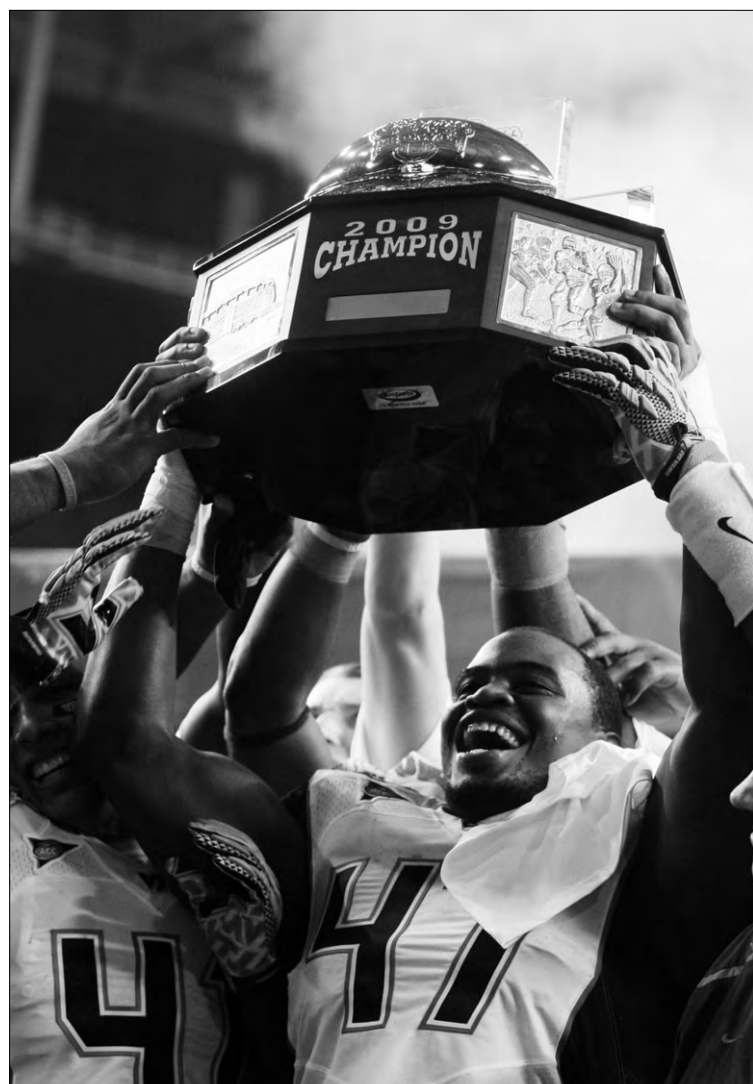


PHOTO COURTESY: ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOY: Virginia Tech's Cam Martin celebrates with his team as he lifts the Chick-fil-A bowl trophy. The Hokies finished the season with 10 wins.

Buddy scores 13 in reserve; Smith leads USA with 16

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us, particularly in the first half when we didn't score for a stretch," USA head coach Rick Pietri told *usajaguars.com*. "They really responded late in the half to send us in tied. I couldn't be more proud of our kids, because FIU is a good basket-

ball team."

The Jaguars were able to maintain their momentum and FIU came no closer than five points the rest of the game.

"There's always space to get better, but [each game] we are getting better. The chemistry is getting better," Gonzalez said.

Companies hope to settle the quarrels that led to standoff

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systems for about five weeks in early 2007. The current agreement had been reached just two days before that year's Super Bowl.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski commended the companies for reaching an agreement.

"This extension ... will avert the frustration that Mediacom customers would have experienced if Sinclair stations had ceased to be available over Mediacom systems," Genachowski said in a statement Thursday.

He said he hopes the companies use the extension time to settle their differences.

Traditionally the networks paid

affiliates to broadcast their shows, though those fees have shrunken to almost nothing as local stations have seen their audience numbers fall.

Because of a fractured audience and dwindling dollars from advertising, broadcasters nationwide have accelerated their push for new revenue to pay for programming.

Roberts drops 29 against the Jaguars

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shot clock down to about 10 to five seconds on each possession throughout the first half, even receiving a couple of shot clock violations.

"Our shot selection in the first half was poor," said Thomas. "Most of the time when you work the ball around, the defending team will have a breakdown in that short period of time that you moved the ball."

Tim Williams led South Alabama with 18 points, followed by forward Martino Brock who had 15 points. Coming off the bench, center Gary Redus had 6 blocks.

Antoine Watson and Martavis Kee chipped in with 7 points each for FIU while Roberts led the team with a career-high 29 points shooting 10-for-21 on the night. He was the only Golden Panther to reach double figures.

"I was just feeling it," Roberts said.

With one more point, Roberts would have been the first player to

score 30 points since Alex Galindo in 2008.

FIU is 1-2 in the Sun Belt Conference with 15 games left, all against conference opponents. The Golden Panthers play eight of them at the U.S. Century Bank Arena in Miami where the team is 2-3 this season.

Thomas had a more up-tempo attitude in the loss against South Alabama, compared to the previous home games played. Early in the first half many of the FIU players were holding light conversations with the officials, when Thomas roared out of his seat and yelled at his players to stop talking.

"I'm trying to get my guys ready for conference play," Thomas said.

A win over South Alabama could have been a turnaround for the Golden Panthers considering that South Alabama is leading the Sun Belt Conference and just came off an impressive win against the No. 18 ranked Florida Gators.

"This loss just really hurts," Coach Thomas said.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Undersized men's team struggles on home court

JOEY CRUZ
Staff Writer

When facing the obstacle of being undersized in almost every game, the FIU men's basketball team must conquer the turnover battle and shoot a high percentage from the three-point line to help balance their lack of presence in the post.

"It's not them playing a certain defense, we're doing this to ourselves," said FIU forward Marvin Roberts.

Three-point shooting has been a major struggle for the undersized Golden Panthers, who have a 26 percent three-point field goal percentage this season.

In FIU's 71-59 loss to conference rival South Alabama on Dec. 31, the Golden Panthers were unable to secure the ball as the Jaguars scored 25 points off 19 FIU turnovers.

"Our inability to take care of the basketball really killed us," said head coach Isiah Thomas. "This is definitely a tough loss for me to swallow."

The first half included 11 Golden Panthers turnovers, which transitioned South Alabama's 18-point swing midway through the first half making it difficult for FIU to rally back after giving up a 31-16 halftime lead.

"We didn't really have a chance to plan our home court," said Thomas. "We came off



VICTORIA LYNCH/BEACON FILE PHOTO

GO HARD: Stephon Weaver looks to score at the rim in a game earlier this season against Murray State.

a long road game stretch and couldn't practice in the arena due to other tournaments."

The struggles from the three-point line did not stop against the Jaguars. FIU shot a mere 35 percent from beyond the arc.

The Golden Panthers were working the

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Agreement is reached to avoid blackouts

NIGEL DUARA
Associated Press Writer

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Football fans will be able to watch college bowl games on Sinclair stations after all, as the broadcaster and the Mediacom cable TV operator agreed to extend by eight days their negotiations over fees.

Sinclair Broadcasting Group is seeking higher rates from Mediacom Communications Corp. to carry its stations. The deadline was extended from midnight Thursday to midnight Jan. 8. During the extension, Mediacom will pay Sinclair a higher rate than it was paying under the contract that expires Thursday.

That means the Orange Bowl game between Iowa and Georgia Tech won't be blacked out Tuesday. Other high-profile contests, such as the BCS national championship game next Thursday, had also been in danger of not being shown to Mediacom subscribers.

"We recognize that several of the impacted markets have college teams that will be playing in the BCS Bowl games," Sinclair spokesman Barry Faber said in a release. "We thought it was important to ensure that our viewers had the opportunity to see those games without inconvenience."

About 700,000 Mediacom subscribers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois,

Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin were at risk of losing Sinclair programming.

The temporary Sinclair-Mediacom deal came as Time Warner Cable Inc. and Bright House Networks remained locked in a bitter dispute with News Corp. over similar fees for carrying the Fox television network and some of the cable channels that News Corp. also owns. That agreement was to expire at midnight Thursday, but the network struck a deal with Time Warner to extend the contract for a few hours, making it appear likely that a deal on fees would be reached.

Despite the Sinclair-Mediacom extension, feelings haven't warmed between the two sides. Faber said Mediacom hasn't been dealing fairly with Sinclair.

"It has been unfortunate that Mediacom has refused to pay fair compensation for our programming, which is much less than what they pay cable channels with far less viewers," Faber said in the release.

Tom Larsen, Mediacom's vice president of legal and public affairs, responded that the comparison was not applicable because cable channels generate far less revenue than broadcast stations.

This is the second time the two companies have been locked in a standoff. Sinclair stations were pulled from Mediacom

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Rodgers' infectious enthusiasm helps Golden Panthers

RODGERS, page 12

"I never looked at it as a downfall. It gave me a whole extra year to work on my game," said Rodgers. "It gave me time to add weapons to my arsenal."

According to teammate Cherisse Buddy, Rodgers almost immediately became a significant leader for the team even though she was usually on the sideline.

Whether it is motivating players or just making people smile with her singing and dancing, she always seems to be making an impact.

"She's always dancing. She's the one that got us to do our 'pre-hype' before the games and she started our warm-up routine," Buddy said. "She's definitely the funniest person on the team. She's very enthusiastic. She's the one that gets us hyped before every game."

"I just can't help it sometimes," said Rodgers. "I just basically took everyone under my wing."

In her first game on Dec. 20, 2009, the sophomore came off the bench to score a team-high 16

points during a road win against North Texas.

"I can't say enough about Rakia," said head coach Cindy Russo in a previous interview. "The level changes when she's out on that court, she is very intense. She's one of the best athletes I have ever worked with."

Rodgers' first game wasn't just a lucky debut.

In the next game, she showed her consistency by again scoring 16 points off the bench in a loss at home to Florida Gulf Coast on Dec. 22.

Since then the offensive threat has continued to show her ability, and has now recorded four straight games in double figures, including a career-high 18 points during a home loss against Georgia Tech just last week.

Rodgers has become a sparkplug in reserve for the Golden Panthers, who rank seventh in the Sun Belt Conference in team scoring. Rodgers has also added another shooter from beyond the arc for FIU, stroking seven 3-pointers in four games.

Although they might not be



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CHANGING PLACES: Rodgers, a former Colonial Athletic Conference's All-Rookie Team member, has pleased her new coach. "The level changes when she's out on that court, she's very intense," Russo said.

attainable this season and it won't be easy, Rodgers has set goals for herself and the FIU team that she is determined to accomplish.

"When I got here the spirit of competition was kind of gone," Rodgers said. "I really and honestly and truly just want to

make this a double-digit win, if not, a 20 win team. I just want to help be a part of that. My goal is to help us win."

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

WORTH THE WAIT

Transfer Rakia Rodgers boosts the Panthers' backcourt



CHRIS ADAMS/THE BEACON

STEADY SCORER: Hofstra transfer Rakia Rodgers has played in four games since gaining eligibility for FIU and has averaged 15.5 points per game off the bench.

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

Rakia Rodgers can make the game look easy.

Whether she's driving toward the basket for a layup, knocking down a shot from behind the arc, or even making a steal on the defensive end, it all seems smooth and with finesse.

However, if you ask the 21-year-old FIU women's basketball player about her life and basketball, she will tell you it has been far from easy.

As a lifelong foster child, Rodgers' passion for the game began not long before entering her freshman year of high school.

Over that summer, she would practice every morning.

No matter what the weather was like or how she was feeling, the teenager would be in front of her neighbor's home, in Virginia Beach, at 5 a.m. sharp to begin her morning workout.

Rodgers had not been playing basketball for a long time, but she had one goal in mind. That was to make the basketball team at Princess Anne High School, and she was determined.

"My neighbors had a goal and they hated for me to use [it] without me

asking, but I didn't care," Rodgers recalled. "I would just go out there and shoot and shoot and the neighbors would complain to my mom because it was so early, but I had to do what I had to do because I wanted to make the team and I wanted to play."

The hard work paid off and she was granted a spot on the team.

Rodgers proved to be successful, earning All-Tidewater and All-State honors along with All-Beach District Honors in her four years.

The athlete's next goal was to attend college, something no one in her family had ever done.

"At first I didn't even know that you could get a scholarship on playing basketball. I didn't find that out until my sophomore year," said Rodgers. "When I found that out is when I decided that I would pursue basketball and college."

In 2007 Rodgers accepted a scholarship to Hofstra University in Long Island, N.Y., where she played one full season, averaging 9.4 points and 5.0 rebounds per game.

Rodgers was named to the Colonial Athletic Conference's All-Rookie team, but even with the success she never really

felt at home while at Hofstra. Soon she decided that it would be in her best interest to transfer to another university.

With offers from schools such as Akron, Alabama, University of Georgia and University of South Florida, the talented player, who says she made her decision mostly due to coaching and her desire for a diverse atmosphere, chose FIU.

"[The coaches] are teaching me so much more than just basketball. Coach [Cindy] Russo has taught me about my demographics as a person, a lot of life lessons," said Rodgers. "I didn't grow up with parents my whole life, I was a foster child, so having someone to take the time to show me the things I couldn't teach myself really means a lot to me."

The only setback for Rodgers, who arrived in Miami nearing the end of the 2008 season, was that due to NCAA transfer regulations, she was forced to sit out the remainder of last season along with the first nine games of this season.

Rodgers never really saw it as a downfall, only as another opportunity to make her game and her team better.

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Jaguars use late scoring run to top Golden Panthers

FIU shot 37 percent from the field and struggled at the foul line

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU women's basketball team was unable to close out 2009 the way it would have liked.

The University of South Alabama, however, was able to celebrate the new year with their fifth consecutive win after defeating the Golden Panthers 61-51 on New Year's Eve at the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

Forward Elisa Carey led FIU (6-8, 1-2 Sun-Belt) with 14 points and 14 rebounds, marking her fourth double-double of the season while Cherisse Buddy had a solid game off the bench, contributing a season-high 13 points and 5 rebounds.

Meanwhile, Morriah Smith led the Jaguars and all scorers with a career-

high 16 points.

The Golden Panthers uncharacteristically struggled from three-point range as they shot just 22.7 percent (5-of-22) while the Jaguars were efficient at 66.7 percent (8-of-12) on the night.

"I think the only trouble we had was that we weren't making shots," said FIU point guard Michelle Gonzalez.

FIU got off to a stagnant start as they trailed 16-9 in the first eight minutes of the game. Buddy, however, came off the bench to lead a 15-0 run for the Golden Panthers.

At the 9:55 mark, the senior guard knocked down a shot from behind the arc to tie the game at 16. She later finished the run with a fast break layup, after making a steal, to put FIU ahead 24 to 16.

South Alabama kept the game close as they tied it at 26 with a Shakira Nettles' 3-pointer at the sound of the buzzer to end the first half.

"We didn't make shots at the beginning and then at the end they were just close," said Gonzalez. "You can't win a game in the last three minutes. You have to go hard from the beginning."

Over the first seven minutes of the second half the teams exchanged baskets, but neither were able to really pull away until the Jags scored 10 unanswered points to go up 49-41 at the 9:23 mark.

Down the stretch South Alabama hit six of its nine attempts from the free throw line and 15-of-19 of them for the night while FIU struggled, making just 6-of-12 for the game.

"I was really concerned about [FIU's] size inside, but for the most part, we did a pretty good job managing it. It was a very opportunistic win for our kids and they really stepped up for

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CHRIS ADAMS/THE BEACON

GOING UP STRONG: FIU forward Elisa Carey looks to score one of her 14 points against a USA defender. Carey was 5-of-9 from the floor and added 14 rebounds.