

1-11-2013

The Beacon, January 11, 2013

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GUN CONTROL

Media coverage of shootings sparks debate

CONSUELO NARANJO
Staff Writer

Helplessness, tears, faces of despair paint the picture of 16 mass shootings last year in the United States, which became viral news in social media around the world.

From Feb. 22 to Dec. 14, 2012, mass shootings around the country left a total of 88 dead and hundreds injured, including children, according to George Zornick, a writer for The Nation.

One week after the tragedy in Newtown, Conn., CEO of the National Rifle Association, Wayne LaPierre, expressed his absolute support for the gun industry.

“The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun,” said LaPierre.

His speech fired up the minds of those who believe that his idea of increasing the distribution of arms to protect private and public services around the country



SETH PEARLMAN/AP IMAGES

People across the country have begun to speak out and share their opinion both for and against guns. They have started to take to the streets and petition for more and less gun control.

is just a justification to increase production in the gun industry, and it will just open doors for more crimes.

Regan Kramer, FIU Wesley Campus Ministry staff, supports the idea of strict gun regulations. “In some European countries

it’s hard to obtain a firearm; for instance, statistics have shown less crime and deaths,” said Kramer.

“We have to find the root

of the problem. More guns in our society are just a representation of increasing danger for our kids and loved ones,” said Susana Benitez, a grandmother of an eight and six years old children.

Additionally, La Pierre described media, music, celebrities and videogames as violence promoters. “There are blood-soaked slasher films like ‘American Psycho’ and ‘Natural Born Killers’ that are aired like propaganda loops on ‘Splatterdays,’” he said.

According to the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ 2009 publication, in the U.S., children between the ages of 8 to 18 years old spend an average of six hours and 21 minutes each day using electronic or print entertainment media. Prolonged exposure to such media can cause physical and mental issues in the child, such as tendency to obesity and violent behavior.

SEE SHOOTING PAGE 4

SGA

Petition launched to expand University’s finance program

JACKIE ROSADO
Staff Writer

The University’s accounting association, Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, has launched a petition that aims to get the University to offer more classes for its finance students.

According to the ALPFA’s president, Martin Falconi, the association is the largest business organization in the University and one of the leading chapters in the nation.

It helps students transition into the business world by helping them find a job or internship. They work with finance, accounting, business and Management Information Systems majors.

The organization holds workshops that help finance students develop the skills necessary to enter the workforce and develop into leaders.

Every Friday, ALPFA brings in accounting and business firms from the Fortune 500 to promote themselves and the internship/job opportunities they have to offer.

The Fortune 500 is the

annual ranking of America’s largest corporations, such as Wal-Mart, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and General Motors.

Finance students are only required to take two basic accounting classes, according to Falconi, while other universities across the U.S. offer three to five courses to choose from.

That is one of the obstacles FIU’s finance students come across when they participate in ALPFA’s career fairs.

“After seeing different recruiters tell us there is a requirement of 12 to 18 accounting credits a finance student needs in order to qualify for internships and top firms, we acted by asking that the University offer more classes for its finance students so they can meet that requirement,” said Falconi.

The classes that ALPFA wants the University to offer include: cost accounting, financial accounting, tax accounting, and financial statement analysis.

Norbert Esquivel, a senior and a member of ALPFA, understands the purpose of the petition and how it will

benefit the students.

“As a member of ALPFA, I understand the predicament that my fellow finance majors are going through. They deserve to have the same opportunities as us,” said Esquivel. “Being an accounting and finance major, this really does not affect me, but for others it isn’t fair that they go through a rigorous course load to end up not getting the proper job offers.”

ALPFA spoke with and gained support from the dean of College of Business, David R. Klock. They still need support from faculty to then take it to the FIU Board of Trustees to be evaluated, which is their next goal.

“I think this is something great that ALPFA has to contribute to the University. It may not affect me directly, but I do support it. More is always better than less, and offering extra classes to the University’s students is definitely something to support,” said Maureen Gonzalez, a junior majoring in public relations.

The College of Business

SEE ALPFA, PAGE 2

GETT’IN DOWN AT THE PIT



ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

SPC welcome weekend continues with music, dancing and panther spirit. Students from different campus organizations were at the pit recruiting and showing off their moves.

SINGING AWAY

ALFONSO YEC/THE BEACON

Pre-Med Society Members Wendy Tamayo and Josh Sixon (left to right) perform a karaoke rendition of Lady Antebellum's 'Need You Now' during the CSO Club Fair. Participants earned a free lunch from Panera.

ALPFA pushing for more classes to be available

ALPFA, PAGE 1

was unavailable for comment as of print time for this story.

Falconi said the organization is currently working on building support to add more courses.

The petition was originally launched at the end of last semester, but it will be relaunched at an orientation ALPFA will be holding at the Graham Center in room 243

on Friday, Jan. 11 at 5:30 p.m.

The petition can be found online at Change.org, a web platform that supports social change and where anyone can post a petition form for people to sign.

The petition is called FIU College of Business and FIU School of Accounting: Add Accounting classes to the core of Finance program at FIU.

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chevy Spark looks electric but runs on gas

ANN M. JOB
AP Staff

Don't be surprised if some people assume the 2013 Chevrolet Spark is another newfangled electric car.

Just 12 feet long and with an aerodynamic front end and abruptly chopped-off rear, the South Korean-built Spark could pass for an electric car.

But there's no plug and no problem with fueling the 2013 version of this Chevrolet, because it comes with a gasoline-sipping, internal combustion, four-cylinder engine. (An electric Spark is planned for 2014.)

While the 2013 Spark doesn't rival the government fuel economy numbers of electric cars, its top government mileage rating of 32 miles per gallon in city driving and 38 mpg on the highway for a manual transmission model put it ahead of many competitors.

For example, the best government mileage rating for the 2013 Honda Fit hatchback, which is similarly sized to the Spark, is 27/33 mpg with manual transmission.

Also of note: The Spark can come with high-tech features such as smartphone integrated navigation, Pandora personalized Internet radio, Stitcher Internet news broadcasts and Bluetooth audio streaming.

New for 2013, the five-door Spark hatchback also is Chevy's only subcompact car and carries the lowest starting retail price of the brand.

Starting manufacturer's suggested retail price, including destination charge, is \$12,995 for a base 2013 Spark LS with five-speed manual transmission and 84-horsepower four cylinder.

The lowest starting retail price, including destination charge, for a 2013 Spark LS with four-speed automatic transmission is \$13,920.

However, smartphone compatibility comes only in higher trim levels starting with the 2013 Spark 1LT, whose starting MSRP, including destination charge, is \$14,595.

In comparison, Chevy's next-largest hatchback — the 2013 Sonic — has a starting retail price of \$15,595 with five-speed

manual and \$16,690 with six-speed automatic.

Meantime, the five-door 2013 Honda Fit starts at \$16,215 with 117-horsepower four cylinder and manual transmission and \$17,015 with automatic.

The 2013 Ford Fiesta hatchback starts at \$14,995 with 120-horsepower four cylinder and manual transmission and \$16,090 with automatic. Top fuel mileage is 29/40 mpg for the 2013 Fiesta SFE model.

Chevy's Spark has seats for four, with a low, plastic area with two exposed cupholders positioned between the two rear seats.

It's actually not apparent, at first, that there are two rear doors for access to these seats.

This is because the doors sit nearly seamlessly into the side styling and door handles are tucked up in the back upper part of the door windows.

Room in these flat-cushioned back seats isn't as bad as feared. There's a full 37.3 inches of headroom in the back seat and more than 35 inches of legroom.

This compares with 37.2 inches of headroom and just 31.2 inches of legroom in the back seat of a Fiesta hatchback.

Indeed, back-seat passenger knees in the Spark don't need to touch the front seatbacks unless a front passenger has his or her seatback reclined a good ways back.

A plus: Rear-door windows go down nearly all the way.

All Spark seats are either cloth or leatherette, and the latter decently mimics the look and feel of a lower-class leather.

Overall, the somewhat barebones nature of the Spark interior is handled with class.

With a pod of gauges seemingly hung on the steering column in front of the driver — and they move up and down when the steering wheel tilt is adjusted — there is an expansive plastic dashboard in front of the driver.

Yet, this area doesn't look boring or low-cost, thanks to styling lines that sweep out toward the windshield and nicely textured plastic.

Even the ceiling material is textured.

The well-sized, 7-inch

display screen that was in the middle of the center stack in the top-of-the-line test Spark 2LT had big enough letters and numbers to make navigation maps easy to see and use.

But there's no covered storage for small items anywhere in the Spark except in the glovebox, which doesn't have a lock.

There's also no tactile feedback when using the display screen buttons.

Cargo space, with back seats in use, is a mere 11.4 cubic feet, which is less than what's in the trunk of a small sedan like a Toyota Corolla.

But there's a more accommodating 31.2 cubic feet in the Spark when split rear seatbacks are folded down.

The ride in the Spark can feel Spartan. The test car hit its bump stops a few times on city street bumps, sending a quick jarring sensation to passengers.

The 15-inch tires got to their limits quickly, and the lightweight, 2,269-pound Spark was buffeted one way and another on windy days.

Passengers heard wind and road noise, and the little, 1.2-liter, dual overhead cam four cylinder roared when pressured to deliver power quickly.

The fuel-efficient nature of this powerplant was quickly apparent during acceleration, as peak torque is just 83 foot-pounds at 4,200 rpm.

This compares with the more spunky Fiesta's 112 foot-pounds of torque at 5,000 rpm.

But the fuel mileage was genuine. In nearly all city driving — and it wasn't gentle driving — the Spark tester averaged 29.4 mpg, which is better than the government estimate. A full tank of unleaded gasoline, therefore, could have lasted for 270 miles and cost under \$30 at today's prices.

A couple nits: The driver seat had a clunky knob to crank to raise seat cushion height, and the rear wiper on the back window is small and doesn't clear the whole view.

There are no crash test ratings yet for the Spark, which comes standard with electronic stability control, traction control and 10 air bags, including bags mounted to the sides of the back seats.

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Professors: An Unused Resource

MICHAEL BAISDEN
Opinion Editor

Frustration occurs in every student's mind when they struggle with class material and search for a place to go to for answers. So many times, they turn to Google, or ask a friend, or in the rarest of occasions, turn to a book.

But many students neglect a resource right in front of them many hours in the week.

A professor, that individual talking endlessly about the subject that doesn't truly hold your interest, is what some people may call an expert on the matter.

Professors make themselves available to students consistently in the hours outlined in their syllabi.

But for some students turning to a teacher may seem inconvenient or unnecessary.

You're rushing to get to the next class, forgot to read chapter three and the class is in an hour and a half, or you haven't eaten all day.

These are all valid reasons to dismiss the office hours, but if you can make the time, you should.

I didn't learn that until my senior year, and I'm not saying I regret the fact, but now that I know the benefits, it just seems silly to disregard someone there to help you.

On my last assignment of fall semester, my professor in my reporting class allowed all of us to do a rewrite.

He went over mine, said I should change the lede, rearrange the story completely and bring it back for the next class.

I went home and made

the corrections he made and a little of my own. When I turned it in, he read it and said that it was A- work.

I walked away thinking, "well damn, if only I'd went to him the whole semester."

No one seems to have the time to do something twice. But if doing a first draft makes a C+ an A-, some extra time should be the least of our concerns.

And with the availability of the professors, it seems to be fair that they look at us with a brow raised when we ask for five chances for extra credit.

Most of us have opportunities to come in before the test and time to visit the tutoring services to edit the research paper.

Then again, maybe you don't. Maybe you have a 30-hour-a-week job, loads of homework, are a member of a club, or have a family to take care of.

But once again the method here is balance. And don't be ashamed, if you can't manage it all don't do it all.

Our professors want us to succeed, they want us to understand the material they're teaching us, but they also want us to reach out and speak up for more knowledge. Professors can only meet us halfway.

We need to take control of the resources we do have, instead of blaming others for pitfalls we could have otherwise overcome with a little vigor.

One thing I've learned from one of my professors here at FIU, it's that you can't sit back and let life happen to you.

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Video Games and Violence: Off-Target Answers

ISAAC ORTIZ
Contributing Writer

After the tragedy in Aurora, Colo. and the devastation in Newtown, Conn., millions of Americans looked for answers.

Parents especially wanted to understand and find the answers as to why gun violence is so persistent in this country.

But often people point a finger at the wrong things when they are desperate for answers.

Many people came to the conclusion that violent video games have made teens more aggressive and even desensitized them to the violence.

My question is: Why?

The violence in video games has nothing to do with the violence someone else committed.

I don't think video games are to blame for the recent shootings. I understand the concept of empathy but to say one man's doing was caused by a source of entertainment is very bold.

This perceived connection between violence and gaming has actually been disproven by a number of research studies.

The Washington Post studied the 10 largest game markets in the world and reported there was "no [evidence of] statis-

tical correlation between video game consumption and gun-related killings."

Of the 10 largest game markets, the U.S. has the most gun-related violence. The figures are incredible and lead me to believe that the games aren't the problem.

There are some other issues going on here, and the solution isn't taking away little Timmy's "Call of Duty".

This is an argument based on a difference of perspective and values.

The video game industry, just like the movie industry is rated.

If parents decide to let their children play a gory

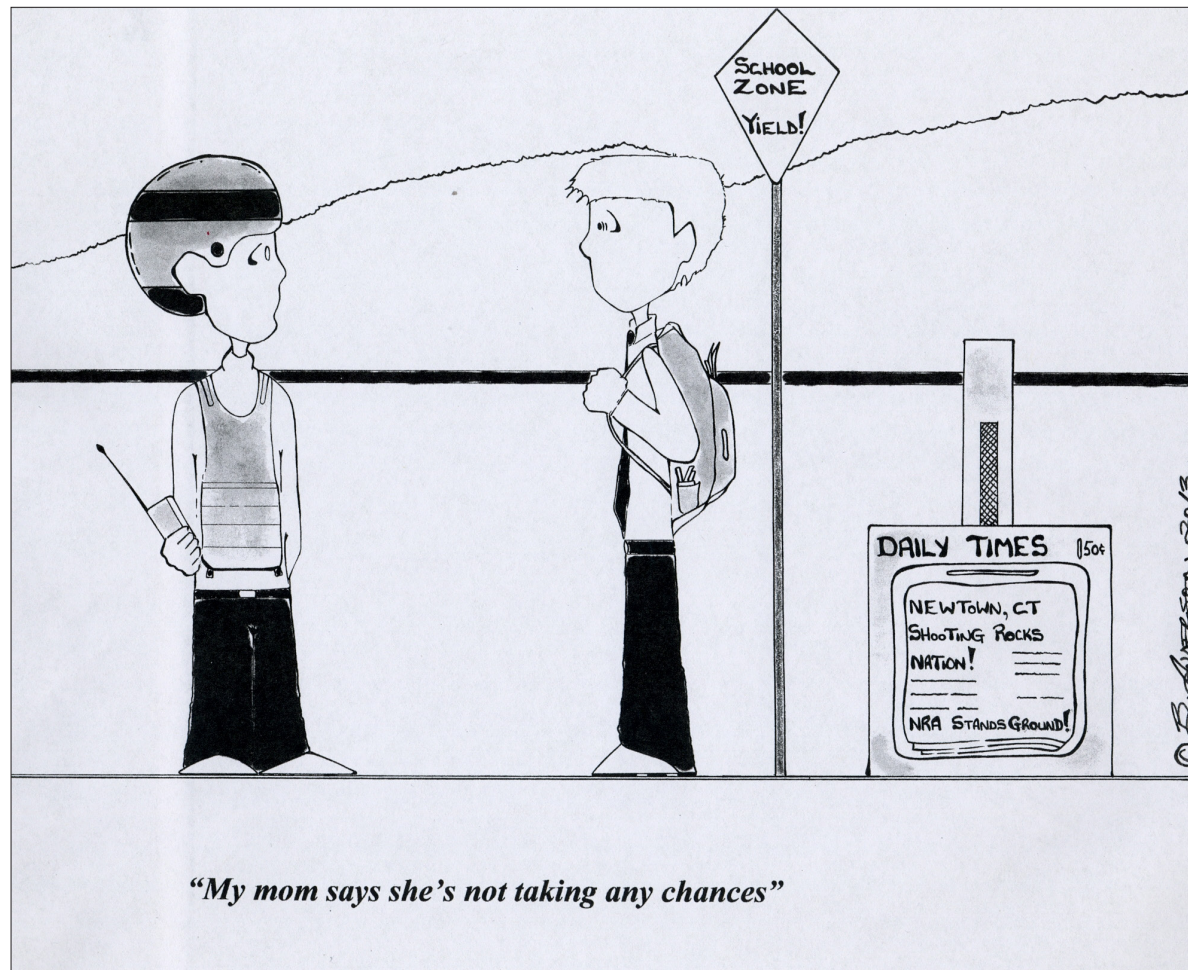
and violent game that is clearly labeled for adults only, then the parent shouldn't complain. Instead of saying, "Violence is too much for children...Games are to blame," parents should learn to protect their own kids.

Every day millions of people look for answers during times of tragedy. People often want the simple answer to their questions.

The truth is the answer is never simple. It's a combination of various factors: political, cultural, moral, and personal.

-opinion@fiusm.com

TAKING EXTRA PRECAUTIONS



"My mom says she's not taking any chances"

ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN ANDERSON/THE BEACON

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Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to jonathan.szydlo@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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REEL TO REEL

Calling all film critics: your chance is here!

With a fine year in film now gone and a new year full of new films approaching, it's the perfect time for those who love talking about movies to get to work.

COLUMNIST



JUAN BARQUIN

Whether you're new to the world of film criticism or you think of yourself as a regular Pauline Kael, it's time to sharpen your knives because in comes the season for competition.

No, it's not the Oscars or the Golden Globes, although everyone surely has their bets placed for those already, but something that allows anyone who loves to talk about movies to participate.

The Miami International Film Festival, now in its thirtieth year, has opened up an amazing opportunity for students this year. In addition to their student filmmaking competition "CinemaSlam," the festival is introducing the Miami Future Cinema Critics program.

Offering the chance for both video and written word film bloggers, the MFCC will be selecting a group of seven Miami writers to watch a special playlist of films curated by the MIFF programming team.

Of these eight to ten features, the MFCC

will decide on a "best film" together and offer one lucky filmmaker the chance to have their feature known as the Miami Future Cinema Cinema Critics Best Film of 2013.

Michael Bay might be delivering another trash hit this year, but the MFCC gives anyone from ages 21 to 30 a shot at looking into movies outside of everything commercially released in the US. The age range and the option of either written or video film criticism allows for a wide competition, so be sure to submit your best application.

Even the application process is as simple as can be. It is comprised of a cover letter, resume, proof of past or current undergraduate study and three writing samples of 500 words or three audio/video samples limited to two and a half minutes.

More information on that can be found online at the MIFF website. MiamiFilmFestival.com, under the Miami Future Cinema Critics tab.

So students, call your friends or don't to lower the competition, but get out there and gather up your application because the deadline is Friday, Jan. 18. With the festival only a few months away, it's a deadline those interested will be as keen to remember as this film critic is.

'Me' generation to face trouble in the workplace, experts say

HUMILITY, PAGE 4

Keys also admits that students were incredibly more focused years ago.

"They kind of had to be [involved]," said Keys. "You had more one-on-one contact with them."

Although Keys is unsure of what has created our generation into one of self-indulgence, it is differences such as these that could contribute to the overall effect. Keys feels a humility course being taught at Yale is a bit obscure and feels it is something that cannot be taught.

"It's like trying to teach someone ethics," said Keys. "It's like going back to the Golden Rule."

According to Keys, humility is something

that you are raised with, not taught.

Freddy Pires, a freshman finance major, sheds light on his feelings of our generation.

"Our generation is incredibly self-indulgent," said Pires. "I believe that this has been brought on not only by social media but also by the public school system. The 'everyone's special in their own way' idea that public school teachers are required to abide by has ruined our generation."

He added that students would rather be praised for doing something in a mediocre way than receive no praise for excelling.

"Our generation no longer holds intrinsic value in doing something out of self-determination," Pires said.

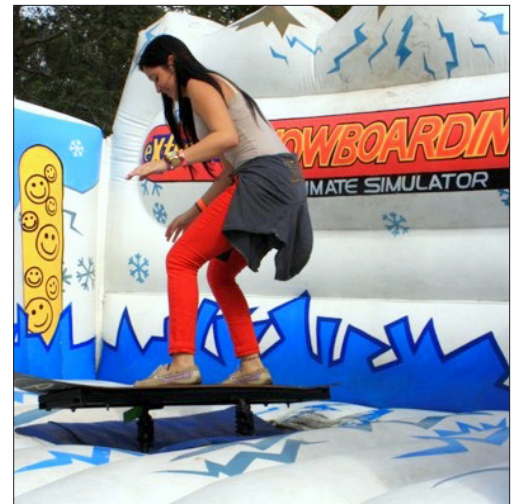
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WARM WINTER



PHOTOS BY EMILY ADAMS/THE BEACON

The Winter Carnival took place outside at the GC lawn. The carnival offered fun snacks that included, funnel cakes, cotton candy and popcorn. There was a slide, snowboarding and henna tattoos for students to enjoy a little time off from this first week.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS SPRING 2013

FRIDAY, JAN. 11

LAST DAY FOR STUDENTS TO APPLY FOR A SHORT TERM LOAN
WHEN: 12:05 a.m.-11:55 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC PC 125

BLACKBOARD LEARN STUDENT ORIENTATION
WHEN: 10-11 A.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC PC 414

GAME DAY
WHEN: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: BBC WUC Panther Square

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE - FACULTY EXHIBITION
WHEN: 6:30-9:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Miami Beach Urban Studios

SUSTAINABILITY 101 TRAINING
WHEN: 12-1 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC PG5 P&T Conference Room

PROGRAM II: TRADITION AND INNOVATION
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$20 - \$175
WHERE: Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County

SATURDAY, JAN. 12

3RD ANNUAL EVERGLADES EXCURSION
WHEN: All Day
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Everglades National Park

FIU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AT UALR
WHEN: All Day
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Little Rock, Ark

SPRING 2013 BROWARD PINES CENTER
WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Broward Pines Center Main Lobby

GREEN CRITICS' LECTURE SERIES
WHEN: 4-11:45 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC Frost Art Museum

FIU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AT ARKANSAS STATE
WHEN: 4:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Little Rock, Ark.

SECOND SATURDAY ART WALK
WHEN: 6 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: Wynwood Art District

SUNDAY, JAN. 13

MORIKAMI MUSEUM & JAPANESE GARDENS TRIP
WHEN: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: BBC WUC 141

GENERIC BSN INFORMATION SESSION
WHEN: 9:30-11 a.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: BBC AHC3-121

PLEASURES OF THE PALATE
WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$250
WHERE: La Gorce Country Club

BUDDY VALASTRO
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$38.50 - \$87.50
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach

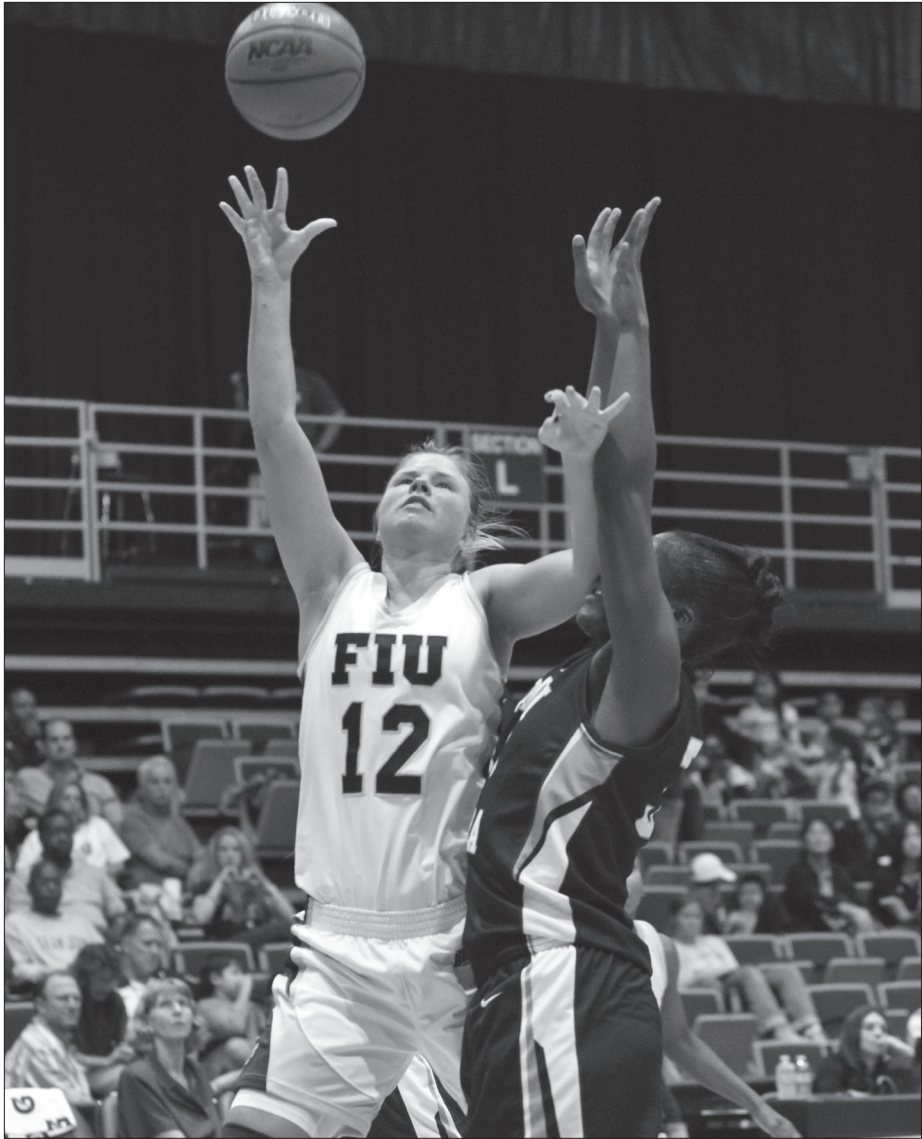
FEMI KUTI
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$30
WHERE: Grand Central

BACKYARD BOOGIE
WHEN: Daily
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Wood Tavern

To have your event featured, email us at
calendar@fiusm.com

PROFILE

No language barriers in basketball for Russian transfer



JONATHAN SEGAL/BEACON FILE PHOTO

Marita Davydova (left) is averaging 10 points and a team-leading 8.6 rebounds per game in her junior year.

RUBEN PALACIOS
Staff Writer

Marita Davydova was an MVP in high school, led her basketball team to the Russian Junior Championship three years in a row and represented her country during the Under-20 European Championships in summer 2012.

The 6-foot-3-inch junior transfer is already an accomplished basketball player, but now Davydova can add something else to her list of achievements: being the starting center for the FIU women's basketball team despite it being her rookie season at FIU and in the states.

"We knew she could play here," said Head Coach Cindy Russo. "We knew that she could give us quality time but I don't know if we could have expected this much."

Just 12 games into her FIU career, Davydova plays a huge role on the team. The Moscow native currently ranks second on the team in scoring at 10.3 points per game and leads the team in rebounding at a rate of 8.7 rebounds per game.

"I wanted to be a part of the team right away and do my best," Davydova said.

Basketball, however, was not her first sport. Her first passion was swimming. She began swimming at 5 years old and loved it. She picked up a couple of more sports before turning to basketball too. As a young child, she started to play tennis and the weather in Russia helped facilitate ice skating for a while.

"From when I was 5 years old, I had a schedule," Davydova said. "I would wake up and go to kindergarten, then after that my father would pick me up and I would go to the swimming pool and then I would go play tennis."

Finally, when she was 10 years old Davydova picked up a basketball, an inevitable considering

her family had so much history with the sport. Both her father and brother are referees for the International Basketball Federation and her father called an Olympic finals game. Her mother played for the Russian National team as well.

"I have a sports family. So everyone knew that I would go to basketball," Davydova said.

It is common for European basketball players to aspire to play basketball in America, but this wasn't necessarily Davydova's approach. She never thought about playing in the U.S. because she enjoyed playing at home so much.

That changed one day when a former FIU player, Sasha Melnikova, wrote to Davydova and expressed how much she enjoyed FIU. Melnikova talked about how great the coaches were and that the team was good. This was enough to gain some interest from Davydova, who looked into this transition.

Once she decided on the move, though, her fears became apparent.

"I was afraid about studying. How could I study in a foreign language?" Davydova said.

Once Davydova arrived at FIU, she was quickly overwhelmed with all the help she received with her studies. She had a tutor for every course and the transition to studying in a foreign place became easier.

Looking back at it now, Davydova smiles because her fear of a language barrier has vanished.

"I like [Miami] very much, but at the time I was afraid and my parents were afraid," she said. "My mom would say, 'How are you going to go to another country with a foreign language nobody will understand you? What will you do?'"

Davydova has quickly become part of the women's basketball family. She gets her fair share

SEE DAVYDOVA, PAGE 7

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Tymell Murphy lays down the law on the court

KEVIN CASTANEDA
Staff Writer

Murphy's Law states that, "Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong."

Tymell Murphy, the starting forward for the FIU men's basketball team, learned that the hard way. He recorded zero rebounds in a brutal loss to Middle Tennessee, the No. 1 team in the Sun Belt Conference, on Dec. 29.

"I wanted to make sure coming into the New Year, I would rebound a lot more," Murphy said.

Murphy did just that by channeling his rage into three straight double-double games during a three-game home stand. The most impressive came against Florida A&M University on Jan. 2, when he pulled down a whopping 20 rebounds and scored 24 points.

"I think he was upset. He got zero rebounds against Middle Tennessee State University. Then he comes back against FAMU and gets 20 rebounds, and I think he tasted success," said Head Coach Richard Pitino. "He's a guy who's tasting success right now and he likes it."

Murphy did more than just score and rebound over the three-game stretch. He was an efficient beast on the floor. He shot a 67 percent from the field and 75 percent from the three. He also tallied eight blocks, with five coming against the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Jerome Frink, the team's starting center, could not be more pleased with Murphy's performance.

"He's been a big boost because he's grabbing rebounds, making plays and scoring, so that helps take pressure off the other players," Frink said.

Even with all the success, he knows he has room for improvement. He is averaging more than two turnovers a game, which at times was detrimental to the team.

"Coach wants me to work on protecting the ball when I drive to the basket," Murphy said.

If Murphy can continue his hard work ethic, he will make sure that anything that can go wrong for his opponents will go wrong.

HOME AT LAST

The last time the Panthers

won three consecutive games was during the 2010-11 season. If someone wanted to see the last time they won three straight home games, they would have to travel back a decade to the 2002-03 season.

The most astonishing part of the Panthers' winning streak is that just over a week ago the team looked depleted from their six-game road trip. They finished 2-6 and were blown out by University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University and Middle Tennessee State University.

"Certainly scheduling didn't help us going on the road six games in a row being almost gone for the whole month and playing very good opponents to go with that," Pitino said.

Pitino finds the answer for the team's revitalization to be relatively simple.

"You're sleeping in your own bed. You're not traveling. I think traveling wears on your legs a little more than people understand," Pitino said.

BREAK-EVEN POINT

The team is at the midway point of the season and is back

to a .500 record (7-7) after its Monday win over Bethune-Cookman University. After 14 games last year, FIU was a paltry 4-10.

Breaking even on the season leaves the team ranked seventh in the SBC out of 12 teams. They are currently beating the preseason coaches' poll prediction, released on Oct. 24, 2012. The Panthers were picked to finish second to last in the conference.

Pitino, who was never phased by the prediction, feels that his team is progressing and playing as he expected. Though that does not mean he is complacent with where they currently are.

"I always tell these guys to

worry about winning the next game. Certainly we want to do much better than be at .500, that's not a goal of ours to be at .500," Pitino said.

The team has no problems winning at home, as they are currently 4-2 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena. Pitino is aware of this success, and hopes to continue to build on it.

"I think this place is a special place," Pitino said. "I think the sky's the limit with this place, our kids love going to school here. They love being in South Florida so there's no reason why we can't continue to build."

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HALFWAY THERE

(Stats after 14 out of 29 games)

2012-2013

- 7-7 (2-3 SBC) overall record
- 7th place out of 12 teams
- 69.6 overall points per game

2011-2012

- 4-10 (1-1 SBC) overall record
- Finished last place at the end of the season
- 61.3 overall points per game

Ribi, among others, breaks multiple records

SWIMMING, PAGE 8

“When I race, I don’t really think about how tired I am, I just focus on going out and winning every race,” Perez said about her record breaking performance.

Perez’s performances over the winter break earned her two consecutive Sun Belt Conference Swimmer of the Weeks awards.

She then took those awards home to her native Barcelona, Spain and hung them at her grandfather’s home.

“My grandfather is no longer with us so it means a lot to bring those awards home to honor him but it also reminds me that I can win events at Conferences this year, something I wasn’t able to do last year,” Perez said.

That meet was followed by a winter training trip to Key Largo where the team was split into two to compete against each other throughout the week and help keep the competitive edge they will need to win the Sun Belt Conference this year.

The team then placed second at the Orange Bowl Swim Classic, finishing behind only Michigan, a powerhouse team for many years now.

“Swimming top caliber teams like Michigan and West Virginia was a great experience for the team, especially over the holiday training sessions,” Horner said.

The New Year was then welcomed with a team victory at the FIU Winter Invitational the University hosts every year over teams like Texas Christian University, who is ranked seventh nationally.

“We’re very pleased with the team this year, and a lot of work that was done at the start of the season is paying off now and the team bonding is evident,” Assistant Coach Ignacio Gayo said.

With the toughest part of the season over with now, the team is in perfect position to meet their expectations and end a season that will go down as one of the best in FIU’s history.

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PANTHER OF THE WEEK



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEX J. HERNANDEZ/FIU SPORTS

Tymell Murphy dominated with 48 points, 25 boards, 6 blocks and a .541 FG percent in his last two games.

Nissen: “I see her becoming a tremendous power for us...”

DAVYDOVA, PAGE 6

of fun poked at her, the majority coming from Coach Russo.

“Her nickname is ‘Smiles A Lot,’” Russo said. “There are moments where you usually see stress in peoples’ face and you look at her and she just smiles.”

Maybe Davydova is always happy because she has the potential of playing out her dream here in the states.

“It really is my dream to play basketball,” Davydova said. “I live in the now. I don’t think about the future, I live for today. So I enjoy the day and I am enjoying my life. I am really happy that I’m here at this university and on this team.”

As far as continuing her dream of playing professional basketball, she has a couple of experienced basketball minds that see that potential in her.

“I think she can go to the next level for sure,” Russo said. “She has good hands. She is physical. She has good size and has a nice touch on the ball. Those are all things you can’t teach.”

“She is going to be an awesome player,” said associate head coach and member of the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame Inge Nissen. “I see her becoming a tremendous power for us before she is done here.”

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

Saban restless in a way rest of us are not

JIM LITKE

AP Sports Columnist

At some point, this much success should have brought joy, or at the very least, a deep sense of satisfaction. It’s only made Nick Saban chase each win more relentlessly than the last.

If nothing else, it will be interesting to see him try to top this one.

Alabama’s Crimson Tide slipped on the BCS crown for the third time in the last four years Monday night, crushing Notre Dame 42-14 and almost as impressively, forcing a wide grin from its often-unsmiling coach. Small wonder.

The win was Saban’s fourth national championship, which left him tied with Notre Dame’s Frank Leahy for second on The Associated Press’ all-time list, and behind only Paul “Bear” Bryant, the most famed of his predecessors at Alabama.

“It’s not about me,” he said insisted afterward. “It’s about seeing all those people being happy and proud of what this team was able to accomplish.

“That’s the thing that makes me happy and whether I look it

or not,” he added, cracking what might have been his second grin of the night, “I’m happy as hell.”

For the next 24 hours or so.

“Just because we won the national championship doesn’t mean you don’t have to go do the right things the right way at the right time like you’re always supposed to. ... So,” he continued a moment later, “we’re going to help them do that starting Wednesday.”

The weekend before the title game, more than a few people wondered whether Saban might finally open up, the way Urban Meyer did while still coaching at Florida a while back, the way some of his peers have when their legacy, like Saban’s, was secured. He did — just not the way most expected.

He began with a story about inheriting his uncompromising work ethic from a father that he and everyone else in their tucked-away corner of West Virginia always called “Big Nick.”

“There was a bum that used to come to my dad’s service station early in the morning because he’d give him free coffee and doughnuts,” Saban said. “We had had a tough game the night before, I don’t remember whether it was

basketball game, a football game or whatever. The guy was giving me a hard time and I sort of sassed him. I was 17 years old. I got the strap right on the spot.

“It was the right thing,” he added quickly. “I needed to learn a lesson. I was disrespectful to an older person, regardless of the situation.”

Saban rarely comes off as a man who speaks from the heart. More often, he sounds like someone cobbling together bits and pieces culled from a shelf’s worth of books on motivational speaking, which Saban happens to have turned into a lucrative sideline. Maybe that’s what made the story he told about his father seem even more revealing when the subject came up a day later.

This time, the lesson was not about respect, but about always striving for “a standard of excellence, a perfection.” Saban recalled being 11 years old, already working at that same service station by then. His responsibilities ran the gamut from pumping gas and collecting the cash to checking the oil and tires, and finally, washing the cars.

“I hated the navy blue and black cars, because when you

wiped them off, the streaks were hard to get out. And if there were any streaks when he came,” Saban paused, referring to “Big Nick” again, “you had to do it over.”

Sports is not the only place where the father-son dynamic ignites a spark of ambition that grows and grows until it becomes a consuming flame. And there are men like Saban atop every profession. They clamber up the ladder without regard for consequences, treating each job like an audition for the next one. His story is instructive that way.

Saban played defensive back at Kent State, despite standing only 5-foot-6, and the determination he showed won him a job as a graduate assistant there in 1972. Next came a half-dozen more stops as an assistant — including a season with the NFL’s Houston Oilers — before Saban landed his first head-coaching job at Toledo in 1990. He brought the school a Mid-American Conference title in his only season there, bailing out to become defensive coordinator with the NFL’s Cleveland Browns under then-coach Bill Belichick.

In the ensuing 15 years, Saban burned through three more jobs, each one good enough to be

considered a “destination” among his peers — first Michigan State, then LSU, where he won his first national title, and finally with the Miami Dolphins.

Instead of feeling like he’d arrived, Saban remained restless in a way the rest of us are not. After two years, including his first losing season as a head coach, he flat-out denied he was leaving for the vacant job at Alabama — and then lit out for Tuscaloosa three weeks later.

That was 2007, and Saban is still there six seasons later, longer than his tenure lasted anywhere else. He’s been so successful he not only owns the town and the state; he’s even won over the fans and alumni who used to insist no coach deserved the Crimson Tide job without a connection to Bryant.

Some of the most stubborn have made that connection themselves now, mentioning Saban in the same sentence with Bryant, and adding the “D-word (dynasty)” at the end that was once reserved for Bryant as well.

Saban’s counterpart, Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly, said his colleague’s success made quibbling over descriptions irrelevant.

SWIMMING

Swimming team stays hot despite icy winter break



ANDRES BEDOYA/BEACON FILE PHOTO

The Panthers will host Central Connecticut today at home. The meet will start at 6 p.m. at the BBC Aquatic Center.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Briton gets 33 months for weapons-to-Iran plot

JUAN CARLOS LLORCA
AP Staff

A federal judge sentenced a British businessman to nearly three years in prison Wednesday for trying to buy surface-to-air missile parts from undercover U.S. agents to resell to Iran.

Christopher Tappin, 66, pleaded guilty in November to aiding and abetting to export defense materials in a deal that opened the door for him to serve part of his sentence in Britain near his ailing wife. U.S. District Judge David Briones in El Paso said Wednesday that he would recommend that the U.S. Department of Justice approve any request by Tappin to be transferred to the United Kingdom.

Tappin read a brief statement during the sentencing hearing in which he apologized for the crime.

"I regret my actions and the impact they had on my family," he said. "I am looking forward to putting this incident behind me and returning to my previous unblemished life and my wife."

As part of the plea deal, prosecutors agreed not to oppose any request by Tappin to serve part of his 33-month sentence in Britain. Along with approval from the Department of Justice, Tappin also needs approval from the British government to serve time in one of its prisons.

In 2006, Tappin associate Robert Gibson contacted a company set up by undercover U.S. agents to buy batteries for surface-to-air missiles. U.S. authorities alleged Tappin provided undercover agents with false documents to deceive authorities and circumvent the requirement for the batteries to be licensed by the U.S. government before being exported.

"We hope this sends a message to people that are selling defense materials that we monitor sales and shipments, and that we are watching," federal prosecutor Greg McDonald said Wednesday.

The judge dismissed charges of conspiracy to illegally export defense articles and

conspiracy to conduct illegal financial transactions. Tappin must also pay an \$11,357 fine, the amount he would have profited from the sale.

Tappin must report to prison by March 8. His lawyers asked that he be allowed to report to a Pennsylvania prison, something the judge said he did not oppose. Tappin will likely spend six to nine months in the United States before being sent back to Britain, Tappin's attorney, Dan Cogdell, said. There, he will serve no more than half of the remaining sentence, Cogdell said.

"I look forward to returning home to be near my friends and family, and especially my sick wife," Tappin said afterward.

Tappin fought extradition to the United States for two years until being denied a petition to take the case to Britain's Supreme Court. His extradition touched a nerve in Britain among those who believe extradition arrangements with the United States are unfairly weighted against British citizens.

After he was brought to Texas in February,

Tappin was held at the Otero County Jail for about two months, where he initially was put in solitary confinement at his request. Tappin

was later released on bond in April and has since lived near his lawyer's house in a gated community in Houston.

OSCAR BALDIZON
Contributing Writer

It may be winter but the FIU women's swimming team is heating up at the right time.

After a winter break filled with a training trip to the Keys, three meets against top tier competition, and countless yards swam, the team is on track to meet and exceed the expectations they put on themselves at the beginning of this season.

The mission from the get go this year was to go out and win FIU's first Sun Belt Conference championship in swimming and diving.

The winter break started off with the team's most important meet of the first semester, the Mizzou Invite.

The team enjoyed a weekend where it broke five FIU swimming records and had 42 finishes on the Panther all-time top-ten list. Marina Ribí broke her 200 fly record for the second time this

season and Sonia Perez broke her 400 IM record by blowing everyone else in the pool away with a seven second win margin over second place.

"Overall, for a mid season event, I feel this is exactly what we needed to accomplish to stay right on track for that Conference Championship we're aiming for," Head Coach Randy Horner said.

The Panthers continued their winter success at the Nova Southeastern Invitational in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Perez broke her third record of the season with a first place finish in the 1000 Freestyle.

She beat everyone by more than six seconds, but that wasn't even the most amazing part of the performance.

The team had practiced for two hours earlier that morning, lifted weights, and then traveled to the meet before Perez broke the record.

SEE SWIMMING, PAGE 7

A FEAST FIT FOR PANTHERS



SANA ULLAH/THE BEACON

On Jan. 9th, Campus Life at Biscayne Bay Campus hosted a free brunch in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms for students and faculty. From fruits and eggs to pastelitos and sandwiches of all types, the line wrapped around the outside hall to the stairs. Not only was there a complimentary meal, but University President Mark B. Rosenberg was there to greet each and every person in line before they received their brunch.

DINING EVENTS SCHEDULE

Tuesday Dinner:

Feb. 5, 12, 26
March 19, 26
April 9

Wednesday Lunch:

Feb. 6
March 6, 27
April 17

Thursday Lunch:

Jan. 31
Feb. 14, 28
April 4, 11

Friday Lunch:

Feb. 8
March 1, 22
April 5, 19

Reservations can be made by calling
Roger Ledesma : 305-919-4526
Lunch begins at noon, 6 p.m.
for dinner.

\$18 for appetizer or salad, choice
of entree, dessert, coffee and
a glass of wine.