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Egypt's President forced to step down

REBECA PICCARDO
Staff Writer

Last Wednesday, Egypt's military forced Mohamed Morsi to step down from his position, and was placed on house arrest along with members of the Muslim Brotherhood after a series of anti-Morsi demonstrations and a 48 hour ultimatum to order reformers and offer concessions to the opposition.

University professors and students responded to these events with mixed feelings.

"Undoubtedly, the events of the last week have hurt the concept of Egyptian democracy for many Egyptians, particularly those who voted and still back President Morsi," said Reza Sanati, professor and graduate fellow at the Middle East Studies Center.

In a television announcement on Wednesday, Gen. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi announced that the military

has suspended the constitution has called for new elections.

"Many of his supporters do not accept the notion that Morsi was 'abusing his power,' while those opposing him do hold that view," said Sanati.

The military set up a provisional government, in which Adly Mansour, the chief justice of Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court, was sworn in as the new president on Thursday live on television.

A date for the new elections has not been set yet.

"It is important that the new interim government reaches out to the Muslim Brotherhood and incorporate it into new elections and the rewriting of the constitution," said professor Russell Lucas, associate professor of Arab Studies in Michigan State University and former FIU faculty member.

Three of the six appointees that Mansour announced

on Sunday were from the military.

"The military responding to popular demonstrations calling for Morsi to step down sets a dangerous precedent and it will make the consolidation of democracy more difficult in Egypt," said Lucas.

This is the second time the military has forced a president out of office in the past two years.

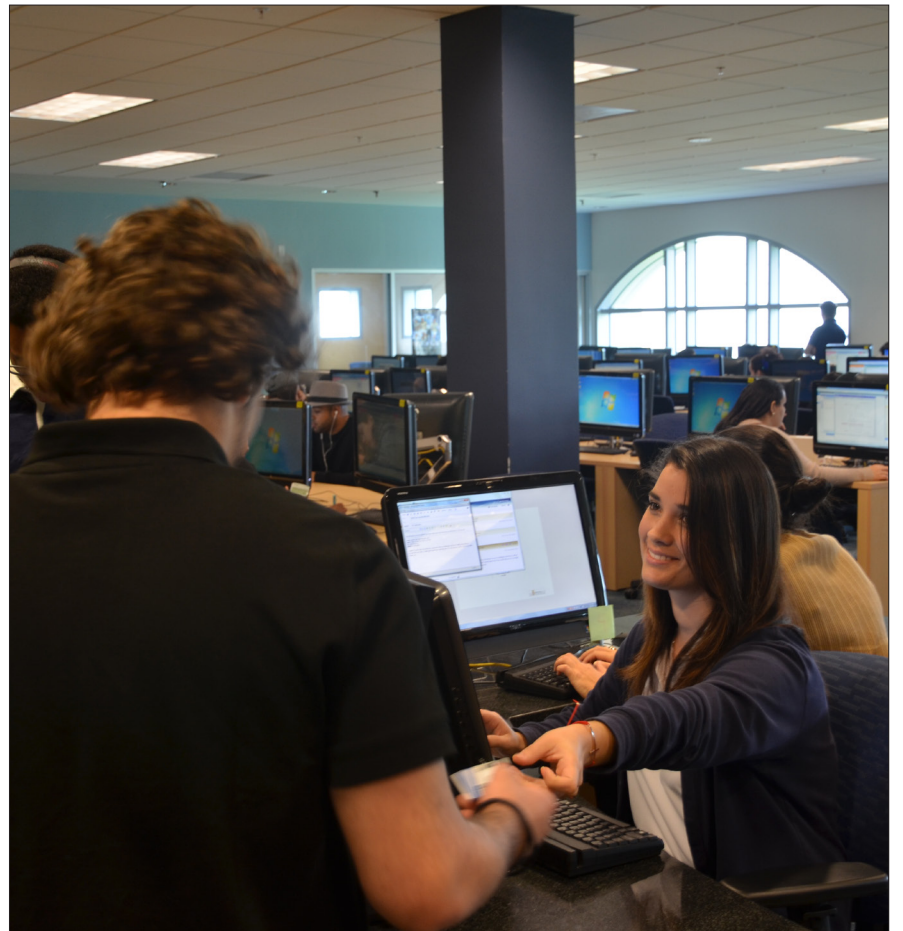
According to Sanati, the military intervention in Egyptian politics will invariably add a new element to the post-Mubarak Egypt.

"Many analysts and academics, collectively with Egyptian society, thought that in the post-Mubarak era, the politics of the country would be decided by the ballot box," said Sanati. "This move by the military was clearly in direct contravention of that."

After Mubarak was forced

SEE EGYPT, PAGE 2

MATH HELP



BEACON FILE PHOTO

With the help of the University's Mastery Math Lab, the pass rate for 2012 College Algebra has increased to 52 percent. Evelin Urdaneta helps students check-in and use equipment in the lab.

Texting while driving ban effective starting fall

CARLOS COBA
Contributing Writer

Twenty-five percent of American teens respond to a text message at least once each time they drive, according to the U.S. government's official website for distracted driving.

Judging by that statistic, texting while driving should be a common sight at the University. When Assistant Chief of FIU Police Alphonse Ianniello was asked if he saw any texting while driving around campus, he said he personally did not.

However, students said

they witness their peers texting and driving often.

"I see people texting and driving all the time on campus," said Roberto Lopez, junior computer science major. "It's usually in the parking garages, which is especially bad considering the amount of blind corners as well as the pedestrians you see walking around all the time."

On October 1, 2013, Senate Bill 52 will make texting while operating a moving vehicle a secondary offense. This means that a driver can be fined for texting while committing a moving

traffic violation, a primary offense.

First time offenders will receive a \$30 fine. A driver who is fined for a second time within five years will receive a \$60 fine and accumulate up to three points on his or her license.

Some people question the bill's effectiveness because of the complications behind determining whether a driver was actually using their phone to text at the time of the infraction.

"How would police officers differentiate between a message received at the same

time [that was] not read, and one that [is] actually answered at the time?" said Andrea Padrón, senior biology major.

The bill's answer to this question is to check phone records when the driver challenges the officer's claim that he or she was texting while committing a moving violation.

Section 1, part 6(c) of SB52 says that during the process of determining whether a driver was typing any text while driving, authorities may use billing records from the driver's phone or use evidence from the "appro-

priate authorities receiving such messages."

Under very specific circumstances, one's phone bill records may be used as evidence in a Florida traffic court.

Requesting such private documents comes into place if one decides to go to court to challenge the ticket and is able to prove that no text went through at the time of the infraction.

In that case, it is a question for the judge to decide.

"A police officer couldn't get your records unless they are subpoenaed by a judge,

which might seem excessive when dealing with a secondary offense," said Dan Dawson, press secretary of the Florida Senate's Majority Office.

As unlikely as the court submission of one's private communications might be, the topic of the invasion of privacy is currently a popular topic since the National Security Agency's methods of communications surveillance were recently publicized.

Virginia Easley Johnson P.A., managing partner and

SEE TEXTING, PAGE 2

Race not considered a factor in University admission

STEPHAN USECHE
Staff Writer

The University considers a number of factors when it comes to admitting its students; race isn't one of them. Affirmative action, a tool that has helped universities across the country to give equal admission to students of different races, is not used at FIU or other universities in the state of Florida.

According to Howard Wasserman, professor of law, the University does ask the applying students for their race and ethnicity, but can't use that information when it comes to deciding whether or not to admit the student.

"Florida law decided that it will not take race as a factor for admission," said Wasserman.

Even though the Office of Admissions wasn't available to give further information on its admission policies, its records show that for the fall of 2012, 50 percent of the students admitted were Hispanic.

Lexy Feito, junior in programing, is aware of the abundance of this overflowing number of Hispanics in the University.

"It's mostly Hispanics here," said Feito. "I barely see any other ethnicities around campus."

According to the University's 2012 Fact Book, from the 18,013 students admitted to the University last Fall, 13 percent were Black,

4 percent were Asian, less than 0.50 percent were Native American, 18 percent were White, 12 percent were international students and 1 percent were not reported.

Last month, in the Fisher v. University of Texas case where Abigail N. Fisher sued the University for its race-conscious policies, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to have the case go through extended examination by a lower court. Fisher claimed that she was not granted admission to the University due to its affirmative action policy.

States, including Florida, have scrapped affirmative action from its state universities. Back in 1999, Florida's then governor Jeb

Bush issued Executive Order 99-281, which prohibits the use of affirmative action in the state universities.

Affirmative action was also created to provide diversity within an institution. According to incoming FIU student, Kelly Khoury, diversity is what characterizes universities.

"I'm expecting to be exposed to different cultures, languages, beliefs and religions," said Khoury.

President Rosenberg was unavailable to offer information on the University's admission policies.

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WORLD NEWS

Afghanistan arrests former US translator

Afghan authorities have arrested Zakaria Kandahari, a man who served as a U.S. Special Forces translator. He was picked up in the southern city of Kandahar by the Afghan National Directorate for Security, wanted on allegations that he tortured and killed civilians. When he was arrested, Kandahari had three pistols, two fake Afghan National ID cards and seven other false IDs on him, according to the country’s intelligence service.

Cyberspying targets South Korea and US military

The identities of hackers trying to infiltrate South Korean computers to steal U.S. military secrets are not known to researchers. Researchers at McAfee Labs said the malware is designed to find and upload information referring to U.S. forces in South Korea and the word “secret.” The value of any information the hackers have acquired is also unknown. McAfee experts said the hackers have targeted government networks with military information for at least four years.

Haiti hopes to revive tourism

The Haitian government is hopeful in reviving its tourism sector with a Venezuelan-financed \$13.2 million airport and new infrastructure on the southern island of Ile-a-Vache, and an \$8 million development of the historic coastal town of Jacmel. The Ministry has signed off on 15-year tax breaks and exemptions from import duties for 11 hotel and resort projects. It is also training a force of “tourism police officers” who will learn Spanish and English and be trained in first aid and customer service.

Courtesy of Associated Press

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

Professors develop quick delivery of anti-HIV drug

AARON PABON
Staff Writer

Two University researchers, with the assistance of two graduate students, have developed a new way for the anti-HIV drug azidothymidine triphosphate to enter the body: through the brain.

The discovery has been made by Madhavan Nair, a professor and chair of the department of immunology, and Sakhrat Khizroev, professor of immunology and electrical engineering.

The human body has a multitude of natural barriers that prevents certain drugs and substances from entering the body. One of these barriers is called the blood-brain barrier, which prevents the AZTTP drug from entering the brain and prevents effective treatment.

“We wanted to send some drugs to the brain and the nanotechnology and nanoparticles are the smallest in size, so they can cross the blood-brain barrier,” said Nair.

The new delivery process developed by Nair and Khizroev works by attaching the AZTTP drug to microscopic magnetic particles and using magnetic energy to guide the drug to its destination.

Once the drug has reached its destination, it is released from the nanoparticles by passing a low electric current. According to Nair, the drug is still functional after the process and allows the

drug to work past the blood-brain barrier.

“Now we have a new technology by which not only can we send the drugs to the brain, [but also] release the drugs,” said Nair.

The testing of this breakthrough was conducted at FIU’s Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. There, they created a cell membrane which simulates the blood-brain barrier that is found in humans.

Nair and Khizroev have been working on this research since 2009, and the research will continue through a second stage of testing that will commence at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

The second stage will involve testing the technique on monkeys infected with HIV.

Pending the success of the second phase could mean the possibility of human trials, and eventual approval from the Food and Drug Administration would mean open use to the public.

“We hope that this can be done in a laboratory in a doctor’s office,” said Nair.

“It’s a very cheap technique,” said Khizroev. “We want to have it in every office for quick treatment.”

Because of the cost effectiveness of the process, it can be used at almost any location. Examples include hospitals, free health clinics, and Third World countries.

“You don’t need any fancy equipment or any fancy clean-rooms,” said Nair.

According to Khizroev, there has been a major response from South America because of both the breakthrough and the cost effectiveness of the delivery process.

“There is a lot of participation and a lot of momentum,” said Nair. “There are a lot of students interested in this project.”

Two graduate students, Vidya Sagar and Rakesh Guduru, came on board to help with the project two years ago.

“Whether it is bacterial or viral, we can just monitor with these particles based on their quantum coupling of this interaction,” said Guduru.

Sagar works in the department of biology, and Guduru is an electrical and computer engineer.

Guduru’s main interest is to develop a tool to diagnose any type of infection.

“I will be working towards having some solid treatment for HIV,” said Sagar. “My ultimate goal is to be able to stop HIV and to make sure that something positive comes in the future.”

Sagar and Gurudu will continue research along side Nair and Khizroev.

The discovery also has prospects to help those that suffer from neurological diseases, such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, and to help with treatment for brain cancer or epilepsy.

“There is a good foundation to expand to other medical innovations,” said Khizroev.

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Military coup overthrows Egypt’s President Morsi

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out of office, the military directly governed for about a year and half before Morsi was elected.

El-Sissi said that Morsi had declared himself exempt from judicial oversight in November, which triggered demonstrations and military efforts to reconcile the president with the opposition.

“Only time will tell if the Egyptian Armed Forces did the right thing in stopping a leader that was growing unpopular and was allied to groups that certainly did not represent the best interests of all Egyptians,” said Raul Herrera, a junior and political science major.

Although Morsi won the 2012 election, “his approval ratings have plummeted as his government has failed to keep order or revive Egypt’s economy,”

Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood “clearly took steps to enhance the power of the executive and helped push legislation and new societal norms that clearly many in the opposition found offensive,” said Sanati.

Police arrested crews from the Brotherhood television channel and other Islamist channels after Wednesday’s announcement.

“The violence used against the supporters of the Brotherhood so far is likely to make the situation all the

more perilous,” said Lucas.

In the demonstrations, there have been clashes between the protests by Morsi supporters and the anti-Morsi demonstrations.

“Morsi was democratically elected and the fact that he left office by the force of the military will undoubtedly cause many of his supporters to entertain the logic of using violence,” said Sanati.

Muslim Brotherhood spokesman, Gehad El-Haddad, said that Morsi is under house arrest at the presidential Republican Guard headquarters in Cairo, along with members of his presidential staff.

There have been demonstrations every day since

June 30, some of which have resulted in violence, with 51 dead and 435 injured, according to Egypt’s Health Ministry.

“International organizations should definitely intervene in the realm of charity and humanitarian aid if necessary but other countries should stay out of the issues militarily,” said Herrera.

According to Herrera, the US should avoid damaging relations with Egypt by taking sides.

“At the same time, the United States, as well as other world powers, should keep an eye on developments,” said Herrera.

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Texting ban creating uncertainty

TEXTING, PAGE 1

practicing attorney at Foley & Mansfield in Miami believes the bill does not invade anyone’s privacy.

“Invasion of privacy is the government’s intrusion into one’s personal life without just cause,” said Easley Johnson. “Because it is now illegal to text and drive, the State would need those records to prove the charge, as the police officer couldn’t personally testify as to what the driver was actually doing on the phone.”

The situation would differ if texting and driving was a primary offense and an officer could issue a citation for simply catching a driver using his or her cell phone’s keypad while driving.

Assistant Chief Ianniello believes that texting while driving will one day be a primary offense.

“I think that texting while driving will be treated just like wearing a seat-belt,” said Ianniello. “At first, I couldn’t just pull you over for not wearing one, but that changed and that’s the common

process.”

The law is one that, in theory, will help drivers think before they text.

How law enforcement will use it and how the courts interpret privacy rights remains to be seen.

“Enforcing it could be very problematic,” said Cody Taffet, a senior anthropology major. “I don’t see any other way to deter people from texting while driving.”

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Take a stand with Wendy Davis

LAUREN BANA
Staff Writer

Sen. Wendy Davis of Texas made one of the greatest impacts on American women over the course of the past weeks, and I am proud to stand with her and her now infamous bright pink and green tennis shoes.

On June 25, I encountered an uprising all across the world of social media. Every other, if not every, Tumblr post, Facebook post and tweet echoed with the shouts of thousands of feminists all across America.

After an 11 hour long filibuster of an anti-abortion bill, which, according to the International Business Times, “would ban abortions after 20 weeks and add other restrictions that opponents say would close 37 of the state’s 42 abortion clinics, and several other proposed bills,” Davis only temporarily delayed the probability of the bill passing to Monday, July 1.

According to The Washington Post, “advocates of the legislation say it is a means of assuring abortion is safe; opponents say it would force nearly every abortion clinic in the state to close.”

I, as an opponent to this bill, see the closing of nearly every abortion clinic in the state of Texas as a terrible occurrence for the women of Texas, and I am glad that Davis was adamant enough to stand up to such a biased bill.

Although it appears so, Davis’ filibuster, in which she could not eat, drink or stop talking, will not have been done in vain.

Whether or not she succeeds in postponing the bill, an entire nation will have seen for themselves the true power that women hold.

They will have learned that we will no longer stand for the oppression of those who wish to oppress us.

Junior biology major AnaMaria Zambrano said that she feels that “women have

become so used to having our rights taken away that some women have even bought into the nonsense the oppressors have been feeding us.”

“I’m proud to stand with Wendy Davis and the women of Texas on this, and I know that she will inspire people all over America to stand up and fight for their rights,” said Zambrano.

I think that having someone like Davis stand up against those oppressors of women’s rights can really have an impact on our generation to stand up for our

rights in the same, strong way that she did.

Davis not only stood in her bright pink and green tennis shoes for the women of Texas, but for all the women of America.

I’m hoping that what has been happening in Texas will teach women in our University’s community to stand up for their rights as well; and maybe we will have our own Wendy Davis rise from FIU to stand up for the rights of women everywhere.

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THE BEACON | Editorial

Low APR scores reveal bigger problems than bad coaching

In Las Vegas, everyone knows that the job of the dealer is to distribute the playing cards to the players. It seems that Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia has discovered his inner dealer by shifting blame for low Academic Progress Rate scores to his coaches.

After the 2011-2012 APR scores became official, the FIU men’s basketball team received a ban from next year’s postseason and a reduction in practice time. FIU scored a humiliating score of 750, way below the NCAA minimum requirement of 900.

However, instead of placing the blame on Garcia, someone who was brought into this school to fix its already tarnished Athletics Department, it seems the blame was shifted over to former men’s basketball coach Isiah Thomas.

That is hard to believe, seeing how FIU’s scores during the first two years under Thomas were 910 and 909, just above the NCAA’s minimum average of 900. It was only during the 2011-2012 season where the APR score hit a low 858 -- a score that Thomas noted only happened when a number of student athletes turned pro unexpectedly, or transferred without a release due to him being fired.

So if the math is right, the resulting low APR scores during the 2011-2012 season were due, in part, to Garcia’s decision to let go of Thomas knowing full well that a majority of the team would leave in an uproar. These are the questions that people don’t ask: how can Thomas be the one punished for the low APR scores when, during his time here, the team was over the minimum average?

In fact, Thomas said that many players wanted to transfer, but were told that they would not be given their releases because it would affect FIU’s APR score. Once again, Garcia showed off his arrogance and power. As a result, seven scholarship students left in anger without getting released, thus plummeting the APR score.

If the entire scandal involving the men’s basketball team isn’t enough to place the blame back on the man in charge of Athletics, how about this fun fact: since Garcia was hired back in 2006, the football, men’s basketball, soccer and track and field teams, as well as the women’s cross-country and indoor and outdoor track teams have been sanctioned by the NCAA for poor academic performance at least once.

Garcia even went as far as adding resources to the Student-Athlete Academic Center in 2008 by increasing the center’s operating budget to \$195,000 and doubling the number of tutors to 14, as well as purchasing 20 personal computers and 25 laptops for the students. However, all this spending was for naught as multiple teams continued to score well below the minimum score of 900.

That’s six athletic programs that have been punished by the NCAA over the past seven years under Garcia. If this was any other sports-accomplished school such as Duke, Ohio State or the University of Miami, Garcia would have found himself looking for a new employer a long time ago.

To have two or three programs in trouble with APR scores is bad enough, but to have six is just downright embarrassing to the Athletics department and the University itself.

DORM LIFE



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: GREEN LIBRARY REQUIREMENT

On June 26, an opinion piece titled “International students unacknowledged in GL’s new requirement” discussed how international students are affected negatively by the recently introduced Green Library policy of requiring two forms of identification when checking out devices. Such devices include laptops, iPads, e-readers and any other computer accessories and components available for students to borrow.

The article states the two-identification policy was implemented due to a rash of thefts of devices using stolen Panther IDs. The article goes on to signal a discontent among international students because the only identification available to international students, besides their PIDs, is their passport; and carrying passports around campus on a daily basis is a burden.

Indeed, imposing a second state-issued ID for all students seems like a particular burden to international students. Yet, this burden has ways to be resolved.

Specifically, all international students are

eligible to receive a state-issued ID. Students can simply go to a local driver’s license office, along with his or her passport, I-20 and other state-required documents. Any student, international or domestic, can then apply and receive a state-issued ID, which is very similar to what a driver’s license looks like.

Students can also visit gathergoget.com to verify documentation needed to obtain the state-issued ID, and even schedule an appointment; there is a Drivers License Services Center right across from MMC.

The benefits of securing the devices available for all students in GL against theft completely outweigh any burden from the process of applying for a state-issued ID. There are even many other benefits international students will gain from obtaining a state-issued ID.

For example, a state-issued ID is useful not only in the University setting, but beyond: students could use their state-issued ID to open a bank account, as an ID when paying with a credit or debit card at a store, when attending age-restricted events, and

a vast range of other possible situations in which the state-issued ID will be handy.

Finally, I do want to raise the issue of a particular group of students that will be possibly detrimentally affected by the new library policy: undocumented students.

In Florida, an individual may NOT request a state-issued ID or driver’s license if he or she does not have documents of residence, etc. Only U.S citizens, legal residents, international students and such others with official, unexpired documents are eligible to apply for a state-issued ID or driver’s license.

As a result, undocumented students may not be able to enjoy the library benefits that other students do enjoy; this is a sad consequence in the long list of practices that adversely affect undocumented students.

The question now is whether undocumented students are being unacknowledged in our University.

-Nikols Mendoza-Colmenares, FIU Alumnus, Political Science Department & Honors College

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‘Sky lounge’ brings new look to DM

DANIEL URIA
Staff Writer

Students passing through the Deuxieme Maison building recently may have be surprised by the new look of one of FIU’s oldest buildings. French for second house, the building was the second building constructed on the University’s campus. Over time, its age led to it becoming one of FIU’s most overlooked and underappreciated spaces.

This was until Associate Professor and Chair of FIU Landscape Architecture Roberto Rovira, along with a team of four students, decided to give DM a much needed update.

The new renovations have taken the name “sky lounge,” a title which serves to sum up the design of the new additions.

“The design creates a flexible space within the courtyard that can serve for quiet study, conversation, contemplation, gathering and occasional presentations,” said Rovira. “It takes advantage of the space’s dramatic four-story height, while being mindful of the constraints of existing infrastructure underground.”

Rovira explains that he and his team have transformed the four-story classroom building from a space that was once dull and boring, into a relaxing sanctuary that’s also quite easy on the eyes. “The gentle sway of the nets above, the texture of recycled blue glass on the ground, the blue flowering vines that climb from the base of the four columns in the space, and the delicate ‘air plants’ that seem to float in mid-air, lets one’s

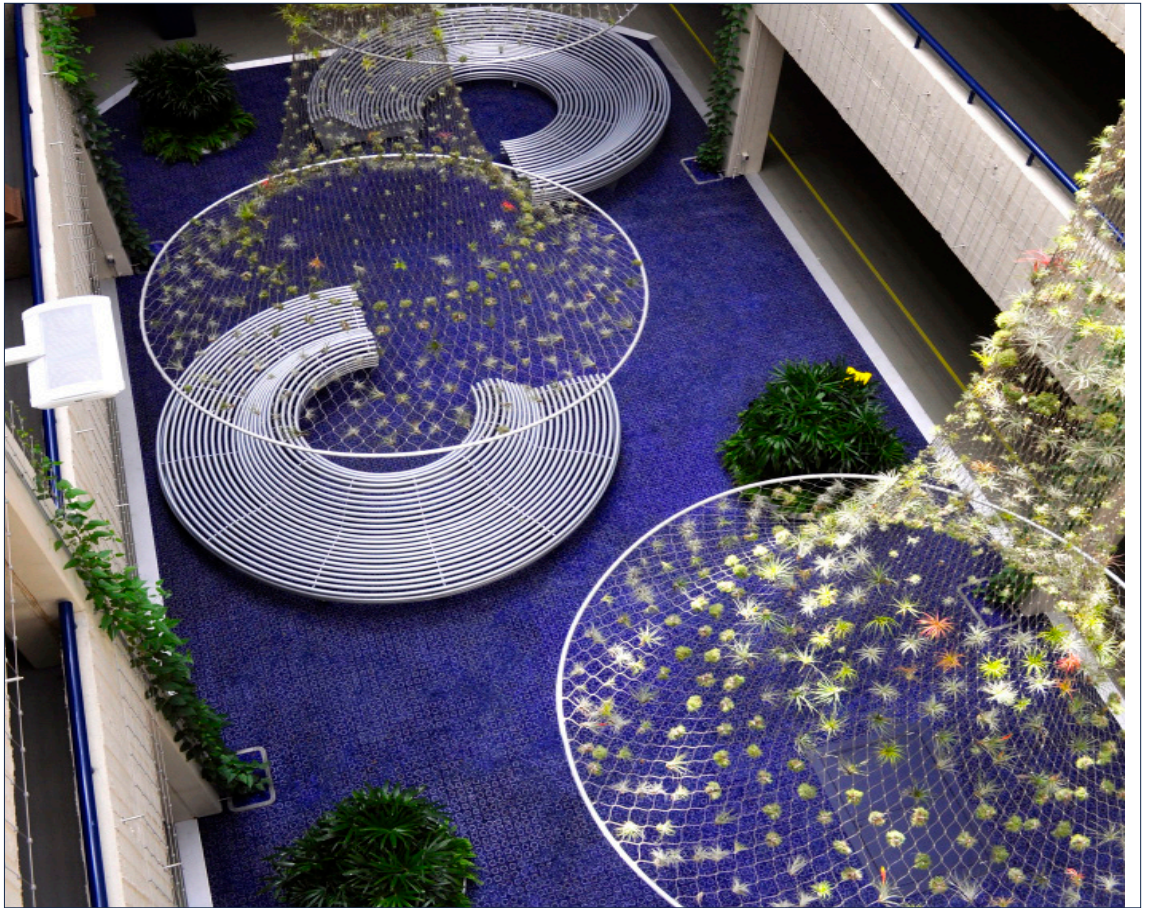
mind wander and help frame the sky,” said Rovira. “That said, the view looking down from the upper floors is also quite special, especially when it’s full of students.”

According to Rovira, the idea to revitalize DM came from the 2010 Open Space Charrette, a series of architecture competitions seeking to transform some of the buildings most suited for this kind of extreme makeover. “Some of the overall goals were to create safe, accessible spaces that promoted interaction and that advanced a sense of community and livability on campus,” said Rovira.

Ultimately, DM became the building chosen, but some roadblocks kept the renovations from getting started. Issues with the cost and practicality of some of the early designs stalled the project for two years, until Rovira came along. “As a final alternative, I volunteered to design the space in the Spring of 2012 and selected a group of four students from the original charrette team to assist me in the process,” said Rovira. “I chose to focus on the interior courtyard portion of the project while still trying to meet the goals and aspirations of the original charrette.”

One of the students chosen for the team was Martina Gonzalez, who assisted in designing the sky lounge benches through a furniture-making course. “In that course I was able to make a prototype of the benches that you see in the sky lounge,” said Gonzalez.

She also speaks highly of Rovira as a professor as well



STEPHANIE MASON/THE BEACON

Associate Professor and Chair of FIU Landscape Architecture Roberto Rovira, along with a team of four students, renovated the Deuxieme Maison building into a ‘sky lounge.’

as a project manager. “Roberto Rovira has, since day one, encouraged and challenged skills in fabrication,” said Gonzalez. “He has given me opportunities that have increased my abilities with wood making, always finding an opportunity to connect that passion of mine with my landscape architecture studies.”

Rovira and his team are proud of the work that they have done and are excited by the positive early reception of the new Deux-

ieme Maison building. “I can’t think of a more satisfying process than to see the complete transformation of the space which makes people’s faces light up when they enter the courtyard and are surprised by the contrast of old and new,” said Rovira.

Gonzalez believes that although adjustment to change is difficult for some, students will find themselves visiting sky lounge again and again.

“Even when people seem

reluctant about the changes, I believe everyone will revisit this space more than twice and find it a refreshing place to be,” said Gonzalez. She was also very pleased with the opportunity to make a lasting change to the landscape of her University saying, “I think FIU embraces hard working students, an aspect that I am honored to benefit from.”

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Toledo arrives in Spain for summer semester

AILYS TOLEDO
Columnist

I knew from the moment I booked my flight that traveling to my destination was not going to be pleasant. Perhaps this predetermined mindset is what set the tone for my flight. I was set to depart from Miami International Airport at 5:35 p.m. on May 18 and arrive in Madrid the following day at 11:35 a.m. It goes without saying that although I was looking forward to arriving in Spain, I was not looking forward to the nine hour flight.

I do not have a fear of flying nor do I have acrophobia. Being short and petite has its advantages sometimes—I can fit into tight squeezes easily and still feel comfortable. This is a great asset to have while flying because seating space is quite limited and the restrooms are also tiny. I do not like flying simply because

I get restless easily. It does not take long for me to start getting antsy, especially while waiting to get somewhere. I was that child that would pester my parents with, “Are we there yet?” every half an hour while on long car rides.

thoroughly. I decided to make a list of all the things that could keep me entertained while I was on the flight. The first thing I did was update my Kindle: I bought “The Great Gatsby” and “Travels with Charley.” I wanted to read

me at all times. So often I feel like I walk into a building or sit in a park and I do not even notice the lovely art close to me.

Another thing I did to prepare for this torturous trip was update my iPod with new music. I figured music would be my best tool for relaxation whenever I started to feel some cabin fever. I downloaded songs about passion, love and having the time of your life to get me in the travel mood. I even tried to include some variety in my playlist. I do not usually listen to Spanish music, but I decided to start listening to Alejandro Sanz and Enrique Iglesias, who are both Spanish artists. Music has the power to transform whatever or wherever you are into a completely new world. Whenever a good song would come up, I was suddenly in a better place and mood.

The funny thing is, after

all my preparation and worry about being bored on the trip, my experience was the complete opposite. The first thing I noticed as soon as I sat down was the touch-screen TVs behind every seat. There was no charge to use it, which was even better. Passengers had unlimited access to movies, games, current travel information, like how much time was left until we landed and much more. I was so grateful for this feature because it made the time left go by so much faster. I watched “Silver Linings Playbook” and “Road Trip,” played Bejeweled and Tic-Tac-Toe against other passengers and was able to see the plane’s route to Madrid.

Not only was the personal TV awesome, even better was that someone from the group was on my same flight. He was able to switch seats with the person next to me, which was even better. I was happy

to have someone to talk to and get to know. I do not think I have talked so much about myself than during this nine hour time period to Matthew Young. It was such a blessing to be able to get to know him and talk about what we wanted to do while we were in Spain, our expectations for the trip and about our lives back home. This friendship that we formed even before we got to Spain was a great foundation that lasted and grew stronger throughout the rest of the trip. Traveling is different for everyone. People can blame bad flying experience on anything from bleak airports to unfriendly flight attendants, but the truth is, it really is whatever you make it. A positive attitude and a comfortable neck pillow can go a long way for a better plane ride. That, and the comforting fact that flying is only a temporary means to a rewarding trip.

“A positive attitude and a comfortable neck pillow can go a long way for a better plane ride.”

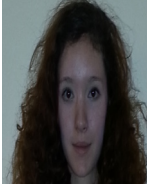
The longest flight I had ever been on before this trip was to California, which is a four to five hour plane ride. What was I going to do for a whole nine hours?

I prepared for this upcoming dilemma quite

books that would force me to view things that are aesthetically pleasing in various ways. One of the lessons I really wanted to implement while I was in Spain was to be more attentive and aware of the beauty that surrounds

Summer heat calls for hot accessories

COLUMNIST



ASHLEY GARNER

Trying to give fashion advice when it's over 100 degrees outside is like trying to tell a pig to learn how to fly; all every single one of us wants to do is walk around with as little clothing on as possible if any at all.

At least that has been my experience after living in Miami for a little over four years now. You can't wear your favorite shirt because you'll sweat through it within minutes of walking outside and you obviously can't wear layers because of the same reason.

So what are we to do during these six months of weather-induced hell?



ASHLEY GARNER/THE BEACON

My friends, the answer lies within the accessories.

All summer I have been noticing students exercise their expression of self not so much through their attire but through their accessories.

Take sophomore business major Carolina Barreto for example.

Her outfit was simple and sweet with a casual crop top, shorts and tennis shoes but the true twist of the ensemble was found on her fingers with a handful of emotionally loaded knuckle rings.

"The rings are my mom's, class rings and from childhood memories."

These were beautiful not only visually but spiritually too.

Next we have senior business major Talebee Alexander who was found sporting an athletic inspired crop top and cargo pants on an especially sunny day in front of the Graham Center.

What first caught my eye about her was her skin-bearing outfit that she said was inspired because "it's hot" but the more

I paid attention I realized that the real style that was oozing from this outfit was not from the shirt and pants but from the accessories.

Her large hoop earrings, leather studded bracelet, discreet belly button ring and tattoos, the most permanent accessory of all, created get-up that was all her own without forcing her to sweat any more than necessary.

So my advice to you all this summer if you're looking for ways to express yourself and clothing simply isn't an option because you don't want to die from a heat stroke is to find yourself through rings, necklaces, body chains or hats.

The options are endless and practically timeless because, unlike clothing, jewelry has less a chance of going out of fashion as quickly as those wedge sneakers you bought last season.

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Campus Life brings color party to University

JESSICA VALERIA RODRIGUEZ

Contributing Writer

Campus Life claims this year's Summerfest will be "bigger and better" than before. This year, Summerfest will consist of live music, giveaways and a color party. The event is planned to take place between the Blue and Gold Garage on July 24. You need a valid FIU ID to enter, and upon entry, students will receive a giveaway bag with one pound of color powder, Summerfest sunglasses to protect the eyes from the powder and protection bandanas to keep the powder out of your mouth

and lungs.

To prevent buildings and police officers from getting colored on, there will be color zones, known as "Port-O-Lets," and wash stations at the entrance of the concert. According to Campus Life, the success of this system is key to continuing the color party for years to come, so they hope all students comply with the rules.

The color powder provided by Campus Life is made from food grade quality cornstarch. It is non-toxic and biodegradable, making it 100 percent safe.

However, the powder may temporarily stain hair and permanently stain

clothes, so it is recommended not to wear your

fest and idea genius for the color party, said that

“

The purpose of the event is to get students pumped up for the fall and bring more attention to FIU by showing freshmen what we do.

Jane Rodriguez
Committee Member
Campus Life's Summer Fest

favorite clothes.

John Parmenter, chairman of Summer-

there will be other giveaways aside from the entrance goodies, such as

tank tops, water bottles and towels. As opposed to having it in the GC Ballrooms like last year, it will be in a bigger area and will have on-going DJs instead of bands. Parmenter confesses none of it would have been possible without intense preparation.

Campus Life has been planning this event for three months with much deliberation.

"The purpose of the event is to get students pumped up for the fall and bring more attention to FIU by showing freshmen what we do," said Jane Rodriguez, vice president of programming for the Student Programming Council and committee

member of Campus Life's Summerfest. "[Summerfest will] definitely encourage students to take pride in FIU."

Sophomore biology major Andres Lopez is also looking forward to this year's Summerfest. "I'm definitely attending the Summerfest with my friends; college years fly by and these are the opportunities we get to make them memorable," said Lopez. The buzz is spreading and there seems to be a good feedback from the student body judging from their Facebook RSVP list. So Panthers, prepare to get colorful!"

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'Love is All You Need' features good acts

COLUMNIST



JUAN BARQUIN

There's a misleading feeling to the way that images of happy couples flash on by to "That's Amore" during the opening credits of "Love is All You Need" after being introduced to Ida, played by Trine Dyrholm, a hairdresser who has been battling cancer about to travel to Italy for her daughter Astrid's, played by Molly Blixt Egelind, wedding.

Susanne Bier's writing with Anders Thomas Jensen for this so-called romantic comedy is as predictable as it comes, but there's a twist to the way it's presented. Just like in most rom-coms, the predictability is high and there's enough drama to go around, but Bier never shies away from the dramatic elements of her story, making it feel much less like a romantic comedy than expected.

After establishing that this hairdresser has lost her hair and her husband has been

cheating on her, Susanne Bier takes her character down a muddled but interesting route. The traditional rom-com stylings involve the wedding, the enchanting music and location, and even Ida's meet cute with her romantic interest Philip, played by Pierce Brosnan, who just happens to be the father of her daughter's fiancé Patrick, played by Sebastian Jessen.

The drama of the film comes from all sides, some hidden and some out in the open. Fighting and crushes, uncertainty filling the air and

the awkward relationship between Ida's daughter and her fiancé. The tumultuous wedding is frankly one of the film's weakest points, even though it's meant to be what holds the film together, with Jessen and Egelind's work and story piling in comparison to that of their on screen parents.

What really makes "Love is All You Need" rise above the predictability of it all is some truly stellar work from its two lead actors, as well as the beautiful way that the Italian scenery is shot that

only serves to enhance their chemistry. Dyrholm and Brosnan have a knack for balancing both the light and dark that comes with the story, charming each other and the audience all the same as they dance, flirt and fight throughout Italy.

While Pierce Brosnan has shown us that he can have a good time often enough, a constant reminder of which is "Mamma Mia," he takes this opportunity to remind us that he can handle drama well. Trine Dyrholm delivers a vulnerability that one doesn't

usually get from a film of this nature, baring it all for a character that genuinely deserves to have an actress who can handle the cards they've been dealt.

For all of its flaws, Susanne Bier's film is enjoyable to watch because of all the good that comes with it, be that turning the rom-com genre on its head a bit or just plain and simply watching a wonderful actress in a beautifully shot film for nearly two hours.

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Softball leader starts new chapter as coach

PATRICK CHALVIRE
Staff Writer

Ashley McClain, FIU's softball all-time leader in almost every statistical category, is now stepping out of the batters box and using her knowledge to help other young ladies achieve their goals.

McClain racked up numerous accolades, such as being named the second player in the program's history to be named to the All-Sun Belt first-team on three occasions.

McClain is also the Panthers' first-ever Sun Belt Player of the Year and the first FIU player to earn three National Fastpitch Coaches Association All-Region honors.

McClain helped lead the Panthers to a winning record each of her four years at FIU. Now McClain is using what she has learned on the field to teach other players as an assistant coach at Murray State University, some players who are just one to two years younger than McClain.

"It was definitely a learning experience because I transitioned so quick from being a player to a coach," McClain said. "I've gotten great feedback from the girls telling me they've really enjoyed how I coach them."

As a Racer, McClain will work with their pitchers and assist with hitting. Areas the young athlete has had much success in during her softball career.

"It's been a blessing having Ashley on staff this past year," said Head Coach Kara Amundson. "Her ability to connect with our pitching staff was pertinent for the success of our program and she did an incredible job not



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Ashley McClain hopes to begin her new career as a coach at Murray State similar to her great career at FIU.

only building a connection with them, but also helping them grow as players and people."

During her senior year at Riverview Tampa High School, McClain recorded an ERA of 0.90. At FIU, McClain ended her career and is currently the all-time leader in batting average, total bases, RBI, homeruns and doubles.

McClain is no stranger to the stress that comes with being associated to a team at the

college level. Having been in the limelight most of her time at FIU, McClain knows first hand what players may go through and how to overcome it.

"Once you break that one record, once you show how good you can do, there's always going to be pressure to follow up that next year to do the same," McClain said. "I had great support from my teammates' who just kept

making me feel like I was just another player out there playing."

While at FIU, McClain expressed to former head coach Beth Torina her goal of being a graduate assistant; though leaving the game of softball wasn't something that would come easy.

Torina, who would later accept a head coaching position at Louisiana State University, helped McClain find a way to continue being a part of softball, and introduced her to the staff over at Murray State. A move that has since been a plus to the Racer players.

"She has a very positive approach to coaching and a vibrant personality," Amundson said. "I am really looking forward to her coming back this year and starting up right where we left off."

Coaching wasn't McClain's first choice after graduation. The love of softball still filled her lungs once her time as a Panther came to an end.

Unfortunately, McClain's plans to go on and play National pro Fastpitch, the women's professional softball league, did not pan out the way she had hoped. So she came to the realization to put down the helmet, put on the coaches hat and begin anew at Murray State.

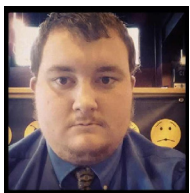
McClain hasn't completely hung up her cleats though. Whether or not McClain will stay coaching or try again on the field is still yet to be seen.

"I definitely enjoy softball and it's going to be hard for me to give it up," McClain said. "You're definitely going to see softball somewhere. If I'm playing on a small pitch league or if I'm dealing with the University."

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Panthers face a new mountain to climb

COLUMNIST



RHYS WILLIAMS

Starting on July 1 of this year, FIU joined Conference USA in all sports, along with eight other universities. This brings the total number of members in C-USA to 16. The Panthers also go into the fall with the third hardest schedule in the conference and 88th hardest in the nation, according to ESPN. With the football program already starting a new era under new head coach Ron Turner, what should we expect to see from some of the opposing teams facing the Panthers this season?

On Oct. 5 FIU will face Southern Mississippi who are coming into the 2013 season with a major chip on their shoulders. The Eagles went a forgettable 0-12 last year.

With two defensive players on the Athlon's preseason list for C-USA, look for them to exploit the youth in the offensive line for the Panthers when the team goes to Hattiesburg for their first C-USA contest.

Next up for the Panthers is the Homecoming game against the University of Alabama at Birmingham on Oct. 12, who only won three games throughout the 2012 campaign. Running back Darrin Reaves and Punter Hunter Mullins lead the team as the Blazer representatives on the Athlon's list going into the fall. The running back compar-

ison between the two teams is almost even, but the Blazers hold an advantage in the special teams category.

Redshirt freshman Chris Ayers and Sergio Sroka look to fill shoes of FIU record holders Josh Brisk and



BEACON FILE PHOTO

The FIU Football team looks to prepare for a new era under the guidance of new head coach Ron Turner.

Jack Griffin respectively. With the weak showing the pair had in spring practice, it is necessary that in the remainder of the summer and into the fall practice, the pair must grow into their roles.

On Oct. 26, Louisiana Tech will roll into town, a team that posted a 9-3 record last season.

When the program decided to hold out from a regular bowl game to wait and see if they would get a BCS bowl game it was a risky choice, many people thought that the Bulldogs would partake in the Discover Orange Bowl but it did not come to pass.

East Carolina is next up for FIU, a team who boasted an 8-5 record last season which ended in a loss to the University of Louisiana in the R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl. In Athlon's all Conference-USA 1st and 2nd team selections, the Pirates are tied for second with seven players selected.

The second match up in November for the Panthers will be the Middle Tennessee State University. The Blue Raiders are another 2013 addition to C-USA and familiar to the Panthers from the Sun Belt. In their last season in the SBC, they Raiders went 8-4 and looked primed for a bowl game until a last game loss to SBC Champions Arkansas State 45-0.

FIU will then take its first and only trip to Texas when they play against the University of Texas at El Paso. The team that went 3-9 last season has the 97th hardest schedule in the

nation, out of 126 teams, according to ESPN. However, they are in the middle of the pack for the new C-USA, with nine of the other 18 teams having easier schedules than them. The Miners also go into the fall with five members on the Athlon's all Conference-USA preseason list, which is four more than the Panthers.

On Nov. 23, FIU will return back to Miami to face Marshall University. The Thundering Herd is one of the few teams that the Panthers will be facing that had a below even record at the finish of the 2012 season. However, the past is the past, especially for the Herd.

With eight players selected to the preseason all-conference team by Athlon's, they lead the pack. The Herd were a pass first offense last season with an average of almost 120 more passing yards per game than their opponents.

FIU will then wrap up the 2013 season on the road against Florida Atlantic University. The Owls are another team that joined C-USA on July 1. Our northern neighbors in Boca Raton are joining us a year earlier than expected, leaving the Sun-Belt conference. In their last season in the SBC, the Owls tied with our football program with three wins and nine losses. They also tie with the Panthers in number of players selected to the Athlon's all conference list, only a single player in Tight End Nexon Dorvilus.

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Panthers look to pounce on new Conference

STEVEN ROWELL
Contributing Writer

It's time for a change in Miami.

All athletic teams at FIU are beginning their transition into the new Conference USA from the Sun Belt Conference.

In their final campaign in the SBC, the Panthers went 12-8 in the SBC and reached the semi-finals of the SBC tournament before bowing out to Middle Tennessee and then eventually falling to Florida in the Women's National Invitational Tournament.

With the 2012 season behind them, FIU begins a new era for women's basketball. The 2013 season will be the first season FIU enters their new conference -- Conference USA and will now have a new slate of conference opponents to face each year.

FIU is one of eight schools that are joining Conference USA this year giving the conference a total of 16 teams, FIU is not the only school to leave the Sun Belt for Conference USA as Middle Tennessee State, North Texas and Florida Atlantic University will be joining FIU this coming season.

The Panthers are in the east division along with FAU, East

Carolina, Marshall, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Middle Tennessee State and Southern Mississippi.

Out of those teams, East Carolina finished with the best conference record of 11-5 last season.

In the west division, Louisiana Tech another team entering its first season in the conference along with North Texas, University of Texas-San Antonio, UTEP and Tulane who finished in second place in the regular season last year with an 11-5 record, and last season's tournament champion in Tulsa as they defeated former Conference USA member the University of Central Florida.

The thought of FIU entering Conference USA has been welcomed by some of the current teams in Conference USA including East Carolina Head Coach Heather Macy.

"I would like to welcome all the new teams including FIU into the league, and I look forward to it being a more competitive year with the new teams," Macy said. "I think we will be a really good basketball league this year and even after this year."

Macy thinks it will really open up recruiting for FIU joining the new conference.

This change will only be

brief for four seniors Jerica Coley, Marita Davydova, Arielle Durant, and Timeyin Oritsesan as they will only have one season in Conference USA.

With the goal in sight of reaching the NCAA Tournament, the Panthers led by the four seniors, will have to achieve success against their opposition where familiarity of their opponents will be minimal.

While FIU will be facing new opponents, the same goes for current Conference USA teams as many of them might get their first go at defending Coley, who was the nation's leading scorer last season, and was named Sun Belt Conference Student-Athlete of Year and has broken several records at FIU.

The conference schedule has not yet been released for any teams.

"Since we haven't gotten the schedule out yet, we haven't really been able to know who our opponents are home or away, so I haven't really gotten to looking at players from opposing teams yet," Macy said.

The entire FIU women's basketball team and the coaching staff were unavailable to comment.

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BEACON FILE PHOTO

Marita Davydova and the rest of the women's basketball teams looks to conquer a new conference this season.

Coasting to 2nd makes or good night at Daytona

JENNA FRYER
AP Writer

Tony Stewart coasted for at least 250 miles at Daytona International Speedway, where he hardly worked up a sweat until the final hour of the race.

It's a game he hates to play, dropping to the back of the pack at restrictor-plate races to casually circle the track lap after lap.

The strategy of waiting until the end of the race to make a frantic, final push goes against his fundamentals of racing.

But he couldn't deny the results Saturday night when he found himself in position to challenge Jimmie Johnson for the win.

Although he ultimately settled for second, the finish pushed him a whopping six places to 10th in points in the Sprint Cup standings.

"This is a 195 mph chess match, and the lap that pays is lap 160," Stewart said. "A lot is said about guys that lag back like that, but we're in the most competitive series in the country, and when you're running in the most competitive series in the country you have to do what you think is in the best interest of you, your car, your team and your situation to get to

the end.

"Part of winning races is knowing to be where at what times. I know some people don't like that and some people don't agree with it, but that's what I think is the best thing to do in the interest of our race team and to ensure at the end of the day when it's time to go we have a car that's capable of doing so."

Stewart has used that strategy for years at Daytona and Talladega, the two tracks that NASCAR requires the use of horsepower-sapping restrictor plates.

The plates control speeds and keep the cars bunched, raising the likelihood of a multicar crash when a driver makes a mistake.

Now more and more drivers are simply riding around for the three quarters, choosing to wait until the end to turn it up a notch.

It was frustrating to fourth-place finisher Clint Bowyer, who had voiced his boredom with Daytona several times over the weekend.

"I made a rule with myself at these restrictor-plate tracks to be easy. You know, ride around," Bowyer said. "It's boring. You want to be up there racing for every lap led. If you get wiped out it

doesn't matter who caused it or whose fault it was. If you get wiped out before halfway in one of these restrictor-plate races it's your own fault. You knew better than to put yourself in that situation."

The final results Saturday showed that riding in the back is the best strategy for making it to the finish line.

Johnson, who had the dominant car, led a race-high 94 laps and felt confident his speed was enough to keep him out front and ahead of trouble.

But Stewart, Kevin Harvick, Bowyer and Michael Waltrip all made it inside the top-five but laying back for at least half the race.

David Ragan did the same thing to win at Talladega in May.

But Stewart is correct in sensing that many fans don't like watching drivers take it easy. They gripe and grumble that there's no point in watching a plate race until the very end because that's when it gets exciting.

So what does NASCAR do about this predicament?

Series officials can't force drivers to race hard, and there doesn't seem to be any real consequence to laying back.

Several years ago when Denny Hamlin was in the

thick of the championship race, he lost a tandem partner while racing at the back and fell out of the draft.

In danger of going a lap down and ruining his title chances, fellow Toyota driver Waltrip got out of the gas and slid back to rescue Hamlin.

And NASCAR can't take the plates off unless it figures a way to slow the cars, which nobody has been able to do at the two biggest and fastest tracks in the series.

But as Bowyer grumbled about how much idle

time he spent at Daytona, where drivers run just a few laps of practice to tune their cars, then turn one lap on qualifying day, then sit and wait for the race to take it easy until the end, it became apparent the whole system is broken.

NASCAR will never cut races from 500 or 400 miles to a 25-lap shootout, but that's basically what they've become.

Everybody sat around and waited three days to watch the final 25 laps of Saturday night's race.

At minimum, NASCAR should cut the plate events,

excluding the Daytona 500, down to two-day shows for the Sprint Cup Series.

No team is using all its practice time, making it pointless for everyone to be at the track all those hours.

As for the race itself? Who knows?

There's no incentive to race early, and there's not much NASCAR can do to change that.

For now, we know what we're going to watch four times a year.

We'll sit and watch for some wrecks, then wait for it to get crazy at the end.



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Georgian wines shocking American palates

COLUMNIST



DANIELA WALTER

The first time I tasted a Georgian wine was in my first wine class, History of Wine, taken in fall 2012 at the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management with Professor Bill Hebrank. As we went through the history of wine in class, we were able to taste wines from distinct countries that you would not usually taste; not because they are not available in the market, but because they are not familiar to us and unfortunately most of us try to stay on the safe side while experiencing new things. Wine might not seem complex at first, but requires more information that you might be willing to know.

On June 21, we tasted six Georgian wines. It was an experiment conducted by Clark Smith and his assistant in Miami Nicole Linares to introduce these wines to the “American palate.” Our tasting group consisted of every nationality, as you would imagine in South Florida. Clark Smith is one of the teachers for the Wine Program at FIU. We tasted three whites and three reds as an assignment. He joined us via a Skype conference call while in California and we went through each wine together. In addition to that, he gave us a little bit of background

on the country and the challenges that Georgian wines have been facing by trying to get into the American Market.

The group had mostly the same impression about each; but still, wine tasting is a unique and personal experience. As we waited for three more people to join us, we decided to start the tasting at 9:30 p.m. with the whites.

The first white wine we tasted was, to our surprise, produced in The United States; more specifically at The Finger Lakes, NY, by Dr. Konstantin Frank Winery. Rkatsiteli, the grape variety used in the production of the wine is originally from Georgia, is one of the oldest vinifera grapes known to man. The vintage of the wine – that means the year in which the grapes were harvested -- was 2011, and it had an alcohol content of 12.5 percent. It was a dry wine and some compared it to a Pinot Gris. I was impressed when Clark told us that this wine was produced from a vine that was planted in 1952. Usually old vines produce fewer yields but tend to increase in quality.

It was the only American produced wine of the night and, in my opinion, the least impressive. The appearance was a faded gold. The nose - usually how the sense of smell is referred - was delicate with hints of star fruit, roses, and fresh-cut grass. The taste did not

suggest any balance since the only thing that I could really perceive was the high acidity in my mouth. There was a lack of fruit and elegance in it. Still, some of the group thought that the acidity was pleasant and was the wine’s high-

referred to as “Fire Wine.” The nose was a very intriguing one, with notes of black tea leaves, truffle and earth. However, it lacked structure on the palate, making me a little disappointed. What helps white wines to age is

his brother Morgan.

The fifth wine tasted in the evening, the second red wine and my favorite from the whole tasting, was a 2007 vintage produced by Wine Man with the Saperavi grape, an indigenous variety, also originated the Kakheti region of Georgia. For a red wine, this one had an unusually low alcohol percentage: only 12. Unquestionably, it was dark red, with such a deep color that when placed over a white surface, you would not be able to see anything through. In all honesty, it had a perfect balance on its tannin with hints of black pepper and smoke olives, note that this wine also was produced in old style, with the use of Qvevri. Cherry and blackberry were easy to pick up as in comparison with our more known Cabernet Franc.

It is definitely a wine more suitable to the American market than the others that I tasted. The average price of this wine is \$13. I love the structure of this wine; it had individuality and introduced each element in a harmonic way, yet I could still pick its unique terroir; the different earthiness scents on the nose and on the finish of the palate made it the best of the show!

-Daniela V. Walter is a Teaching Assistant to professors Chip Cassidy and Bill Hebrank of the Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management.

“This wine had the most beautiful color I have ever seen in a white wine: amber like a liquid in fire.”

light. The average price of this wine is \$15.

The second wine I want to mention was the third and last white wine we tasted that night. It is originally from The Republic of Georgia, specifically the Bodbiskhevi-Kakheti region produced by Pheasant’s Tears Vineyards with the same grape variety previously mentioned, Rkatsiteli. The vintage was 2009; in my opinion, a little young to already be open. Nonetheless, this wine had the most beautiful color I have ever seen in a white wine: amber like a liquid in fire.

On that note, Clark explained to us that this wine is sometimes

its acidity, which was very subtle producing a very light mouthfeel, in other words, the texture of a wine in your mouth; you can associate water with the lightest and milk as the heaviest to better understanding. The finish was short and it reminded me of a 5 p.m. tea party. The average price of this wine is \$18. On a history note, those wines are aged before bottled in Qvevri, a unique Georgian wine vessel made out of clay.

Our complete group included myself, Orestes Lavassas, Nicole Linares (the host), Sara Kaplan, Cortessa Major, Azadeh Sigari and her fiancé as well as Aaron Welch (FIU wine visitor professor) and

Health insurers fear young people will opt out

KELLI KENNEDY
AP Writer

Dan Lopez rarely gets sick and hasn’t been to a doctor in 10 years, so buying health insurance feels like a waste of money.

Even after the federal health overhaul takes full effect next year, the 24-year-old said he will probably decide to pay the \$100 penalty for those who skirt the law’s requirement that all Americans purchase coverage.

“I don’t feel I should pay for something I don’t use,” said the Milwaukee resident, who makes about \$48,000 a year working two part-time jobs.

Because he makes too much to qualify for government subsidies, Lopez would pay a premium of about \$3,000 a year if he chose to buy health insurance.

“I shouldn’t be penalized for having good health,” he said.

Persuading young, healthy adults such as Lopez to buy insurance under the Affordable Care Act is becoming a major concern for insurance companies as they scramble to comply with the law, which prohibits them from denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions and limits what they can charge to older policy holders.

Experts warn a lot of these so-called “young invincibles” could opt to pay the fine instead of spending hundreds or thousands of dollars each year on insurance premiums. If enough young adults avoid the new insurance marketplace, it could

throw off the entire equilibrium of the Affordable Care Act. Insurers are betting on the business of that group to offset the higher costs they will incur for older, sicker beneficiaries.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that about six million people of various ages will pay the tax penalty for not having insurance in 2014, the first year the law championed by President Barack Obama will be fully implemented.

It’s hard to estimate how many of those will be the young and healthy adults insurers are trying to reach, but that subgroup makes up a very small portion of the overall market. Even though it’s small, experts say it could be enough to throw the system’s financing off-kilter.

About 3 million 18-24 year-olds in the U.S. currently purchase their own insurance. Many pay high prices for scant benefits, with high deductibles and co-pays because they make too much to qualify for Medicaid and have no coverage options from their employers or parents. The Urban Institute estimates that the majority of adults in their 20s will qualify for government subsidies under the Affordable Care Act.

Premium hikes could be a disincentive for young people weighing their options. Premiums for people aged 21 to 29 with single coverage who are not eligible for government subsidies would increase by 42 percent under the law, according to an analysis by actuaries at the consulting firm

Oliver Wyman. By comparison, an adult in his or her early 60s who would see about a 1 percent average increase in premiums under new federal health rules.

Insurers including America’s Health Insurance Plans and The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association recently wrote to federal health officials warning that they feared low enrollment by young adults and proposed beefed up penalties for opting out. Insurers worry the \$100 penalty might not be a strong enough deterrent. The penalties jump to \$695 or 2.5 percent of taxable income — whichever is more — by 2016.

“The key to keeping health care affordable is you really want to balance the pool, where you have enough young and healthy people to balance off the care of the older, sicker people who are likely to utilize much more health care services,” said Justine Handelman, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association’s vice president for legislative and regulatory policy.

She said younger people use about a fifth of the services that older beneficiaries do.

Jonathan Gruber, an economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who helped craft that state’s law, said he thinks the first-year federal penalty should be higher.

The penalty under the Massachusetts law, which served as the model for Obama’s overhaul, was \$218 the first year in 2007. Gruber said that amount proved effective.

“People hate paying money and getting nothing for it,” he said.

Roughly 40,000 of about 6 million Massachusetts residents paid the penalty the first year, he said.

Many young adults have chosen relatively bare-bones health plans before the Affordable Care Act, but the new law requires all plans to offer a minimum set of benefits, thus raising the price for coverage.

The cost of health coverage is difficult to estimate because it includes so many factors, but a 27-year-old making \$30,000 a year in 2014 will have a \$3,400 premium and will be eligible for subsidies that cover about 26 percent of the bill. That person would end up paying \$2,509, or about \$209 a month. That does not include deductibles, co-pays and other variables which can vary widely.

The estimates come from the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation’s online Health Reform Subsidy Calculator.

Francois Louis, a 20-year-old college student in South Florida who works part-time, can’t remember the last time he went to the doctor and gets by on over-the-counter medication whenever he’s sick. He’d love to get a check-up, but says it’s too expensive on his income of less than \$15,000 a year.

“I probably would do the \$100 fine because it’s just cheaper and you don’t have to worry about paying off monthly costs,” said Louis, a student at Broward Community College near Fort Lauderdale.