Organization joins tsunami relief effort

By JUAN GARCIA
Contributing Writer

The tsunami catastrophe that occurred on December 26, 2004 brought much focus and attention to the devastated countries of Southern Asia. In response the world is bringing aid to their doorstep and FIU is doing its part as well. India’s 1.03 billion inhabitants. That’s over 400 million children, many of whom are uneducated, malnourished, diseased and uneducated.

In recent years, India made progress in feeding, immunizing and educating more and more of its children. This disaster now threatens to wipe out whatever progress it has made in the previous years.

Like various other Student Organizations’ Council clubs and organizations at FIU, CRY America is holding a fundraiser to provide economic aid to the children of India.

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“Our SOC club was founded on this very principle of compassion, and we will try our level-best to get FIU students involved,” Salehmohamed said.

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“We can’t help but be thankful and appreciative for all that we often tend to take for granted. After all, what principle difference is there between us and those who were affected so drastically by the deadly waves?” asked Salehmohamed.

According to CNN news, the tsunami devastation has triggered what could be the largest worldwide collaborative humanitarian relief effort to date. The amount of aid received has been so great that there might even be some serious logistical problems distributing it.

Salehmohamed invites students, staff and anyone interested in donating money or participating in the tsunami relief effort to visit www.america.cry.org for more information.

Donations can also be dropped off at the SOC office in GC 2300 or made via check to “CRY America Inc.,” memo to Tsunami Support. CRY America FIU can be reached at cryamericafl@yahoo.com.

Security set for inauguration

By MICHELLE MITTELSTADT
The Dallas Morning News

Anti-aircraft battery units and combat air patrols will search the skies as rooftop sharpshooters scan the streets below, Coast Guard cutters ply the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, and bomb-sniffing dogs patrol the subway system.

Next week’s 58th presidential inaugural - the first of the post-Sept.-11 era and occurring against the backdrop of war - will offer an unprecedented level of security for the swearing-in of a U.S. president.

Six thousand law enforcement officers, 2,500 military personnel and countless other federal, state and local officials will be part of an intricate - some say stifling - security blanket that has been nearly a year in the making.

The security force is augmented by a high-tech arsenal that includes sniffer dogs to detect chemical and biological hazards, bomb jammers and a network of surveillance cameras fixed to downtown, bolstered by video feeds from helicopters.

A hundred-square-block area stretching from the White House to the Capitol and beyond will be off-limits to traffic on Thursday. Inauguration Day, and pedestrians in barricaded zones will have to go through metal detectors at 22 checkpoints.

Manhole covers are being sealed, ventilation ducts secured; and security teams will sweep hotels, offices and residential buildings that line the parade route.

And while deliveries are being discouraged within the restricted areas, vehicles that must enter will be scanned by X-ray ports.

“Our goal is that any attempt on the part of anyone or any group to disrupt the inaugural will be repelled by multiple layers of security,” Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said.

Demonstrators coming to town to protest President Bush, the war in Iraq and other policies contend that some security measures are going too far.

See SECURITY, page 2
Inauguration Lockdown

From SECURITY, page 1

measures are aimed less at terrorists than at suppressing
dissent and keeping critics removed from the
president.

“They are trying to
make a very big issue out of
disrupting the event and we think
part of that is to keep
people away,” said Bill
Hackerwell of the anti-war
A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition.

“Over half the
country is opposed to this
war, and we think that Bush
should not be allowed to sort
of sanitize Pennsylvania
Avenue from dissent.”

Ridge, D.C. Police
Chief Charles Ramsey and
other law enforcement
officials play down the pro-
test angle, focusing the
attention on the terrorism
possibility.

Although U.S. officials
have not directed any spe-
cific inaugural threat, Ridge
said authorities cannot let
down their guard during an
event he called “the most
visible manifestation of our
democracy.”

The first inaugural since
the Sept. 11 attacks “obvi-
ously raises security con-
cerns that we didn’t have to contend with in the
past,” Ramsey said. Security will be cho-
rographed from two
locations: A joint military
command center at Fort
McNamar in Washington
and a state-of-the-art loca-
tion in Herndon, Va., 25
miles northwest of town,
maned by representatives of
50 federal, state and
local agencies under the
leadership of the Secret
Service.

Law enforcement offi-
cials from 60 departments
around the country are to
supplement the D.C. police force -
with the city footing an
overdue bill that D.C.
Administrator Robert
Bobb estimated would exceed $11 million.

Ridge said he would
don’t assess the federal tab
for security, saying it would be
in the “millions.”

Heightened security
is omnipresent in a city
scarred by the Sept. 11 ter-
orist strikes, the anthrax-
by-mail attacks, a ricin
attack on Capitol Hill and
the ever-present know-
edge that Washington is
a symbolic target to ter-

orists.

U.S. Capitol Police
patrol the grounds around
the Capitol with assault
rifles, fences ring the Wash-
ington Monument; and
massive concrete plant-
ers and barricades pop
up around the city with
regularity.

At Ridgwell’s, a catering
firm juggling many inaug-
ural events, workers have
gone through backdrops,
checks, submitted photos
and obtained credentials to
make deliveries in the
restricted zones. Cater-
ners have been ordered to
deliver all equipment the
night before the inaug-
ural, with food deliver-
s completed by 7 a.m.

Thursday:

“Security has always
been tight for inaugura-
s, but it is a little bit tighter,”
said Susan Niemann, a
Ridgwell’s principal. “For
the most part, we are
coping with it.”

SEC Notes

FIU PAGEANT

The Miss FIU schol-
arship pageant will take
place on Jan. 15 in the
Graham Center Ball-
room at 7 p.m. at Uni-
versity Park.

33RD ANNIVERSARY

Florida International
University’s 33rd an-
niversary ceremony will
take place Jan. 25 at 7
p.m. in GC. President
Modesto A. Maidique
will attend as well as
FIU alumni and the
Student Government
Council.

Food will be served,
and business-casual
attire is required.

INTERNET CAFE

The Internet Cafe is
now operating in the
Green Library at UP.
Student government
representatives are
pressing library offi-
cials to make it a 24-
hour-a-day cafe, but
for now, it will be open
only during the library’s
normal hours.

PEP RALLY

The first pep rally of the
Spring Semester
will be on Jan. 27
for the Men’s baseball
game against FAMU on
Jan. 28. Location to be
announced.

PUBLISHING POLICY

The Beacon is published on Mondays and Thursdays during the Fall and
Spring semesters and once a week during Summer B. Advertising inquiries
for classified, local and national ads may be addressed to our advertising
department at our newsroom. One copy per person. Additional copies are
25 cents. The Beacon is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad
content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. The Beacon
is an editorially independent newspaper partially funded by Student and
Services fees that are appropriated by Student Government.

WEATHER

MONDAY

Hi/Low 73°F/59°F

TUESDAY

Hi/Low 71°F/57°F

WEDNESDAY

Hi/Low 72°F/55°F

THURSDAY

Hi/Low 74°F/54°F

FRIDAY

Hi/Low 71°F/56°F

SATURDAY

Hi/Low 73°F/58°F

SUNDAY

Hi/Low 73°F/58°F

Courtesy of www.weather.com

University Park

Students!

Office assistant
needed!

Got some time to kill?

Earn some easy extra bucks
working as an office assistant at the University
Park Beacon office.

We prefer Federal Work Study. Stop by our
office in WUC 124 or GC 210 for an applica-
tion.

The Beacon is located in the Graham Center, room 210 at the
University Park campus. Members of the editorial and production staffs
and questions regarding display advertising and billing should be directed
to the Advertising Manager at 305.448.2709. Mailing address: Graham
Center, room 210, Miami, FL 33199. Fax number is 305.448.2712.
Beacons Bay campus is 305.919.4722. Office hours are 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.,
Monday through Friday. E-mail: Beacon@fiu.edu. Visit us online at:
www.beaconnewspaper.com

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WINNER & LOSER

WINNER
Airborne pooch: A small dog in Florence, Ala. fell from a fifth floor balcony when Gary Gallien, a house painter, just happened to have his arms out and catch the dog. No one happened to catch the cat though.

LOSER
Baby boy Yahoo: On Christmas Day, a Romanian woman gave birth to a baby boy and decided to name him Yahoo as a thank you to the Internet for having met her husband online. Ironically, the couple met in an AOL chatroom.

OPINION

By ALICIA BUSTAMANTE
Opinion Page Designer

With the excitement and chaos of the first week over, it’s time to finalize your schedule and take control of what your semester is going to look like.

This may include dropping or adding a class. You might say, “More changes? But I just figured out that PC and CP are two different buildings!”

However, it’s far better to make these changes now, rather than to drop a course later or worse yet, fail. Remember, the final drop/add date is Jan. 18. Your time and your money are at stake; here are some tips to make the most of them:

THIS ISN’T STARTING WELL...

Sometimes, you can tell how good—or soul-crushingly awful—a class is going to be on the first day. Keep in mind that titles of classes mean nothing.

One bad sign is when the professor strolls in 15 minutes late, and then asks the class what class he or she is teaching. Another bad sign is when that same professor hasn’t seen or can’t pronounce the name of the $90 textbook you just bought for the class. At this point you should get up and leave. And if you’re anything like me, throw the book at your professor for wasting your time. Aim between the eyes.

If you get past the formalities of roll-taking and syllabus-explanation, you’re going to want to notice small details. If your professor checks his or her watch more than you do, that is not a good sign.

Also, keep your senses keen. Should the professor walk by and the smell of gin waft through the air, think of it as a smoke alarm. Then again, that smell could be a lifeline as it shows you’ll probably have a chance to argue your grade over a beer at Gracie’s Grill.

ANTICIPATE THE WORST, HOPE FOR THE BEST

We would all like to think that, as college students, we are superhuman. So, taking five classes; joining a fraternity, student government and the anime club; and having a part-time job while volunteering at a puppy store will be no sweat, right?

Not so much—unless you like ulcers. Know your limits. Taking three classes and getting As is better than taking five and getting Cs. College is not a race. No one cares whether you graduate at 21 or 23.

If you keep up that schedule you’ll end up shaking and huddled in a corner on the third floor of the library repeating the quadratic formula.

FROM PRE-MED TO MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Majors are like LifeSavers: you pretty much want to try all of them, even grape—which tastes like crap.

The average student changes majors three to four times throughout his or her college career.

When you don’t really know what classes to take and you have no idea what you want to be, it’s inevitable that you’ll drop one. And we all know advising doesn’t help. No matter what your academic advisor says, taking modern dance is not going to help you as a chemistry major. Although, being limber is fun.

SANITY IS KEY

All in all, dropping a class is nothing to be ashamed about. Self-preservation is the objective of any successful semester. Good luck. You’ll need it.
KEEP ROLLIN’

Hot rides steer students away from pumps

By MATT SANTIAGO
Contributing Writer

With more than 60 percent of FIU students living at home and driving to school, fuel consumption is a critical issue.

Take a look across the parking lots and you will notice fewer V-8 SUVs and more small, fuel-efficient four-cylinder cars. With gas prices as high as they have been, most college students will admit that driving to and from FIU takes a toll on their bank accounts.

The auto industries have begun producing lightweight, fuel-efficient cars with lower price tags to combat the rising fuel prices. So for the college student in need of a vehicle of such caliber, there are a few new ones that are sure to set their mark within the next year.

Traditionally, Asian car manufacturers are known for their fuel efficiency, but within the past few years American companies have given the Asian market a run for its money, because they have also joined the fight against fuel consumption.

Commonly, the idea of fuel efficiency means sacrificing performance. This is hardly true anymore given the new designs of economy cars.

According to the consumer issue of “Road and Track Magazine,” a good example of this is the new Chevrolet Cobalt. With this new American made pocket-rocket, the Chevy power tradition meets much needed fuel efficiency.

For just under $14,000, the sporty Cobalt comes standard with a 145 horsepower four-cylinder engine. This gives the car a more than expected quickness while providing an impressive 26 miles-per-gallon in the city and 33 miles-per-gallon on the highway.

Not enough power? The Cobalt SS model comes equipped with a supercharged 205 horsepower engine for around $21,000 that doesn’t sacrifice much on fuel mileage.

From England we get the Mini Cooper, one of the most popular and affordable cars in today’s growing market.

“Mini Coopers are great. I get great gas mileage with every tank,” said freshman Cristina Villacorta, an owner of the Mini Cooper S. “I’m at three-quarters of a tank, and I still won’t have to refill for another week-and-a-half!” she said.

With a classic body reminiscent of the old Mini Cooper, a more powerful engine and a sporty suspension, this fuel saver has become common at FIU.

At a base price of $16,449, as reported on the Car and Driver website, this car offers sporty looks, expected European performance, well-known reliability and affordable fuel mileage (28 miles-per-gallon in the city and 37 miles-per-gallon on the highway).

However, for those of you who love your SUVs, Pontiac didn’t forget about you when they produced the Pontiac Vibe.

“I’m looking into getting a new car like an SUV. My friend has the Pontiac Vibe, and he gets great mileage, better than my Honda for sure,” said freshman Emily Jacque, current owner of a Honda Civic.

Although you may be unsure about classifying this as an SUV because of its low profile appearance, the Vibe comes nicely equipped for $17,475. This is not a bad price for a quality SUV. The only downside to the Vibe is a small 130 horsepower engine, which might not be enough to sufficiently carry an SUV. However, it saves fuel and averages 30 miles-per-gallon in the city and 36 miles-per-gallon on the highway.

These are just some of the choices to consider when looking for a new and more efficient vehicle.

So when you become tired of paying $2 per gallon twice a week, forget the F-150s and Expeditions, and consider scaling down to the face of the future: pocket-rockets.
Flor Moreno (Paz Vega) stumbles to find the right words in English to express her hot-tempered Mexican emotions, while her insecure boss, Deborah Clasky (Tea Leoni) tries to Americanize her.

The story is told through the eyes of an older and wiser Cristina (Shelby Clasky). Flor's daughter, who is trying to appeal to a Harvard Admission's committee. In the film, she appears at a much younger age and she does an excellent job juggling the responsibilities of growing up with a single-mother, who can’t hold a conversation with her American employers.

Children of immigrants can easily identify with Cristina's character. And now, in college, when most of us have closed the door to childhood and entered the adult-life, we can better understand characters such as Flor and sympathize with the difficult experiences our parents faced entering this country. But along with culture clashes there are also culture clichés.

Not only is Flor a housekeeper, a single-mother, and a Mexican immigrant, but she also turns to Angie Sow Barrera when she struggles to learn English. Both mother and daughter have olive skin and dark hair, which sadly fits the wet-back Mexican stereotype.

The Clasky family decides to go on a month-long vacation to a California beach the culture clashes hit an all time high.

In one scene, Flor is outraged when Mrs. Clasky takes Cristina to do errands without her permission and ends up dyeing her jet-black virgin hair with blue streaks. Besides the growing love between Mrs. Clasky and Cristina, another interesting and tense relationship develops between Flor and Mr. Clasky.

They are able to overcome the language barrier and express themselves through their humility and good-hearted nature, which leaves Mrs. Clasky raising her eyebrow in suspension. Each scene is constructed to help audience learn more about each individual character as well as the plot itself. At the end of the film, the audience develops a connection with each character, no matter the age, gender, or language.

The eighth-month-long production was directed by Academy Award winner James L. Brooks, who directed such hits as Terms of Endearment. As Good As It Gets, and Jerry Maguire.

The story came to life when Brooks, who doesn’t speak a word of Spanish, hired Vega, who in turn hired a translator to produce the film.

Vega has proven to rise above the intimidation and fear an immigrant feels upon arriving in America, not only in the movie but also in real-life.

She could prove to be Spain’s most demanded export since Penelope Cruz. Oh!}

**New ‘Alias’ season proves more exciting than last**

Ladies and gentlemen start reserving your Wednesday nights, for as of Jan. 5, ABC’s “Alias” is back. Golden Globe nominee, Jennifer Garner, has returned to the small screen with her character, Sydney Bristow.

Creator, J.J. Abrams, has kicked-off season four exactly gone from being the CIA’s top field agent to a deep undercover special operations representative.

She works alongside the two people she likes least in this world: her father (Victor Garber) and Arvin Sloane (Ron Rifkin), her new boss and the man who deceived her two years ago by making her believe she worked for a secret sector of the CIA, SD 6, when in fact she was working for the enemy.

Sydney must now work under the man she vowed to never trust and learn to work beside her father knowing that he killed her mother.

Thrown into the loop of an intricate plot is Sydney’s longtime, on-again, off-again boyfriend, Vaughn (Michael Vartan) and her half-sister, Nadia (Mia Maestro), who recently discovered her father was none other than Sloane.

The fourth season of Alias promises to be full of action. “In a second, everything can change,” said freshman Beena Kazi.

Things are never what they seem. Covers are compromised, plans derailed and even your best friend can turn out to be a mole within the CIA.

“I was completely glued to the screen when it premiered. It’s completely addicting,” said freshman Patricia Perez.

This season, the show only promises to get better. There is no doubt that the show’s heart-stopping suspense and excellent fight choreography will keep viewers coming back for more, each week.

**Sandler woos Spanish crowd in his latest comedy flick**

By MICHELLE FERRER

Stand-up comic Adam Sandler along with Spanish actress Paz Vega who makes her Hollywood breakthrough in “Spanglish”.

**CAPTION: Adam Sandler stars with Spanish actress Paz Vega who makes her Hollywood breakthrough in “Spanglish.”**

**Photo: MICHELLE FERRER/THE BEACON**
The End is nigh for the ‘Left Behind’ book series

Although it did not receive as much media attention as a Harry Potter book would have, Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins’s “Glorious Appearing,” the last novel in their popular “Left Behind” series, has certainly made its impact on the publishing industry. It has sold well over one million copies since its summer release. The series as a whole sold over a billion books around the world.

The conclusion, after all, has been the authors’ primary purpose – “Glorious Appearing” should have been the crown of the entire chronicle, slays the enemies of his followers and establishes a kingdom on Earth that is prepared to last 1000 years. It is possible to think that with movies, book spin-offs, church discussion kits and a hundred other marketable products bearing the “Left Behind” title, the authors spent too much time focusing on developing their books rather than about stressing their theological views than about developing the final fate of their characters.

Welcome back, FIU students!

Kaplan classes are starting soon.

KAPLAN ® is a registered trademark of their respective owners. “Kaplan” and related marks are used for identification purposes only and are not affiliated with, endorsed or approved by the creators of the General Education Test.

Stop by our offices in GC 210 or WUC 124 to apply or email beaconrecruit@yahoo.com.

The Beacon is always searching for dedicated individuals to contribute. It’s easy, it’s fun, it’s good for you!
Swimmer or tennis player?

Q. Would you shed three years of your life for an Olympic medal?
No. My life is more important than that. People who win Olympic medals are sometimes forgotten. People that win medals still have to study and work. Then, after a period of time, people forget the person. It's important for the moment, but then people forget you.

Q. What made you come to FIU?
One of my friends from Hungary came to FIU, and she told me to come swim. I talked to [the] coach, and then I came. I was planning to study journalism, but because all the classes are at North Campus, and we practice here, I couldn't do it. So now, I am studying international business.

Q. What are the best and worst things about FIU?
The best is that there are a lot of international students, and I like to make friends. The worst is that I hate having to do laundry, because the machines here are always broken.

Q. If you were not swimming, would you be involved in another sport?
I would probably be playing tennis. When I was four, I had to decide between the two sports, and I chose swimming.
Swimmer born in Hungarian waters

By HARRY COLEMAN
Sports Editor

For most people, swimming is as simple as moving your arms around, but for Claudia Barsi it is a way of life. Besides swimming in 45-degree water for almost 14 miles at the European Championship, Barsi is a simple girl who hates doing laundry and loves Britney Spears. The Beau had a chance to interview the Hungarian native who holds various records at the Bay Vista Aquatics Center.

Q. What type of preparation is needed before a swimming competition?

It starts with what I eat. I mostly try to eat chicken and pasta, because they contain a lot of energy, which I will need. I also go to sleep as early as I can. If I swim slow, I won’t be able to swim good so I practice as hard as I can to do good.

Q. People don’t realize how long a 1,000-yard race is. That is the length of 10 football fields. What is running through your head as you are competing in one of these competitions?

I don’t really think of anything. I’m from Hungary, so I’m used to swimming in open waters like beaches, rivers and lakes where the shortest I would swim was like two and a half miles. Nothing runs through your head. It’s moment by moment; you can’t think.

Q. The following day after a big competition, do you feel any aches and pains in your body?

If I practice hard before [a] meet, I don’t feel anything. But, if I don’t practice hard, my shoulders and legs start to hurt, because my body is not used to it.

Q. Does being a competitive swimmer require a special diet? If so, what does it consist of?

I wish I could be on a diet, but I’m not. I just eat whatever I can eat, especially foods with carbs.

Q. How has former Olympic veteran and FIU coach Noemi Lung Zaharia helped you develop your swimming techniques?

When I was little I got the basic stuff for swimming, ‘cause my mom was a swimmer, and my dad played water polo. You can say I was born in the water. Coach has helped me, though, because she knows what’s the best thing for me and when I can swim at my best. She was a swimmer, so she knows everything and understands what I need to do to improve.

Q. Is an Olympic appearance a goal for you in the future?

I was planning to go last year in the open water competition because they said it was going to be an event, but it didn’t happen. I am waiting for 2008, but back home it’s hard to make the Olympic try-outs. Hungary is a small country, so lots of people participate.

Q. At this point in time, who wins in a race between you and coach Zaharia?

Oh, me [laughs]. Actually, she swam the other day in practice, but [laughs some more] yeah come on. I think I can. She’s like 35 or 40-years-old.

Q. Is it difficult to manage being a full-time student while being part of the swimming team?

It’s not hard. I can manage my time. So, if I know what I have to do, I can do it.

Q. What is a typical day in your life?

We have practice from 6 to 7:30 in the morning. After that, I go to school and later, I have lunch. Then, we practice again from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., and sometimes we have weights after that. Then, I go home to take a nap, ‘cause I have classes at night after.

(Swimmer born in Hungarian waters continues on page 7)