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University, Sweetwater collaborate to create college town

By IAN NATHANIEL COHEN
Staff Writer

For the first time since the school was established, FIU's students and faculty may soon have a college town to call their own in the neighboring community of Sweetwater.

"The City of Sweetwater would like to revitalize certain areas which are on its northern boundary directly across from [University Park]," said Jorge Forte, Chief of Staff to Sweetwater Mayor Manuel Marocho. "It would like to develop this area as an economic engine for the city by attracting businesses that cater to the university population."

FIU's Metropolitan Center, the School of Architecture and the city of Sweetwater have been collaborating with each other, with the goal of transforming the city into a more of a college town, providing services and businesses which cater to students' needs. According to prosecutor and Assistant U.S. Attorney, Brian Frazier, the Alvarez's provided Cuban government officials information about U.S. political and economic advantages of bringing students and faculty a lot of activity that would be very positive towards them."

During the Fall 2005 semester, Rovira led a studio consisting of eight graduate students, whose task was to brainstorm ideas on how to transform Sweetwater into a college town and present their ideas and designs to city officials. "One of the objectives of a studio is having the students get involved and understand the workings of a community, and integrate that with landscape architectural design ideas," Rovira said. "It was a perfect fit to expose the students to the community process of position making, to have them develop ideas based on thorough analysis of the city and its contexts, and then come with a series of proposals that was then presented to the city of Sweetwater."

Throughout the process, Rovira and his students have been working together with Sweetwater city officials. "We were dealing directly with the office of the mayor," Rovira said. "We presented to the mayor, and the Chief Of Staff. Part of our critiques involved Miami-Dade Planning & Zoning. Regarding what services and locales would be available to the FIU community, Forte said, "Based on the input we have received from faculty and students, restaurants and cafes are a priority, as well as specialty shops and boutiques."

Rovira's students' proposals also included redesigning the main thoroughfares such as 107 Ave, 109 Ave and the Flagger corridor, mixed-use developments which offer commercial spaces and cafes on the ground floor with residential units on above floors and pedestrian-friendly streets. "We would be able to provide the sort of environment that would sustain economic activity, and that students would be drawn to," Rovira said. "We have presented their ideas to the city of Sweetwater at the Jorge Mas Canosa Youth Center, Dec. 8, which was open to the public. "We basically had all the students' projects presented to the public there, and the reaction was extremely constructive," Rovira added. "I'd say it was a very successful presentation, and I think they were impressed by the level of analysis that went into some of the projects."

The implementation of these proposals may not be too far off. "The process has already started," Forte said. "However, change is a slow moving process. The city has initiated certain steps required in order to change the existing zoning of the city. These steps have to go through a process that involves State approval, public meetings and a lot of careful planning. This process can take two years to complete before any visible changes are made."

However, Rovira added that the students had created "a compendium of ideas, some of which require a long-term commitment, but others that are more directionally complete". These ideas have been implemented, and probably there would be a timeline for addressing those first, and then having a long-term plan to complete this overall transformation." Rovira considers one of the most rewarding aspects of the studio to be the instant feedback from Sweetwater city officials. "The students actually got to see the city council making decisions and providing them with direct feedback to their ideas," Forte said. "I feel that this was part of the master planning point of view perhaps don't have that benefit of immediate feedback that the students would be able to get within a semester."

FUTURE TOWN: Graduate students from the School of Architecture make models for the possible college town. Jennifer Rogers-Pomaville displays her model of Sweetwater. David Giran/THE BEACON

Professors indicted for espionage

By ANA SANCHEZ
News Editor

Two FIU professors who are married were indicted as covert agents of the Cuban government and arrested by FBI agents Jan. 6 for failure to register with the federal government as foreign agents.

Roberto Rovira, assistant professor in the School of Architecture and policy studies, and wife Elvia Alvarez, counselor for the University's study abroad program, were arrested by FBI agents Jan. 6, according to University Media Relations department. There really hasn't been a very direct connection with Sweetwater, a five-digit code, encrypted computer disks and traveling to Cuba carrying messages using their academic positions as a cover.

The Alvarez’s could be facing seven to ten years in prison if convicted for not registering as foreign agents and an arrangement is scheduled for Jan. 19.

There is speculation that Carlos Alvarez recruited FIU students for espionage for the Cuban government but at the time of print, the University Media Relations department had yet to confirm whether or not Alvarez had traveled to Cuba with FIU students within the university study abroad program or whether he had recruited students. The Alvarez’s are on administrative leave with pay as per university policy.

Maidique was unavailable for comment at the time of press.
After 29 years, Bonanno to retire

By REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

“It’s pronounced Bow-Na-No,” said John Bonanno, assistant vice president of Student Affairs at FIU, in his deep Southern accent. Bonanno will be retiring this March, after working at FIU for 29 years. He described his tenure at FIU as a very positive one and something he will miss.

After getting his Doctorate in Psychology at the University of Georgia, he joined FIU in 1977. In his career, Bonanno held many positions at FIU and has seen the university go through numerous changes ranging from attendance to physical changes of the campuses.

“When I first started in 1977, the [Biscayne Bay Campus] had just opened and had only the Center for Academic Development and the bookstore didn’t exist back then,” he said. Bonanno had joined FIU as the co-coordinator of Student Development.

“It was a very small office then and we tried to make it more visible on campus,” Bonanno said. Bonanno described working with international students as a learning experience.

“Every time you met someone you would learn something new about a different culture. We got them involved in student activities and wanted them to consider FIU their home away from home,” he said.

Bonanno considers the creation of the Interfraternity Council another highlight of his term at FIU. He remembers when a couple of students came to Student Affairs wanting to start a fraternity.

“They wanted to start a fraternity on campus and after they did, we had another one come up to us, so we decided to start a system and so we formed a ‘Greek Council’,” Bonanno said.

Bonanno continues to be involved with Greek life as he functions as a liaison for Greek Housing.

Bonanno has held other various positions relating to student affairs at FIU, among which have been as director of Student Services and associate dean of Student Affairs, where he had supervised health services, disability services and recreational sports.

Bonanno detailed his current position as one that needs ultimate responsibility and requires strong leadership qualities. His position supervises over many departments at FIU.

“Among the various departments reporting to me are the operations of the Graham Center, housing and the children’s center,” he said.

Bringing up the topic of retirement, Dr. Bonanno said that he is really looking forward to it.

“A lot of people dread retirement but not me. It’s a different stage of life that you don’t really think of when you’re younger,” he said.

Bonanno’s wife, Marie, the library tech supervisor, will also be retiring with him.

“She’ll be retiring Feb. 28 and I’ll be retiring Mar. 1, so I have a day more than her,” he said.

He added, “We’re planning to travel Europe in the future, especially Italy where my family’s from.”

Speaking of Italy, Bonanno said that it was at an Italian restaurant in Memphis, Tenn., that he first met Marie.

“When I was in graduate school, I went to an Italian restaurant in Memphis, sat down and I ate and the owner comes over and asks my name. He asked me if I knew what my name meant and told me that Bonanno is Bon Anno, meaning Good Year,” Bonanno said.

He concluded, “People have always misspelled it or pronounced my name and banana always came in my mind. In my freshman experience classes, I teach and talk about how to study, and memorize by associating things. My name is Bonanno, so you can associate it with banana and if it reminds you of me, that’s good.”

FINISHING UP: John Bonanno, assistant vice president of Student Affairs, will retire Mar. 1. (Cesar Cordova | The Beacon)

Bonanno will be retiring Feb. 28 and Marie will retire Mar. 1.

The Beacon – January 12, 2006
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New Prime minister could help bring stability to the Middle East region

By CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Opinion Editor

One of the most puzzling questions of our time is the question of peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The traditional hotbed of conflict in the Middle East, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has been the cause of innumerable terrorist attacks and deaths.

Even prior to the infamous Six-Day War of 1967, when Israel captured the Gaza strip from Egypt – which really made the conflict into the conflict we know today – this area was a source for violence between incompatible cultures.

The recent stroke and hospitalization of the Israeli Prime minister, Ariel Sharon, left the future of Israel and the future of the region in question. Though doctors expect Sharon to make a partial recovery, he is officially in a partial coma.

remains to be seen. However one thing is certain – the violence in that part of the world has been going on for way too long and has to stop. If that means the U.S. must get involved in a sole effort to save lives, then, in my opinion, so be it.

The humanitarian aspect aside, the U.S. has a huge stake in the outcome of this affair. Israel is one of few major allies the U.S. has in the Middle East. It has one of the best military forces in the region and tanks as having one of the most battle-trained armed forces in the world.

Also, in the war against terrorism, an independent Palestine and Israel living harmoniously side by side is probably the best, if not only, answer to how to rid the world of one of its deadliest terrorist organizations, Hamas, which is responsible for thousands of Israeli deaths.

It has been said that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is just one of those conflicts which will persist for a very long time.

In the last few months, however, progress has been made and it has brought the region ever closer to that precious peace. The removal of Sharon from the arena, it’s a completely new ball game. Whether or not that will come to fruition, now that Sharon is effectively out of the picture, remains to be seen. However one thing is certain – the violence in that part of the world has been going on for way too long and has to stop. If that means the U.S. must get involved in a sole effort to save lives, then, in my opinion, so be it.

Even still, many will argue that this situation is none of our business. In this situation, as in numerous others, the U.S. faces a double-edged sword. If it does get involved, then it is reprimanded for not minding its own business. Nevertheless, if we do mind our business and do nothing, then we are internationally scolded for not giving a damn that thousands of people are suffering.
Local landmark’s history more than just picnic hotspot

By SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

We can face the fact that history is probably not one of the most popular subjects on campus, but the topic inevitably becomes more relevant and interesting to students when it involves a local landmark that so many have grown up knowing and loving.

While it is widely known as ‘El Farito,’ meaning ‘lighthouse’ in Spanish, its rightful name is Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, located in southern Key Biscayne. Many are unaware of the stories behind the site and might agree with sophomore Johnny Betancourt. “I’ve been to the lighthouse beach many times, but I’ve honestly never thought of the history.” And yet, the same lighthouse on the 415-acre park is actually the oldest structure in Miami-Dade County and the oldest lighthouse in Florida.

One of the most fascinating parts of this park’s past is that in the early 1800’s, before the lighthouse was even constructed, Cape Florida served as one of the first stations in the Underground Railroad. This meant that it was a center for escaped slaves and Seminoles to gather and meet with ships heading to the Bahamas, where they could finally taste freedom. Unfortunately, once the lighthouse was built in 1825, the area was so well-lit that it was no longer practical for the slaves and Seminoles to meet with ships.

One of the most fascinating parts of this park’s past is that in the early 1800’s, before the lighthouse was even constructed, Cape Florida served as one of the first stations in the Underground Railroad. This meant that it was a center for escaped slaves and Seminoles to gather and meet with ships heading to the Bahamas, where they could finally taste freedom. Unfortunately, once the lighthouse was built in 1825, the area was so well-lit that it was no longer practical for the slaves and Seminoles to meet with ships.

As a result of the attack, the stairway was ruined and the very top of the structure contained around 200 bullet-holes, both of which were restored in 1846. Shortly afterwards, it had to be restored once again after hurricane damage in 1855. This time its height was increased from 65 to 95 feet.

Years of wear and tear made the lighthouse’s condition deteriorate, which hurricane Andrew only worsened in 1992. Consequently it underwent its latest and most thorough restoration project, one that cost $1 million and changed it from brick-colored to white-washed.

Junior Cristina Noguerais happy the lighthouse has undergone restoration. “A couple of times we’ve wanted to go up but it’s been closed, and so I don’t really know much about its history,” Noguerais said.

Students will be glad to know that this restoration has been completed and the lighthouse is now re-opened to the public. Although students new to Miami would certainly find a visit to Bill Baggs enjoyable, students who have played in its sands as children should take the time to investigate ‘El Farito.’ Not only is it rich in history, but the familiar beach and the view of their city seem still more beautiful from atop the lighthouse’s hundreds of steps.
Faithful production still relevant

By REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

FIU theatre’s highly anticipated and long delayed theatrical production of Molière’s classic farce “Tartuffe,” The Imposter” finally makes its debut at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center Theatre Jan. 16. The play, originally scheduled to be performed in early November was rescheduled due to disruption caused by hurricane Wilma.

Molière’s famous satire about a con man, the aristocrat he dupes and the effects of the con’s behavior on the aristocrat’s family, is probably as sharp and witty today as it was when it debuted in seventeenth century France. When it premiered in 1664, the play brought Moliere the biggest controversy of his career as it caused an outcry among the ‘devotees’ religious hypocrites who Moliere mocks in “Tartuffe.”

The play tells the story of Orgon, a successful businessman who decides to marry his ornerous and conventionally religious man, which is clearly against his best interests. His wife Mariane (Sarah Brohee) to Tartuffe, much to the dismay of Mariane’s love, Valere (David Soloman). By the time Orgon realizes that Tartuffe is a hypocrite, it may be too late, as Tartuffe has managed to capture Orgon’s home and fortune.

The play effectively deals with subjects that are as relevant today as they were then, during the reign of King Louis XIV. There is no shortage ofrouch people today who get taken in by con artists. Although the play is a comedy, it addresses issues such as religion and the blind narrowmindedness that accompanies it.

This is best demonstrated when Orgon’s servant Dorine (played to hilarious effect by Apphia Campbell) tells him that his wife Elmire (Altovise Laster) is sick. Orgon ignores whatever Dorine says but repeatedly asks her the question “and Tartuffe?” in regards to Tartuffe’s health, demonstrating his blind obsession with Tartuffe, the self-proclaimed religious man.

FIU’s production of Molière’s classic comedy has one major difference when compared to the original version of the play. Added is a prologue, which in turn is adapted from Molière’s play “L’Impromptu de Versailles” in which Molière (again played by Miguel Angel Novo) has just completed his latest play and is prepping his actors for the new production, when his plans are disturbed by the unannounced arrival of King Louis (played comically by Daniel Gutierrez).

The king demands that Molière and his actors perform and improve production of his controversial play "Tartuffe". Thus the prologue leads to Molière and his actors performing "Tartuffe" for the king and the audience.

The particularly clever amalgamation of two of Molière’s plays is the brainchild of director Leroy Clark, who decided that the idea of a play within a play would bring something fresh and interesting to the already well known play: Clark, chair of FIU’s theatre department, and director of over 90 theatrical productions including the theatre department’s modern telling of Bram Stoker’s “Dracula”, decided to remain faithful to the original story by keeping all characters and retaining most of the dialogue, originally translated by Christopher Hampton, the author of “Dangerous Liaisons.”

However, this is also one of the production’s flaws. With the presence of a prologue, one expects the play to be book-ended with an epilogue. However, it ends without the audience really learning how the king will react to the performance of the play within the play. In that regard, it was slightly disappointing.

Performances were uniformly solid with Novo and Garcia being the best of the bunch. Props must also be given to costume designer Marilyn Skow for the stunning costumes and vocal coach Tracey Moore for assisting the actors in mastering the accents required for the play.

As Clark will be delivering his last play here at FIU, hopefully “Tartuffe, The Imposter” will justify his farewell. “Tartuffe, The Imposter” will be playing at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center Theatre until Jan. 22. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are $8 for students and $10 for all others.

TARTUFFE, THE IMPOSTER

3 out of 4 stars

Directed by: Andrew Adamson

PLAY TO REMEMBER: As the cast delivers a comedic performance, “Tartuffe, The Imposter” is said to guarantee a good time. With wacky characters, the play will be sure to leave the audience with sentiment.

CORRECTIONS

In the Culture Calendar (Jan. 9), the locations listed at the Frost Art Museum should have read the Wolfsonian.
Men’s losing skid stands at nine games

Though both teams took shots at each other in the second session, FIU failed to convert key opportunities inside the lane and ASU’s three-point shooting, combined with FIU’s foul trouble, took over.

The Indians connected on five of six from behind the arc and 18-of-24 from the stripe, which in the end put the game out of hand for the Golden Panthers.

“We’re not that bad of a team,” Rouco said. “We’re right there. We’re not losing by 20 or 30 points, but we’re losing games that are right within our grasp by not making the plays we need to make.

“We just have to get everybody on the same page.”

FIU will now head west in search of greener pastures for three tough road contests. The trip includes stops in Denton, Tex. to face North Texas, Jan. 12 and Denver, Colo. for a Jan.14 match-up with last year’s conference champion and NCAA tournament participant Denver before closing the trip in New Orleans Jan. 19.

Following their return, the Golden Panthers open a three-game home stand with a Jan. 21 contest against Louisiana-Lafayette at Pharmed Arena.

WASTED EFFORT: Freshman walk-on Marlon Bright led his team with 15 points in the 81-71 loss to conference foe Arkansas State.

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* Attend one of the Information Sessions (below) to receive an application.
Bouderra records 20 points, six steals in victory

Emerging from the huddle came a red hot Rudy Sims who went on a tear and scored 11 of the team’s next 14 points to bring them within two with three minutes left.

But the run was not enough as senior point guard Faeza Bouderra picked up two of her six steals — to go along with 20 points — and combined with center Lasma Jakabsone to shoot a perfect 6-of-6 from the free-throw stripe to seal the victory.

“They just started fouling at the end and in the past we’ve really struggled from the free-throw line,” Bouderra said.

“We just worked on that a lot and were really focused ... but defense was the key to the game.”

With the win, the Golden Panthers have won five of their last six games. A very important stretch for them as they hit the road next weekend with two tough games against Denver Jan. 14 and North Texas Jan. 16.

“Denver is supposed to be an easy game,” Jakabsone said confidently, “but you never know because they’ve had an easy schedule and they’re 12-2 right now.”

The last time FIU faced Denver, power forward Milena Tomova put up a then-NCAA record 42 points.

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CAREER, from page 8

ON THE ROAD: The women’s basketball team will travel to face Sun Belt Conference opponents Denver Jan. 14 and North Texas Jan. 16.
BY ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA

Staff Writer

Like a bad dream, FIU's early season hopes for success have turned sour.

The Golden Panthers dropped their ninth game in a row Jan. 7, to fall to 3-11 overall and 0-2 in the Sun Belt Conference with an 81-71 loss to the visiting Indians of Arkansas State (6-10, 1-1 SBC).

Despite not having their top player, Jerry Nichols, who is out for the season because of injury, ASU finished the second half on a 10-0 run to cut the FIU lead at the half to four, 34-30 and take control of the momentum.

From then on out, it was all Indians.

"We just didn’t know how to act with a lead," said head coach Sergio Rouco, following the loss. "We’re not getting beat right now; we’re just losing games by beating ourselves."

Led by forward Issac Wells and guard Yual Banks, who combined for 46 points, 23 a piece, including eight 3-pointers, the visiting Indians shot 67 percent in the second half while outscoring FIU 51-37.

FIU managed to have four men in double figures, led by Marlon Bright's season-high 15 points, but were hit by an uncharacteristic output from senior-team leader Ivan Almonte who managed just four points and four rebounds in 23 minutes of action while recovering from an ankle injury.

Despite out-rebounding and out-shooting ASU, FIU once again turned the ball over in critical moments, especially at the end of the first half en route to accumulating 23 turnovers in their second SBC match in as many attempts this season.

A scarce crowd of less then 1,000 saw the display put forth by coach Rouco's men, who were without Chris Fuller or Facundo Giorgi, who were out due to injury.

"We want to win," Rouco said. "We just don’t have that instinct yet of how to put people away. But we played hard tonight."

FIU took command in the first half and led by as many as 14 with 2:31 left to play, partly in thanks to their 3-point shooting, 5-for-11, and the play of Kenny Simms.

Simms managed nine points and seven rebounds during the first half, but could only gather one point and three rebounds after the break in just nine minutes of second-half play.

See CAREER, page 7

BY ALDEN GONZALEZ

Staff Writer

The women's basketball team won its second Sun Belt Conference game Jan. 7, as they scarcely held on to beat Arkansas State 54-50. The win improved FIU’s record to 9-5 and a perfect 2-0 versus conference foes.

Thanks to some timely steals on defense and clutch free throw shooting down the stretch, the lady Panthers were able to dodge a big run from the Indians. Going into the second half with a nine-point lead, Marquita Adley – the freshman forward out of Monsignor Pace high school – stepped up big with a career high 11 points and 12 rebounds.

"She had a really good shooting night and she was the leader on the floor in the game," said junior center Lasma Jakabsone.

Adley's outburst gave the lady Panthers its biggest lead of the game.

With 11:14 to go and his team down by 13, Indians' head coach Brian Boyer called a quick timeout to try and ice the Golden Panther shooters.

See CAREER, page 7