Former officer found guilty

BY ANDREW LEINS
Staff Writer

After an hour of deliberation, a jury found former Public Safety officer Frederick Currie guilty on Jan. 26 of one count of sexual battery and one count of battery against an 18-year-old woman.

The crime took place on July 8 of last year.

Currie was placed on administrative leave with pay the night of the incident, according to the CBS4 News website, Currie, 35, took the stand on Jan. 26 in his own defense.

He denied the allegations that he assaulted the 18-year-old woman and her boyfriend.

Currie was placed on administrative leave with the night of the incident, pending investigation and was arrested on July 20, 2005.

By being found guilty for sexual battery Currie lost his police certification.

Before the incident, FIU had twice fired and later rehired Currie due to the dismissals being overturned by an outside hearing officer.

Currie’s previous criminal charges were not included in the prosecution’s case, the charges in those cases were all dropped.

According to testimony, the victims were assaulted while Currie was searching the woman and her boyfriend for drugs at Tamiami Park.

The Career Fair is a bi-annual event which Alvarez took students (some Cubanos (Cuban Bridges) through an exchange program called Puentes to the White House visit.

Although the affidavit does not mention the specific date of the visit, Mark Biordi, director of media relations, told The Miami Herald that Maidique had indeed been to the White House at least a dozen times throughout the years. The newspaper also found that Maidique attended a ceremony at the White House in January 2001 and is a member of President George W. Bush’s education advisory panel.

The affidavit also mentions that Carlos Alvarez willingly told Cuba’s Directorate of Intelligence that one of his students was an FBI analyst because he feared his position at the DI would be damaged if his superiors found that he’d been interacting with a U.S. government employee.

The affidavit also attempts to form a connection between a non-profit exchange program called Puentes Cubanos (Cuban Bridges) through which Alvarez took students (some of them from FIU) to Cuba and recruitment efforts.

“The DI was interested in which of these exchange students would be amenable to recruitment by the DI. Although Carlos Alvarez stated that he never received a follow-up request for actual names of potential recruits, he has stated to FBI agents that he would have provided that information if asked,” the affidavit stated.

The Alvarezes are currently being held without bond at the Miami Federal Detention Center.

Career week offers job opportunities

BY GRACE TAYLOR
Contributing Writer

Students looking for an opportunity to submit resumes, obtain interviews and ask questions concerning their major, to submit resumes, obtain interviews and ask questions for a chance to prepare for job interviews are very famous or large businesses around the country.

Companies such as Target and Disney are common names which have attended the fair before. Other companies such as All State Insurance, American Express are common names which have attended the fair before or after graduation.

“Employers can see the quality of students that FIU has to offer,” she said.

Many of the companies which come to the fair are very famous or large businesses around the country. The Career Fair is a bi-annual event which Alvarez took students (some Cubanos (Cuban Bridges) through an exchange program called Puentes to the White House visit.

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Graham encourages all students to attend. “This event] is for everybody. Freshmen can come to ask questions and find out what they want to major in, or career.

MISSING IN ACTION

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Chief Bill King. GISS CIND/THB BACON

For the full story see page 9.

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WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 1

SPC Pan African Celebration Opening Ceremony: 11 a.m., Panther Square (BBC) 

SGA General Meeting: 4 p.m., GC 150 (UP) 

SGA and The Honors College present the "Head-to-Head Challenge" a debate between professors dealing with global issues: 3:30 p.m., GC Ballrooms (UP) 

FIU New Music Ensemble feat. director Orlando Jacinto Garcia: 6 p.m., Frost Art Museum (UP) 

Dance Tryouts (Caribbean Panthers): 7 p.m., Everglades Hall Second Floor Lounge 

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 2

Hearest Distinguished Lecture Series 2006: "Turning Your Brand Over To The Consumer" feat. Russ Klein (President of Burger King Brands, Inc.): 6:30 p.m., Mary Ann Wolf Theater (BBC) 

Writers on the Bay: 8 p.m., WUC 155 (BBC) 

Caribbean Student Association Festival: 5 p.m., DM 100 (UP) 

SPC General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 159 (UP) 

SPC Pan African & NPHC Fashion Show: 8 p.m., GC Ballrooms (UP) 

Advisory Council Meeting: 10 a.m., GC 2252 (UP) 

Symposia – 360 degree Design: 7 p.m., The Wolfsonian 

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 3

Campus Life Leadership Summit: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Wolfe University Center (BBC) 

SPC Cinema Fridays presents Saw II: 7 p.m., 10 p.m., GC 140 (FREE) (UP) 

Amernet String Quartet performs: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center (Concert Hall 170) (UP) 

SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 4

Panther Rage Southern Challenge: 1 p.m., Baseball Stadium (UP) 

Golden Panther Baseball hosts University of Central Florida: 1 p.m., University Park baseball fields - $5 (Adults), $3 (Seniors, children), Free (FIU Students with ID) (UP) 

Golden Panthers Men's basketball hosts Middle Tennessee in a Sun Belt Conference match: 7 p.m 

SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 5

SPC Campus Entertainment Super Bowl Tailgate: 6 p.m., Gracie's Grill (UP) 

Student Concert – Chamber Music Festival: 4 p.m, Wertheim Performing Arts Center (Concert Hall PAC170) (UP) 

--- Compiled by Reuben Pereira
Poetry club focuses on international issues

BY DIANNE DAWKINS
Contributing Writer

Imagine attending an event with no loud music, only cool lighting and a steep sound of African drums. A spotlight shines through darkness and brings a single poet and a microphone into sight. As the poet speaks with passion and personality, you lose yourself in the words, taking in everything that is said. This isn’t just any type of poetry; you are witnessing the art of spoken word.

The On Point Poetry Club is on the scene to bring people back to the world of spoken word poetry. "I do not think poetry is a lost art but I do think it is unappreciated," said club President Mara Moline. "I feel that the focus today is more on visuals that we see in a video, not on the actual words."

On Point Poetry was founded in May 2005 and has since been dedicated to bringing recognition to talented poets to the Biscayne Bay Campus.

On Point is also hoping to bring together the non-poetic students of BBC for something other than a party or comedy show. Although the club pays respect to other types of poetry, their inspiration comes from spoken word artists such as Maggie Estep, as well as music from The Roots, India Aire, and Angie Stone.

Spoken word poetry is an urban, artistic form of delivering a poetry aloud. It is performed in front of an audience rather than just written. It’s a form of poetry that has been around for decades and was a necessary oral tradition when poems could not be printed. Currently, the club is made up of three spoken word poets.

Each member has a specific style and message delivered in each line they speak. Christian Jeannot writes and speaks about love, social issues, Africa and religion. Elvia Brazil performs her words about love and emotions. And, Steven Ramirez promotes charity and awareness about AIDS, drugs, society, diversity and politics.

On Point Poetry is dedicated to bringing back the power of speech through both written and spoken word poetry, according to Moline.

With topics ranging from politics to poverty, On Point Poetry is more than just a club, it is a movement. "I want this club to awaken people and give them knowledge about what is really going on in the world around them," Moline said.

Not only does the club give unknown poets a place for exposure, it also gives them a place to expand their skills. "I give [members] homework every week," Moline said. "I will give them a word or idea to write about for the next meeting.”

These types of exercises challenge the poet’s creativity and gives them the opportunity to write about something they normally would not.

On Point Poetry also challenges poets by holding poetry contests. Most of the entries are spoken word and are performed, if you are too shy you can submit your poem in writing.

“I had no idea that there were spoken word events at this campus but, now that I know, I can’t wait to be a part of it," said Junior Suanne Walker.

“It is all about bringing us, as students together to hear and to learn what others have to say about the world that we share today," Moline said. "I hope that this year we can get more members to share their thoughts with us.”

For more information about On Point Poetry, students can join them every Monday from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. and again on Tuesday from noon to 1 p.m. in WUC 155.

Japanese ‘mind, sensibility’ learned through anime

BY LORA PINEDA
Contributing Writer

From "Sailor Moon" to "Pokémon" to "Dragon Ball Z," the popular form of Japanese cartoon known as anime has become a popular trend in the United States.

With the growing popularity of anime and manga, which are a Japanese comics, groups such as, Anything Goes Anime North, are developing among universities and colleges in America.

AGAN is a club at the Biscayne Bay Campus that is dedicated to the world of anime, manga and video games.

AGAN provides a place for Anime fans to come and enjoy anime together.

"The student who started it all just wanted a place where students and people from the community could come to watch and enjoy Anime," Folkman said. "[Students get to] see new titles and things they’ve never seen before, and are able to discuss the titles and meet new people with shared interests."

But AGAN is not just about watching anime and reading manga. It is also a place where members can learn about Japanese culture.

“I really want members and anybody who is interested to get an appreciation for Japanese culture," Pearson said. "I think anime and manga are windows into the Japanese mind and sensibility."

In the future, AGAN plans on holding a video game night. Non-members are welcome to take part in this event. AGAN meets every Wednesday from 5 - 10 p.m. in the BBC Library 124.

For more information, visit their website at http://www.fiu.edu/~aganime.
Review of death penalty necessary in Florida

By Christine Urbin
Contributing Writer

California lawmakers have proposed a bill that will put executions on hold so that they may re-examine the death penalty. Since the execution of Stanley “Tookie” Williams, founder of the infamous Crips street gang, the state of California has begun hearings on a bill that would suspend the death penalty until January 1, 2009, in my opinion, by the state.

Subverting the state’s death penalty law is not what is intended to be done, but rather to reassess the system to assure no inmates are needlessly executed. Other than California, New Jersey has been the only other state to propose a bill to suspend the death penalty for a few years.

According to the site deathpenaltyinfo.org, there have been 1,406 executions in the United States from 1976, when the U.S. declared it constitutional. Since 1973, over 120 people have been exonerated from death row across the country. Thirteen states including Alaska, Massachusetts and Michigan have abolished executions – declaring it morally incorrect and unconstitutional.

If all goes as planned, the state of California will put a stop to executions until 2009, pushing back anyone who is on death row another three years.

The three-year hold on executions will give California a chance to study its capital punishment system and make recommendations for reforms. Temporary death penalty suspension has the support of 73 percent of California voters, 40 percent of which voted for the death penalty in the past. Since all of this momentum is happening thousands of miles away, it may seem like it shouldn’t affect us too much, right? What if tomorrow Governor Jeb Bush decides he wants to follow in the footsteps of the lawmakers in California and do the same?

The state of Florida should, with an open mind, consider taking the same actions and putting a short hold on the death penalty. Along with all of the money the state will be saving and using for other important causes, reviewing capital punishment may be good for the system.

In California, after the execution of Stanley Williams some opponents have suggested that states should take a second look at their death penalty policy.

By J. Bennett Johnston
KRT Campus

Ferocious natural disasters and soaring federal budget deficits notwithstanding, 2005 was a robust year for the U.S. economy. Before rushing forward in any capital case since he’s been in office. It is impossible to really know if an inmate is guilty or innocent, but some time away from this act and we might actually find some other way to deal with this problem. Just as in the fictional movie The Life of David Gale, in which an innocent man is sentenced to death for a murder conviction in which he is innocent, the true verdict of a person is never absolutely known.

Perhaps Florida will wait and see how everything works out with California and New Jersey before deciding to follow in their footsteps. Yet in order for Florida to consider having this suspension occur as with any other proposal, a bill will have to be first proposed, accepted, reviewed by both houses of the Senate and then signed by Gov. Jeb Bush, the latter of which may prove to be most difficult.

Some time to study and make improvements on capital punishment may be exactly what is needed in order to be sure that as many problems with the system can be taken care of before it takes the lives of more wrongly convicted prisoners.

Big Oil ‘price gouging’ beneficial for U.S. in long run

By J. Bennett Johnston
KRT Campus

We all know the havoc wreaked by Hurricane Katrina. The emergence of full-throttle economies in China and India, nations whose peoples account for a third of the Earth’s population, has ratcheted up demand – and prices.

We avoided the prolonged energy crisis generated by the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo and the 1979 shut down of Iranian oil. There were no lines at neighborhood gas stations, no ‘odd-day, even-day’ pump rationing schedules, no widespread fuel shortages. Four months later, retail pump prices have returned to pre-hurricane levels, and they have done so without relying on federal price controls or new taxes on energy companies.

By contrast, the windfall profits tax of the 1980s proved harmful to U.S. energy supplies and consumers in many ways: reducing domestic oil production, increasing oil imports and depleting investment revenues for future energy production. Artificial price controls and windfall taxes on domestic energy producers are an unnatural inter- vention. They proved to be a bad idea when they were tried in the past. They are still a bad idea now.

A vibrant economy is a shared national asset. Let’s allow the markets to work the way they are supposed to, according to the natural laws of supply and demand. We will all benefit as a result.
New Canadian Prime minister expected to bolster ties with U.S.

BY CHRISTOPHER NECUZE
Opinion Editor

When you think of Canada, do you picture grand lakes, loons, or perusing currant books? Perhaps you think of hockey, cold weather, a single basketball team and that signature utterance after every phrase ‘eh’. Being unlike most people, when I think of Canada, I think of the politics, the policies and the liberals.

The latter has all but changed, thanks to the recent elections in Canada, which ousted the ruling liberal Party for the more conservative approach. I don’t know much about you, but it seems to me that Liberals everywhere are running out of places to hide.

The new Prime minister, Stephen Harper, has many things on his agenda that make liberals foam at the mouth. During his tenure as Prime minister, Harper plans to touch on same-sex marriage, abortion issues and seeks to (gasp!) lower taxes, just to name a few of his policies.

Social matters, however, may prove to be the mere tip of the iceberg when it comes to the Canadian political arena. Paul Martin, the outgoing Prime minister, has failed throughout his term to address many of Canada’s most pressing issues, such as the country’s embarrasing health care system.

Nevertheless, it will definitely not be easy for Harper. Winning 124 seats, compared to the liberals’ 103, the conservatives did win more seats in the parliament, coming to power, but the government is still minority-led as a majority stake would require the acquisition of 155 seats.

So what does this mean for us? On his “Live on Broadway” stand-up act, comedian Robin Williams described Canada as “the loft apartment over a great party.”

This new government will hopefully score our neighbor to the north an exclusive invitation.

What I mean by this is that a conservative government should better our relationship with Canada, a relationship that is becoming increasingly more important as oil from the middle-east either becomes more scarce or harder to get.

In 2003 alone there was over $460 billion (with a “B”) worth of trade between the United States and Canada, making it the United States’ most important trading partner. An even lesser known fact, but just as important, is that in 2005 Canada reported 178.8 billion (also with a “B”) barrels of crude oil reserves, making its reserves the second largest in the entire world, second only to Saudi Arabia.

Canada is the seventh-largest producer of oil in the world and it sends 99 percent of its crude oil exports to the U.S. In 2004, Canadian oil was the single largest component of all U.S. oil imports. The new Prime minister plans to develop the oil industry in Canada to increase output.

The Canadian public does, for the most part, have a general distaste for the Bush administration. Nevertheless, it is imperative that the U.S. and Canada repair relations. We are each other’s most valuable ally, and in times of need, you must be able to call upon your neighbor for help.

Terrorism policy missing the point

BY DANIEL CORDOVA
Contributing Writer

Osama is back. On Jan. 19, Bin Laden broke his 13-month silence and released a tape over the Internet. Dispelling rumors of his death, Bin Laden offered a truce and also warned Americans not to meet the needs of the terrorist organizations that continue to grow to this day.

How is Osama Bin Laden able to do this? Despite extremely advanced technology, highly trained specialists and a practically unlimited budget, the mighty United States government cannot seem to capture this man.

Many Americans, like myself, are wondering how one man has been able to trade special forces for four years my merely hiding in a cave when most people can’t even hide from telemarketers.

Are we any safer? Since the 9/11 attacks, billions of dollars have been poured into Homeland Security and, thankfully there have not been any more attacks in the U.S. since then. However, the level of paranoia has skyrocketed. A poll conducted by CBS News on July 15 showed that 94 percent of Americans believe there are terrorists inside the U.S. who are planning future attacks. People certainly don’t feel any safer.

But this isn’t the real problem. Having invested billions of dollars into establishing a democratic Iraq in the Middle East, one wonders if we are doing everything we can. The U.S. managed to overthrow a ruthless dictator, yet the very networks that spawned this ‘war on terrorism’ is still making home videos. Our efforts have not been concentrated in the correct places.

Amidst all the chaos, from 9/11 to Afghanistan to Iraq, few have dared to address the real problem: The fact that these groups have such a strong hostility toward the U.S. Is it their perception of our interference with their culture? Is it our unavailing support of the state of Israel?

What needs to be addressed is the driving force behind the hatred. We are spending time and money with new laws and regulations, such as the Patriot Act, that don’t address the real problem. We are going after the symptoms, not the virus.

Al-Qaeda, Hamas and other such fundamentalist groups are continuing to recruit new members, establishing an even wider network of ‘anti-American’ individuals who are willing to die for their principles. While we harass a grandmother because she brought her nail clippers in her carry-on, we should be focusing on quelling the efforts of terrorist organizations that continue to grow to this day.

The hatred toward the U.S. is prevalent in the Middle East. We need to go to war against this hatred. The best way to combat this is by reaching the people. To reach the people you must meet their needs; build a school, not a tank; supply medicines, not guns.

Our goal in this war should be to meet the needs of the people, to overcome the hatred and ultimately establish positive relations. Is this the plan of our administration? Maybe. The public has been kept in the dark about the real plan because they are not addressing the real problem, hatred.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are your thoughts on the University’s decision to increase the inter-campus shuttle bus fare?

- That’s total nonsense. If it keeps going up then it stops being useful.
- It’s fine. You still save some money.
- There’s another campus!

Total participants: 56
Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER
Hamas: The Palestinian political party, that has also been listed as a terrorist group by the European Union, Canada, Israel and the United States, has won a majority of votes in the Palestinian parliamentary elections. The defeated Fatah party has begun burning cars. Hooray for democracy!

LOSER
The United States: The economy grew at its slowest pace in three years, Iran is playing around with nuclear power, there are high fuel prices, the unemployment rate was 4.9 percent as of December and yes, there were democratic elections in Palestine, but Hamas! At least Chevron’s earnings rose a record 20 percent... oh wait that’s because of high fuel prices.

QUOTATION NATION

“Clearly what they did is unlawful. Government officials are not allowed to confiscate student newspapers. The information was obtained legally and by confiscating the newspapers they crossed the line.” – Mike Hiestand, legal consultant for the Student Press Law Center, commenting on the recent removal of The Beacon from newstands by FIU public safety on the night of Jan. 26.

“The success of the film demonstrates that Americans are much more accepting of gays and lesbians than ever before.” – Aferwork Aferwork, president of Stonewall Alliance, on the growing popularity of the controversial film Brokeback Mountain.

“I’ve heard disagreements: ‘preserve your gunpowder for the future.'” – John Kerry, the democratic senator, on his attempt to replace Justice Judge Samuel A. Alito’s nomination to the supreme court and on some of his fellow democrats’ attempts to stop him.

“Community service is an extremely worthwhile activity.” – Leonard Elbaum, professor for the physical therapy department at FIU, on the FIU AIDS walk for Orphans taking place Feb. 6 – an event he helped organize.
OSTALGIA

A fond look back at ‘80s and ‘90s pop culture

BY C. JOEL MARINO
Content Editor

Smurfs, Power Rangers, the Oregon Trail, Michael Jordan, Pogs, the Spice Girls, Saved by the Bell, Last Exit to Brooklyn and Sam Youn, both juniors, laugh and yell “I remember that!” every time a new object is added to the list, their faces full of excitement.

Like many college students around the country, both Andreu and Youn admit to having a fascination with this random recollection of cultural references from the ‘80s and ‘90s, usually making these lists with friends of the same age.

“There were so many things growing up, I don’t think I can say them all,” Andreu said. “It kind of makes you feel old.”

And feeling old may not necessarily be a bad thing these days.

From announcements that Steven Spielberg will produce a live-action version of the popular 20-year-old “Transformers” TV show to a continual praise of all things retro by music channel VH1, media markets across the country have begun to make a trend out of a very unlikely feeling: teenage nostalgia.

VH1 itself can be seen as a main pioneer in this profitable industry after its highly rated 2002 program “I Love The ’80s” was followed by shows on the ’70s and ’90s. Soon after, other cable networks like Bravo and E! began airing similar programming, eventually leading to a full out return of once-disposed pop material as remakes dominated the summer box office and old TV shows found new life on DVD.

“I hate it when I watch all those shows that have to do with stuff when I was a kid,” said freshman Jemelle Whitaker. “It’s like they’re giving me details on things I thought I had forgotten and it helps bring back a lot of good memories.”

Although Youn doesn’t watch many of these programs, he says he still can’t help reliving all those childhood memories because it allows him to bond with friends when they’re not doing much.

“Sometimes we’ll just be standing around, not doing anything, and then someone will just say, ‘Do you remember …?’ and we all join in,” he said, “It’s just something everyone’s been doing.”

Bennett Schwartz, an FIU associate professor in psychology, agrees that this popular impulse by adolescents and young adults is carried out in order to bring people of different backgrounds together while providing a shared identity.

“These common cultural memories both bind us together as a culture and also differentiate us from other cultures or, perhaps, sub-cultures,” he stated via an e-mail interview. “So your 15 – 25 [age group] is bonding by learning a set of common cultural icons and at the same time distancing themselves from the icons of their older peers and parents.”

However, Schwartz also states that there are certain recollections called “flashbulb memories” which register where a person was and what they were doing during important national events, usually tragic ones.

These sort of memories usually do not make it onto the wishful lists, and Schwartz maintains that shows like “I Love The ’80s” and the nostalgic-on-demand “Best Week Ever” (which magnifies the events of a previous week as though years had gone by since they happened) serve as positive memory cues to the otherwise negative cues of the flashbulb memories.

When asked why events like the explosion of the Challenger shuttle or the Clinton impeachment trials were not registered into nostalgic conversations, Youn stated that “we didn’t care back then about the news.”

“The Challenger exploded once, but the shows we loved played every day,” he said.

Whitaker agrees with Youn’s opinion and believes that remembering good, silly things from the past can be a helpful tool for teenagers just entering adulthood.

“The older you get, the more you think about serious subjects like everyday responsibilities and death. This helps people deal with it,” Whitaker said.

Even as Hollywood and the commercial mainstream try to cash in on this need for light-hearted closure, Schwartz thinks that, in the end, popular yearning for days past will continue as a struggle between the generational gap.

“I also think part of it is an attempt to understand the parental generation, hence the focus on the ’80s today,” he said. “When I was a kid, there were lot of TV shows and movies that took place in the ’80s, the coming-of-age time for my parents, [like] Happy Days, Back to the Future, etc.”

Even though Andreu sometimes feels annoyed by the reminiscence of older folk, she says that won’t stop her from being nostalgic herself.

“Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles,” Gameboys, “Full House,” skirts with leggings – I remember all these things because they remind me of special times growing up,” she said. “And that’s what really makes me happy.”

Power Rangers

Based on the Japanese “Super Sentai” television series, “Mighty Morphin’ Power Rangers” was a widely popular live-action children’s show that began in 1993. The series’ many incarnations are still popular.

Spice Girls

Selling over 45 million albums, the Spice Girls were the most popular girl group of the ‘90s. Each member had a distinct persona making the group relatable and accessible for young girls worldwide.

Gameboy

Originally released by Nintendo in 1989, the Game Boy handheld game system – along with its addictive best-selling game Tetris – became the ultimate car-ride companion for children of the day.
The nominations for the 78th annual Academy Awards will be announced Jan. 31. Many predict Brokeback Mountain will be one of the five films nominated for the Best Picture Oscar.

Also expected to get nominations are Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal for Brokeback Mountain, Philip Seymour Hoffman for Capote and Felicity Huffman for Transamerica. A common factor all these movies share is a gay character in the starring role. This has led some Oscar pundits to dub this year’s upcoming Academy Awards as the “gay Oscars.”

Many in the film world have heralded Brokeback Mountain as a landmark film because it’s the first gay-themed movie to potentially reach a mass audience. The western about two Wyoming ranch hands, Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist, who meet and fall in love in 1960’s Wyoming has picked up accolades from almost every major critic group across the country, including the Los Angeles Film Critics and the New York Film Critics Circle – widely considered the most prestigious film critic groups in the country.

Lines from the film, such as the now infamous “I wish I knew how to quit singing” are being used in everything from late night shows with Jay Leno, Jon Stewart and David Letterman, to parody skits, CNN and everything in between. The movie has become a pop culture phenomenon.

The film has received almost unanimous praise among the gay and lesbian community including FIU’s own Stonewall Pride Alliance.

“The success of the film demonstrates that Americans are much more accepting of gays and lesbians than ever before,” said Afework Afework, president of Stonewall Alliance.

Since the film’s opening in mid-December, controversy has plagued the film, mostly ignited by the controversy-fueling media. However, critics of the film are far and hard to find. Most of them, including conservative radio hosts and columnists have admitted that the film is beautifully written, shot and acted and deserves the praise it’s getting.

Audiences from the South and the Midwest are perhaps having the hardest time accepting a film of this nature. A theater in Utah banned the film from screening due to a personal bias of the owner, much to the dismay of the Utah audience.

“The reception towards the film from Christian groups and organization is going to be very negative,” said Daniel Alvarez, instructor of religious studies at FIU. “Because, particularly in the South and the Midwest, the dominant interpretation of Christianity that prevails is very conservative.”

Lesley Northup, associate professor of religious studies, agrees.

“It’s not a recruiting film as some may think,” Northup said. “We have the worst ideas of what a gay relationship is and we have never seen what a three-dimensional relationship between two men would be like.”

President George W. Bush, when asked about the film in a recent press conference, replied that he hadn’t watched the film but had heard of it. A visibly uncomfortable Bush had the opportunity to take a shot at the film but decided not to.

Despite the controversy and subject matter, the film continues to perform exceedingly well at the box office. Since its opening at six theaters on Dec. 9, the film has grossed $547,425, the highest per-showing average for any drama in film history. After the Golden Globes, it was the highest

BOY MEETS BOY: With Brokeback Mountain’s great success, controversial issues do not stand in the way of its widespread popularity.
Film addresses touchy issues

From COWBOY, page 7

As the grossing picture in America for three days. Thus far, it has grossed around $41 million and at the rate it’s going, with the upcoming Oscar nominations, the $100 million mark is easily within its grasp—not bad for a film that cost just $14 million to produce.

“The fact that it’s performing so well in states that aren’t known to be gay-friendly, sparks volumes on how [far] we’ve come as a society,” Afework said.

Some say the film is revolutionary filmmaking but others disagree.

“It’s a conventional romance and it follows the tradition of other Hollywood romance films. Boy meets Girl (Boy meets Boy, in this case), fall in love and fall out of love. It’s a conventional Hollywood film,” said Barbara Weitz, director of FIU’s Film Certificate Program.

The marketing department of the film hasn’t concealed the subject matter, although in some cities some award promos have depicted the men with their wives, implying heterosexuality. The poster of the film has drawn comparisons to the Titanic poster, implying that the marketing team is pushing the film as a conventional romance. It is, in the end, a love story like most love stories in films. And like Oscar-winning romances Titanic, The English Patient and Gone with the Wind, it is about a forbidden love.

“As time passes, there will be a better understanding that these people are humans, that they have feelings, that they are very much like us,” Alvarez said. “There’s such a great divide in our society. We view them as lepers, something impure or dirty. I’m very hopeful that a film like Brokeback Mountain will be a valuable contribution to breaking down these barriers.”

FORBIDDEN LOVE: Brokeback Mountain’s similarity to the Titanic movie poster suggests its marketing teams pushed for a conventional romance. Courtesy Photo

FORBIDDEN LOVE: Brokeback Mountain's similarity to the Titanic movie poster suggests its marketing teams pushed for a conventional romance.
BY BETSY MARTINEZ
Biscayne Bay Editor

The Department of Public Safety removed copies of The Beacon’s Jan. 26 issue at University Park and Biscayne Bay Campus on the night of the issue’s publication.

Public Safety Chief Bill King confirmed that the issue was removed pursuant of Florida statute 794.03, which states that it is “unlawful to publish or broadcast information identifying sexual offense victims.”

“There appeared to be a violation of a Florida statute that covers a sexual victim’s identity and we removed the newspapers to lessen the impact,” King said.

“We only did as we were told to do as far as removing the papers,” said King.

The order to remove the newspapers was handed down by Marcos Perez, vice president of administration and Cristina Mendoza, the University’s general counsel, according to King.

“We were protecting the rights of a person who may not have wanted her name released. She should be the person who gives the authority to print her information,” King said.

The Beacon published a story in which, at the time of publication, an alleged sexual offense victim was identified.

The story involved an FIU Public Safety officer, Frederick Currie, who was arrested and charged with allegedly sexually assaulting an 18-year-old woman while on duty July 8, 2005. The victim was not an FIU student, and Currie was placed on administrative leave with pay. Currie was charged and convicted of one count of sexual battery and one count of battery against the victim on Jan. 26.

The same day, Larry Lunsford, associate vice president of student affairs and university ombudsman, was contacted by Rosa Jones, vice president of student affairs and undergraduate education, and informed him of the situation.

“There was a misinterpretation of a statute. It was not intended to be censorship. They were looking at how to lessen the situation,” Lunsford said.

Lunsford recounted the criticism from The Miami Herald, cited by publishing a photo of ex-city commissioner, Arthur Tecle’s corpse laid out on The Miami Herald building lobby.

“Remember what The [Miami] Herald went through in publishing that? It’s sort of the same thing. [The Beacon] is being accused of and that is, ‘did [The Beacon] make a good judgement?’” Lunsford said.

Lunsford has served as advisor for three college newspapers.

Students fundraise for AIDS

BY JENNIFER MESA
Contributing Writer

FIU Honors College students, in collaboration with other organizations, will join in the FIU AIDS Walk for Orphans Feb. 6.

The 6,000 step walk will begin in the Betty Chapman Plaza. Each step will represent the 6,000 children who are left orphaned every year because their parents died from HIV/AIDS.

Junior Andrea Felix, along with a group from her honors course, Aesthetics, Values, and Authority, with Leonard Elbaum, a professor for the physical therapy department, started the fundraiser as a project for the course.

Elbaum’s physical therapy courses focus on kinesiology, the science of human movement and gait or walking-analysis.

It also covers historically important marches and walks, which inspired Felix and her group to organize the fundraise.

“Community service is an extremely worthwhile activity,” said Elbaum, who encouraged Felix to get involved with charitable walks after finding out that she was double majoring in economics and religious studies.

As the project progressed, Felix realized that it was “growing into something much bigger.”

Besides the Honors College, other contributing organizations include the Student Government Association and Baptist Health South Florida, among others.

All proceeds will be given to the Hope Initiative Program of World Vision, an international non-profit organization that focuses on “caring for orphans and children made vulnerable by the disease, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS with education based on biblical principles and advocating for effective programs that transform communities and save lives,” according to a press release.

While the group as a whole has not set any monetary goal to fundraise, they have agreed that their main goal is to raise awareness and support from the community, according to group member junior Robert Sobrado.

Another committee member, Junior Fritz Murphy has set a personal goal of $6,000.

Felix hopes for a turnout of at least 500 walkers.

For information on how to get involved go to www.firstgiving.com.

F.I.U.

FIU AIDS Walk for Orphans

• When: Feb. 6
• What time: 10:30 a.m.
• 6,000 step walk
• No registration fee
• Free T-shirts and snacks for walkers
• For more information visit www.firstgiving.com

Professionals to interview potentials

CAREER, from page 1

what they want out of their... Carr, said.

The Career Fair and Mega Career Week events are accessible to current, graduate or alumni students.

However, if students wish to be interviewed by companies on the day of the fair, they must register for Golden Panther Services at www.fiu.edu/career.

Students such as junior Jacqueline Toledo are taking advantage of Career Week. Toledo signed up for the workshops in order to obtain an internship.

“I’m interested in learning what’s out there job-wise,” Toledo, who is majoring in criminal justice, said. In addition to her personal benefits from the program, she feels that other students should engage in the event.

“I think it’s a lot of help. You’re studying to later on obtain a career. Attending is worth it,” Carr said.

Even if students do not want to attend this year’s events, Graham recommends that students should not delay their pursuit toward a career.

“Students should not wait and start to build their resumes now,” Graham said.

“That’s what [Career Services] is here for, to help them prepare.”

Those who want more information concerning the fair or Mega Career Week can visit the Career Service center in the Graham Center room 230 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Stop by GC 210 or WUC 124 and pick up an application!
Almonte says opponents, fans respect team more

Almonte, from page 12

this and that, but at the beginning of the season, coach Rouco [gives] everyone an opportunity to play in order to see who can play down the stretch ... now is when you need the people to play.

Everyone at the beginning was not buying into what we had to do for this year. We had people that we didn’t have last year, talent-wise, and we didn’t win the conference but we were a pretty hard team to beat. We have players like Ish [N'Diaye], Kenny [Simms], Jayce [Lewis], Cesar [Chavez-Jacobo] and myself that were here last year and played.

Now, over the last couple of weeks, people are buying into what we did last season and trying to play more inside, more hard nose basketball and they are seeing that it works.

Q: How far do you think this team can get this season? What needs to be done on a nightly basis for that to happen?

We can go as high as winning the conference championship, that is our goal but it’s not that I think about it; it is something that we can do.

Most of the teams that we have played in our conference don’t look much better. It’s not as if we are going into games thinking we are going to get beat.

Everyone knows that when we go on the road, we are going to play hard and compete and try and win all our games.

Last year, we would be on the plane and people would say, “It’s a loss.” People would come to play us and say, “It’s FIU, it’s easy,” but this year, you can see in the fans and the teams that they respect us a lot more.

If we keep playing the way we are playing, and keep doing what the coach wants us to do, sometimes as basketball players, you want to do this and shoot it here, but that’s not the way it is in college.

If everyone buys into what the coach wants us to do, we will play well and have a real good chance to win the conference.

For the rest of this interview, read the Thursday, Feb. 1 edition of “The Beacon”.

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Hialeah Park near highways; ideal for public transportation

HAILEAH, from page 12

like your getting rid of the Washington Monument. Some people who live in Hialeah don’t even know what’s on that plot of land.

Another problem facing the Hialeah Park location is that there are no major highways in its immediate vicinity, so traffic before and after games will make Hialeah traffic even more horrid than it already is.

The park is about two miles east of the Palmetto Expressway and Okeechobee Road and only four miles west of I-95. The biggest draw, however, would be its proximity to the Metro Rail station – literally a one-minute walk.

So, Palm Beach and Eastern Broward residents can take the Tri-Rail, connect to the Metro Rail and save the hassle of driving south on I-95 during rush hour.

On paper, the idea seems marvelous; on the team in wins and saves. Gonzalez enters its final season as the team’s closer.

As the starting first baseman last season, Lopez ranked among the top five on the team in multiple offensive categories – including first in walks, tied for first in doubles, second in RBI, third in runs scored, fourth in hits and total bases and fifth in home runs. Lopez will see some time in the outfield this season.

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A first-time conference honoree, Murray was one of only two Golden Panthers to start in all 62 games and made just one error the entire season. The Junior’s .261 batting average was third on the team and was a 142-point improvement from her freshman season. She also enjoyed a seven-game hitting streak to match the team’s third-longest of the season.

Powell had a team-high 10-game hitting streak (March 18 – April 9), which tied for fourth-longest in school history.

Help Wanted! College Student to serve as nanny for a young child. Must have morning classes. Bilingual and an education or related major preferred. In exchange, student will receive free room in MTV-penthouse, BMW, car insurance, free groceries and a small cash allowance. Contact Teddy @ 305-318-3973.

Airavation consulting firm looking for newly graduated students with excellent knowledge of either Korean, Japanese or Chinese who are available full time, who can travel occasionally with the right to leave and work in the U.S., excellent knowledge of Excel/ Spread Sheet/ formulas tables and office functions. Above position open for executive assistant, project manager, executive secretary and receptionist. Position also open for computer technician/ computer internet security specialist and web-designer/web programmer. Send a detailed resume with motivation letter to: Jobapplication@world-airline-service.com or by fax to (305) 675-0919.

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Help Wanted! College Student to serve as nanny for a young child. Must have morning classes. Bilingual and an education or related major preferred. In exchange, student will receive free room in MTV-penthouse, BMW, car insurance, free groceries and a small cash allowance. Contact Teddy @ 305-318-3973.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS
Senior forward talks about team

BY ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA
Staff Writer

With the Golden Panthers men’s basketball team on a two-game conference win streak and a 10-day layoff, The Beacon sat down with senior leader Ivan Almonte and spoke to him on the team’s struggles, their dreams for the season and a little about himself.

Almonte was an all-Sun Belt first teamer last season and a preseason all-conference player at the beginning of this season.

As of Jan. 30, Almonte is averaging 13.2 points per game and 11.4 rebounds per game this season. At one point in December Almonte ranked second in the nation in rebounds per game.

Q: Are things going the way you expected so far for the team?

Well, not really. You know we had the bad stretch; we lost 11 games and it was really hard for us. I got hurt a little bit and so did some of the other players, so it was really hard to find ourselves.

We have more talent this year, but we didn’t put everything together at the beginning of the season. After the last two games I think everybody is buying more into what [head coach Sergio Rouco] wants us to do, the things we have to concentrate on, like defense and playing hard.

I think everyone is playing together more and trying to win. Maybe at the beginning of the season things went the wrong way, but now we are picking it up and I think we can finish the season the way we expected.

Q: What needs to be done to fix these problems?

I don’t think we need to do a lot of changing. We just need to keep on playing hard, like in the last two games. When conference starts it is really hard to go out there and execute because everybody scouts you and knows what you are going to do.

Q: What were your sentiments down and I think we did pretty well for ourselves last year.

Q: Is this the kind of season you had expected or are they yet to get into stride?

Q: Comment a little on the output from the other players on the team. Are they playing the way you would have expected or are they yet to get into stride?

So, as homage to Hialeah Park, the new Hialeah stadium should have some of the greenery that graced the old park, a replica of its famous fountain and is now primarily used for wedding and quinceañeras pictures.

The biggest problem with construction on the land is that Hialeah Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The park is also an Audubon Bird Sanctuary because many pink flamingos live there.

What to do about that, you say? Get creative with the proposed stadium’s architecture. The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim have a water fall behind the center field wall. The Kansas City Royals have luxurious greenery and a water fountain behind their outfield wall in their stadium. The Miami Marlins have a freaking train that travels around the perimeter of the ballpark.

So, as homage to Hialeah Park, the new Hialeah stadium should have some of the greenery that graced the old park, a replica of its famous fountain and remain a sanctuary for the flamingos. Not many stadiums can say they have a bird sanctuary behind their outfield walls.

As for the whole National Register of Historic Places thing, it’s not