Nursing student fatally shot by brother

REUBEN PEREIRA  Asst. News Director

Damarys Blanco was a regular teen. She went to parties and nightclubs with her friends and wanted to pursue a degree in Nursing at FIU.

To the shock of friends and family, her body was found along with her grandmother’s, 67-year-old Amelia Gomez, covered in blood-soaked towels Sept. 20, according to The Miami Herald.

Alfredo “Freddie” Blanco, Damarys’ brother and Gomez’s grandson, murdered both of them then killed himself. Gomez suffered a wound to the hand, which could mean she tried to defend herself, according to the article.

Freddie Blanco’s suicide took place after an eight-hour standoff with Miami Police Department SWAT. They were able to enter the Southwest Miami-Dade home where Damarys Blanco, 19, was found shot and killed. Vanessa Reyes, Blanco’s aunt, remembered Damarys Blanco as someone who was very family oriented and helpful to others.

“She was very bright. She was very happy, very social, and dynamic; she was always very lively,” Reyes, a hairdresser at University Park’s Santís Unisex Hair and Nail Salon, told The Beacon.

According to The Miami Herald, neighbors of the Blanco household heard strange noises resembling gunshots Sept. 19 and Sept. 20.

“It was like thunder,” Ana Valdez said in that article. “I knew something bad was happening inside.”

Despite suspecting foul play, no one notified the police until Sept. 21.

Freddie Blanco was manic-depressive and wasn’t taken seriously by many, according to Evelin Suarez, a friend of Damarys Blanco since high school.

“He was always online, on playing video games and wasn’t very social,” Suarez told The Beacon. “He was so quiet that I didn’t realize something was wrong.”

FIU, local leaders disagree on Metrorail’s location

ANGELINA TROFF  Staff Writer

A station for the Miami-Dade County Metrorail is scheduled to arrive at FIU in 2015, but its exact location remains contested.

The debate came to a head at an East-West Corridor Meeting held Wednesday in the Graham Center. The current bus stops will adjoin to where the current bus stops are located.

If the 107th Avenue option is employed, there could be a stop at FIU’s Engineering Campus as well.

The Metrorail is a high speed, electrically powered form of elevated transportation that connects parts of the county.

This is, however, where consensus ends.

“As a student, I do not believe that if [the Metrorail] comes down the turnpike it will serve the interests of the school … We need to cater to the needs of FIU at a university, which involves it coming down 107th [Avenue],” said Providence Okoye, SGC-UP vice president.

The Sweetwater City Commission, however, passed Resolution No. 3246 on Sept. 11 calling for a Turnpike stop.

“Sweetwater does not want a train to go through our city. Sweetwater is less than one square mile, and this will divide the city,” said Vice Mayor Ariel Aberaliras.

“We have to work together. FIU needs to partner with us and not be what it’s been: the ugly stepchild across the street,” said Sweetwater Mayor Manny Manno.

In an attempt to mediate, Philip Stoddard, representing the Faculty Senate, considered the benefit to Sweetwater citizens.

“This can be an opportunity to bring together the two sides of Sweetwater,” Stoddard said.

Currently, Miami-Dade Metrorail averages about 59,000 riders daily. The Metrorail operating budget for the existing system for the 2006 fiscal year is more than $41 million and expected revenues are just over $17 million, according to the MDC-transit website.

The Sept. 20 forum was the second in a series of three public meetings regarding the Metrorail to take place that week. MDC publicized these meetings in a media release Sept. 14 on their website.

For more information, visit http://www.miamidade.gov/transit/metrorail.asp.

SGA creates window painting guidelines

IAN NATHANIEL COHEN  Staff Writer

Student Government Affairs recently passed Resolution 06-06 in order to set some guidelines and regulations with regards to the windows in FIU’s Graham Center which serve as a canvas for advertisements of upcoming events.

“It’s a good way to market, because it’s something that students can always see, and it’s cheap,” said Alfonso “Alfie” Leon, president of Student Government Affairs. “It’s free for students to do this.”

Resolution 06-06, which was unanimously passed by representatives of SGA Sept. 6, states that all FIU organizations, such as Campus Life, Panther Rage and the Student Organizations Council, are permitted to use the glass surfaces and windows on the first floor of GC to advertise upcoming events and programs to students in an attempt to “promote co-curriculum education through student programming and involvement.”

Prior to this resolution, there was no system in place regulating student organizations’ use of painted advertisements in GC.

“It’s a good way for students to see the events just quick information,” said Rosalyn Delgado, SPC Concerts Committee co-chair. “For MTVU, we had a couple of students come in looking for tickets, and they couldn’t find out about the concert and knew where to find the tickets because they saw our window paintings.”

The resolution, a result of collaboration between GC and SGA, places restrictions such as how long paintings can remain posted. According to the new rules, student organizations must reserve space through GC’s main office, and it is up to the discretion of GC as to which organizations receive priority.

Organizations must provide a start and end date for their advertising period, and all advertising must be removed within 24 hours after the end date or face a fine, the amount of which will be determined by the GC.
Permits now required to advertise

Teen is shot in Drive-By Killing

Family, friends mourn deaths

MIAMI TO MASERU: 12,991 kilometers

MELINDA BOONE/THE BEACON

Comedian, musician and independent gubernatorial candidate Kinky Friedman defended using a racial slur during a performance at a Houston nightclub 26 years ago after an audio clip of the stand-up routine was posted on the Internet.

Sixty-one-year-old Friedman said he has tried to expose and lampoon racism and was making fun of bigots when he used the n-word twice in a joke.

But state Representative and Former Chairman of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus Gammer Coleman said it’s difficult to find the humor in his joke after his remarks about Katrina evacuees in Houston in which he referred to them as crackheads and thugs.

“Think it’s a great idea,” said Alex Ravelo, Homecoming overall director. “It provides a little bit of uniformity when it comes to window painting, and it keeps our University center clean.”

The Graham Center came up to Student Government and they asked us for recommendations on what we’d like to do in terms of window painting, “said Leon. “It was something that was coming up in our committee talks — we needed to have a system, and the Graham Center didn’t know the best way to do it, so we developed the system.”

Inappropriate material, defined by the resolution as profanity, obscene language, or any language that demeans or discriminates against race, color, creed, age, disability, sex, religion, marital status, national origin or veteran status, is not permitted.

“We don’t want people using this as a way to debate things,” Leon said. “We want them to use it as a way to get students involved.”

SOC, which is the governing body for all clubs and organizations within FIU, was enthusiastic about the new regulations.

“Think it helps benefit the clubs,” said Elie Philippe, marketing director for SOC. “It gives them a new venue to advertise their events or anything they may have going on.”

Any organization interested in using window painting to promote activities can put in a request through GC’s main office in room 1232.

According to Suarez, Freddie Blanco was suicidal.

“He himself told his aunt a week and a half ago that he was going to kill himself and no one took him seriously,” Suarez said.

Following the tragedy, Damarys Blanco’s Facebook and accounts were flooded with friends’ messages recounting fond memories spent with her.

“I last saw her about a couple of months ago when we went to a [dance] club,” said Suarez. “We used to have so much fun together. It’s just really hard to believe she’s no longer with us.”

Clinical Research Study for Birth Control

Clinical Research of South Florida is conducting a clinical research study of an investigational oral medication for birth control.

Qualified participants will receive at no cost for up to 6 months:

• Periodic gynecological exams
• Investigational oral birth control medication

Females that are 18-45 years of age, sexually active, and have regular menstrual cycles may be eligible for participation.

Compensation up to $150.00 is available for time and travel.

For more information about this research study please call 305-445-5637 extension: 233

Participation is completely voluntary.

Friedman under fire for past racial slurs

For more information about this research study please call 305-445-5637 extension: 233
SOC club fair aims to entertain students

REUBEN PEREIRA
Asst. News Director

With the academic year completing its first month, many students have been fishing around campus for different organizations and clubs to join. However, this week, students will get the opportunity to join and learn about more than 140 different clubs on campus.

Every semester, the Student Organizations Council, the governing body for every registered student club on campus, organizes a club fair to allow these student clubs to promote themselves and recruit new members. This semester’s fair, which takes place from Sept. 25-28, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Graham Center forum, will feature performances by numerous clubs, Hawaiian Hula dancers and daily pizza eating contests.

“We’re planning to promote all the clubs,” said SOC President Francys Crevier. “The council has planned entertainment for the event but the most interesting aspect is going to be the demonstrations by student clubs.”

To keep with the tradition of a regular fair, SOC Events Coordinator Anthony Munyaka and Crevier organized and planned activities such as a Limbo dancing contest and a daily Hawaiian Pizza eating contest where winners will be awarded SOC gift packets and towels.

“For this semester’s fair, we were looking for something fun to involve all the students who pass by,” said Crevier. “We’re going to be giving away SOC sandals, which has never been a giveaway before. There’s going to be hula dancing, free food and free t-shirt airbrushing.”

Clubs interested in being a part of the fair have to register with the council as soon as the dates are announced because the number of tables assigned are limited as compared to organizations.

“The clubs that get the tables are always selected on a first come, first serve basis,” Crevier said.

On Sept. 25, academic and engineering clubs such as the American Chemical Society and the Society of Physics students will get the opportunity to demonstrate the activities of their clubs.

“The chemistry and physics clubs usually have had dry ice demonstrations at previous club fairs,” Crevier said.

“During the dry ice demonstration, the clubs insert balloons into dry ice and give out frosted balloons to students.”

Social Clubs, which comprise of some of the largest clubs in the SOC get their chance to promote themselves Sept. 26.

Popular clubs such as the Black Student Union, the Caribbean Students Association, and the Indian Students Association, who usually host large scale events and parties on campus are expected to perform cultural demonstrations to students. Wednesday, Sept. 27, will be geared to art, health and sports clubs such as the FIU Soccer Club and the Student Dance Association.

The last day of the fair, Sept. 28, will be reserved for the business, political, religious and service clubs.

Even relatively new clubs such as the FIU College Democrats, the Bowling Club and Amnesty International are encouraged to participate in the fair.

“It’s not necessary for new clubs to participate in the fair, but it is encouraged,” Munyaka said in a previous Beacon article. “It would be dumb not to do so because the fair is a great opportunity to promote and recruit.”

According to Crevier, the best thing about the club fair is many people realize that there are a lot of unique and fascinating clubs that they didn’t know existed.

---

Getting Started

The Beacon – September 25, 2006

www.beaconnewspaper.com

Looking for a Solid Foundation to Start Your Career On?

Sales Coordinator

We’ll provide you with training in all the basics of our business as you play a vital role in territory sales development. You’ll work closely with customers to identify their needs and coordinate deliveries as well as create daily business reports and assist in overall operations. All we ask is that you be customer focused with an attention to detail and able to work in a fast-paced industry.

In return, we offer a competitive salary, great benefits including 401 (k) with company match and the opportunity to quickly advance into outside sales or branch management. Take the first step to joining us by visiting our booth at the career fair or e-mailing your resume to BSimmons@hertz.com. EOE, drug free environment.

GOT THE SCOOP?

Stop by The Beacon office if you’ve got an interesting story. Apply in GC 210
Research institute hosts discussion on future of Cuba

As part of its continuing lecture series—"Between Fidel and Raul: What’s Next For Cuba?"—the Cuban Research Institute will host "Democratic Transition in Cuba: Possibilities for Change," a panel discussion moderated by renowned academic Frank Mora Sept. 27 at University Park.

The lecture series analyzes the state of current events in Cuba.

At the event, the second in the series, Mora is expected to discuss the findings of a recent report published by the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, which, along with discussing a push for democratic change, suggested recommendations to help a future Cuban democratic government overcome the social, economic and political issues with Fidel Castro’s government.

Mora will discuss democratic transition in Cuba, according to Uva de Aragón, associate director of the CRI.

"He’s a very well informed academic and has a deep understanding of the reality in Cuba," de Aragón said. "It is important for the faculty, students and the community in Miami to know about the reality on the island."

Mora, a professor of National Security Strategy at the National War College in Washington, D.C., has published more than 20 academic journal articles and book chapters on civil-military relations in Latin America, U.S.-Latin American relations, drug trafficking as well as the Latin American political economy and Cuban politics and military.

The first panel discussion, held Aug. 9 in the Graham Center Ballrooms at UP, was hosted by Damian Fernandez, current interim vice provost of the Biscayne Bay Campus and director of the CRI, Javier Corrales, a political science professor at Amherst College and Anthony Maingot and Lisandro Pérez, professors of sociology.

Although the certainty of events in the "Between Fidel and Raul" series will depend on the changes in Cuba, Alma de Rojas, coordinator for the CRI, is confident that there will be more panels in the near future.

"Right now, this is the last one on our calendar but there will definitely be more," de Rojas said.

De Aragón hopes many students show up to the event although she admits that it would be hard to know for sure how many will actually attend.

"It’s always hard to know how many people will show up unless professors make students come in for extra credit," said de Aragón. "We do it at this time because it’s easier for students to come and we hope there’ll be many Cuban-American students because this affects their lives, and it gives them an understanding of their roots and community."

Founded in 1991, the CRI is the nation’s leading institute for research and academic programs on Cuban and Cuban-American issues, according to the Latin American and Caribbean Center at FIU.

The institute employs the expertise of more than 40 FIU faculty members who are spread across various different colleges of the University. The institute has also supported trips to and from Cuba by FIU faculty and students in Cuba.

Apart from the “Between Fidel and Raul” series, de Aragón expects the CRI to host many other events throughout the year including a day-time lecture series focused mainly towards students of the University, a series focusing on the relationship between Cuba and the Caribbean and a series on Cuban musicians.

"I really would like students to come to these events as they are very pertinent to our own lives in Miami," said de Aragón. "What happens in Cuba in the next few years is going to affect this University, Miami and many families who live here."
When Sabrina Gonzales, a self-proclaimed “bridezilla,” was searching for the perfect place to hold her wedding reception, the Roz and Cal Kovens Conference Center at the Biscayne Bay Campus was the last place she would ever consider.

“When you hear FIU, you think ‘Ugh, I don’t want to get married on campus,’” but when you go to see the place, you understand why it’s so popular. “It’s really beautiful,” she said.

The conference center is not only known for hosting corporate events, but also weddings and private parties. It has become a go-to spot for many couples who are looking for a unique and beautiful setting for their special day.

“For every so often, the sounds of fiddles and violins, the laughter of guests, the clinking of glasses, the smell of food, and the beauty of the building itself, create a perfect wedding venue,” Gonzales said.

The conference center offers a spacious and versatile event space, with the ability to accommodate events of all sizes. The center also provides a variety of services, including catering and event planning.

“People come to us with their vision for their event, and we work with them to bring it to life,” said Seenu Ramalinni, director of conferences for Catering and Event Design.

As a result, the conference center has become a popular choice for weddings, with many couples expressing their satisfaction with their experience.

“Every window you opened was filled with the scent of flowers,” said Elie, a wedding guest.

“For the reception, we wanted a wedding by the water,” said Gonzales. “It was so beautiful. It was a perfect fit.”

Gonzales and her husband had a cocktail hour for their 250 guests after the ceremony on the terrace of the conference center.

Guests were able to dine on the terrace, which overlooks the bay, with a stunning view of the sun setting over the water. The conference center requires an additional deposit of $1,000 for catering.

Elie planned the wedding with the conference center 10-months before the event was to take place.

The conference center helped Elie get in touch with a decorator, put together the candle centerpieces, and go over the budget for the wedding.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

“We wanted a wedding by the water,” said Gonzales. “It was so beautiful. It was a perfect fit.”

Gonzales and her husband had a cocktail hour for their 250 guests after the ceremony on the terrace of the conference center.

Guests were able to dine on the terrace, which overlooks the bay, with a stunning view of the sun setting over the water. The conference center requires an additional deposit of $1,000 for catering.

Elie planned the wedding with the conference center 10-months before the event was to take place.

The conference center helped Elie get in touch with a decorator, put together the candle centerpieces, and go over the budget for the wedding.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

“We wanted a wedding by the water,” said Gonzales. “It was so beautiful. It was a perfect fit.”

Gonzales and her husband had a cocktail hour for their 250 guests after the ceremony on the terrace of the conference center.

Guests were able to dine on the terrace, which overlooks the bay, with a stunning view of the sun setting over the water. The conference center requires an additional deposit of $1,000 for catering.

Elie planned the wedding with the conference center 10-months before the event was to take place.

The conference center helped Elie get in touch with a decorator, put together the candle centerpieces, and go over the budget for the wedding.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

“The conference center helped make our wedding so much easier,” said Elie. “They were really very helpful. We were very comfortable at all times and understanding of our needs, she said. The FIU alum married Gregory Elie on July 8. The ceremony took place at the first floor entrance of the center.

A gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.
Retreat empowers women, stimulates intellect

The Women’s Center’s goal is to empower women by providing programs that stimulate their intellectual, professional, social and emotional growth. The creation of the Sisterhood Retreat is an extension of the services already offered by the center, such as mentoring programs, women’s forums and special interest groups, set in a more intimate, concentrated locale and without any distractions, Bauta said.

Warshaw agreed. “We wanted to get women the women to get away from FIU in order to explore their bodies, themselves, and explore their personalities,” Warshaw said. The retreat is currently being planned by a host of student leaders from several on-campus organizations, such as University Park student housing, the Women’s Center in both UP and Biscayne Bay Campus, Multicultural Programs and Services, the Women’s Studies Student Association, the Graduate Student Association and Stonewall.

“If we’re going to make an event that students enjoy, we want to involve them in the planning process,” Onorato said. These leaders, which include Bauta, came together at a meeting on Sept. 20 at the UP Women’s Center office to brainstorm and plan some of the activities for the retreat. The activities planned for the event are being kept a secret in order to surprise the participants. However, it was revealed that the workshops for the retreat are going to deal with day-to-day issues such as body image, health, sexuality and spirituality. “These workshops are going to be about understanding who you are as an individual and as a woman and working with the women in a group,” Warshaw said.

On multiple occasions, the activities of the retreat will encourage the women to detail things they would like to accomplish for themselves. The retreat will also challenge the participants to define their own personal value systems and explore how their beliefs can be a catalyst for change at the university.

“The university is investing a lot in them,” Onorato said. “We want to see them give back.” Sophomore Sarah Cadwallader is already planning on attending the Sisterhood Retreat after learning about it in her Introduction to Women’s Studies class.

Though she has never been to any of the events offered by the center, the retreat has piqued her interest. “It seemed like an excellent opportunity to bond with your fellow sisters and have a great time,” Cadwallader said.

Bauta hope students like Cadwallader will really take advantage of such an opportunity. “Women in our society don’t traditionally have a place to develop their leadership skills, and having that time and space away from the patriarchy gives them the resources that they need to really let their power shine through,” Bauta said.
The Bush Administration contends that our purpose in Iraq is to establish a democracy and that the war in Iraq is about “freedom” and “liberation.” That’s a very clever argument. Who doesn’t love freedom or democracy?”

This misleading framing of the Iraq issue begs the question: What if our troops were to vote on this issue? Would they want to “stay the course” in Iraq? Or do they feel their mission is accomplished and want to go home?

According to the most recent poll published by Zogby International back in late February, 72 percent of American troops stationed in Iraq believe that they should leave within a year. According to another recent poll conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes and World Public Opinion Online, 70 percent of Iraqis favor a pullout of U.S. troops within two years and 87 percent favor a timetable for withdrawal.

These findings, coupled with growing American opposition to this war, point to a growing need for this nation to redepoly its forces, in the name of our security and the popular will. Currently, there are two major Democratic plans for dealing with Iraq, as proposed by Senator Joe Biden, Delaware, and Representative John Murtha, Pennsylvania.

Biden calls for the establishment of three provinces, giving the Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis partial control over each region. The Kurds in the north have long separated themselves from the rest of the country, forming their own separate society in northern Iraq, which they call Kurdistan. The rest of the country would be split between the two warring factions.

All three regions would answer to the central government, which would deal with national issues like border security and oil revenue-sharing. This plan could stabilize Iraq, and allow our troops to leave.

Murtha’s plan, which was proposed in mid-2005, calls for the “redeployment” of American troops. When this plan was first proposed, it sent shockwaves through Washington. Murtha, a former Marine colonel who served in Vietnam, has long had a reputation for being a tough-minded hawk.

After talking with several generals and pondering the Iraq issue, he proposed sending most of our troops home, while keeping a small force in the region in case trouble arises. If Al-Qaeda establishes a “terror camp” in Iraq, our troops can swoop in and take them out. If they need more people in Afghanistan, they can enter the country and assist NATO.

What’s more, the Iraqi people would be given control of their country. Rumsfeld and Bush have long been touting Iraqi security forces, claiming that we’ve trained hundreds of thousands.

Let’s take them at their word, and let those forces take over. “Mission Accomplished,” you say? Great, then let’s get the hell out already.

I am not going to try and convince you that the war in Iraq has been the easy victory that Bush promised. Nor am I going to paint a rosy picture of the situation in that region of the world; the situation is anything but rosy.

Unfortunately, that situation has escalated to a conflict so heated that it has surpassed even the direst pre-war predictions. As President Bush has made clear time and time again, the war in Iraq has become the epicenter of the war against Islamic radicalism. Victory in that theater is vitally important and failure is out of the question.

With every passing day, more and more Iraqi civilians are being killed by Muslim insurgents. Not only do they have no regard for the life of their own people, they also show complete disrespect for Muslim traditions and have ignored the peaceful nature of their god for selfish gain.

It is important that we understand the enemies we are fighting if we are to determine how to defeat them. While the overwhelming truth is that Muslims are the ones who are killing Muslims, the United States, and specifically President Bush, still gets the blame for the increase in violence.

Abu Ghraib and other isolated incidents like it go on a long way in defacing the good name of the United States and giving our enemies ammunition to use against us.

I even though they are the ones stripping on explosives and blowing themselves up in a crowded mall or mosque.

A new direction is needed in Iraq. Whichever path we choose, however, it must be one that includes the annihilation of the insurgency in Iraq.

The Democrats’ plan for Iraq is to establish a democracy, and that the war in Iraq is to establish a democracy. Who doesn’t love democracy, and that the war in Iraq is to establish a democracy? Or do you feel our purpose in Iraq is to accomplish that? The answer is not an option.

I respect a man like Murtha. Any man who has served in the armed forces and fought for my freedoms has earned my respect for that alone. But Murtha’s plan is flawed. As far as I am concerned, he is the only member of the Democratic Party with a realistic plan — flawed as it is — to leave Iraq.

My Republican colleagues will have you believe that Murtha’s plan could be summed up in three words: cut and run. Even though I disagree with the plan, after reviewing it, even I must admit that this is not true. Murtha’s plan includes things that in an ideal setting would be achieved; however, he fails to propose how we would get to that point.

One problem I have with Murtha’s plan is that it imposes restrictions on anti-terrorism operations in Iraq. The problem with the “quick response” forces that Murtha talked about in a Nov. 17, 2005 press release in which he outlined his plan is that they are response forces. U.S. forces need to be actively engaged in the enemy, not simply waiting and responding.

Second, although a redeployment of U.S. troops would be lovely, it is unreasonable to presume that the Iraqi armed forces are yet capable of handling their own security.

Before we can consider moving our troops elsewhere, control of Iraq’s 18 provinces must handed over to Iraqi forces. Currently, only two have been handed over so far, the most recent of which took place on Sept. 22.

There are certain things that the United States must do to ensure that Iraq will be a safer place in the long run and a beacon of peace throughout the Middle East.

Though the issue of Iraq splits this nation, solutions to the problem are really non-partisan. Unlike issues like abortion in which liberals and conservatives disagree on fundamental levels, it is in the best interest of everyone that the conflict in Iraq is won.

We are entrenched in a war where the enemy is testing our resolve and trying to break our will. We must face them with renewed conviction and hunt them where they sleep. We must finish the job in Iraq; failure is not an option.
Homesick students find comfort in nostalgia

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

It’s a sentiment found in the kindergarten going to school for the first time, or in the third grader headed to summer camp, or even in the adult who spends countless hours on planes and in hotels on business. But perhaps the feeling hits no demographic harder than college students leaving home for the first time: homesickness.

Not only can everyone relate to homesickness, but also it has been a motif in ancient literature. In Homer’s Odyssey and other epics, the hero is motivated by homesickness to brave countless foes, mainly to reach the peace and comfort of “home.” Chances are that homesick FIU students haven’t exactly had the drama of braving any foes recently just to go back home for a visit, but admitting that the move to Miami has brought on nostalgia is the first step in getting over homesickness and moving on.

Senior Melissa Hernandez, who moved from Chicago to Miami last year, first experienced homesickness when she realized that she was missing out on regular family activities.

“I hadn’t really gotten homesick at all until today when I found out my entire family was at a White Sox game and I was 1200 miles away,” Hernandez said. “What makes me most homesick is hearing that friends and family back home are doing something that I can’t do here in Miami such as going to Sox games and raking leaves.”

At first, the causes of homesickness seem obvious – it means missing the people and things you love fueled by being thrust into a completely new environment. Naturally one would rather be around what’s familiar and comfortable instead of making the extra effort of getting used to something new. But homesickness is even connected to some deeper identity issues, as some research has claimed. When one is homesick in a completely new world, that’s when people start asking, “Where are you from?”, “Why are you here?” and “Do you like it here?” It’s the time to make some decisions about who you are, and who you aren’t.

English Senior Reshma George had never been very far from home for long until Spring 2006, when she decided to leave the Pacific island of Guam and become an exchange student here at FIU. She chose FIU because as soon as she saw “international” in the name, George knew it could offer the kind of diversity she was looking for. She’s excited to be here, but now it’s her second semester and as some of the novelty wears off, homesickness creeps in.

“This semester I’ve worked at the front desk [in housing],” George explained. “Seeing parents checking in with students, I know I don’t have that. I don’t have anyone in Florida.”

Because Guam is on the other side of the world, she’s excited that she gets to go home for Christmas, especially since most of her friends get to go home much more often than she does.

“I miss my Mom’s cooking, home-

Telling someone they stink – a public service

Having consistently good personal hygiene is a life-long goal that I would put right up there with winning the lottery or working for Rolling Stone. For some, however, taking the time to roll a stick of deodorant underneath the arm is like wasting time to tie your shoes when you’re late for class. I’m not passing judgment, though. America is the land of the free and smelling rancid is some unwritten right in the constitution, along with laughing too loud at a movie theater or asking a bank teller 16,000 questions when clearly there’s a long line behind you.

There is, however, a limit to the mad-

ness. Didn’t someone important once say the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few? If you’re working in an enclosed office with recycled air being pumped out of the vents and you smell

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CUTRO

Some feel stereotypes linger after high school

STEREOTYPE, page 9

Telling someone they stink – a public service

Having consistently good personal hygiene is a life-long goal that I would put right up there with winning the lottery or working for Rolling Stone. For some, however, taking the time to roll a stick of deodorant underneath the arm is like wasting time to tie your shoes when you’re late for class. I’m not passing judgment, though. America is the land of the free and smelling rancid is some unwritten right in the constitution, along with laughing too loud at a movie theater or asking a bank teller 16,000 questions when clearly there’s a long line behind you.

There is, however, a limit to the mad-

ness. Didn’t someone important once say the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few? If you’re working in an enclosed office with recycled air being pumped out of the vents and you smell

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CUTRO

Some feel stereotypes linger after high school

STEREOTYPE, page 9
Conformity influences existence of college-level stereotypes

STEREOTYPE, page 8

than they ever had in high school. Rather than only associate with those that have similar interests, college students tend to branch out and no longer maintain the fade they once donned in high school.

Yet social pressure and a desire to fit in also pushes students to form groups and join clubs, and even at the college level negative stereotypes can still continue to linger.

On campus the strongest stereotype that does seem to exist is the one surrounding fraternities and sororities.

“Many of people think I’m a bully and do nothing but get drunk,” said sophomore Riquet Caballero, a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity.

According to Caballero, being in a fraternity is really about being in a group. The group tries to do as much community service as possible.

“We do parties, but it’s not like you see in the movies,” Caballero said.

Sorority members also tend to be negatively stereotyped.

“People assume you’re an airhead,” said Sophomore Cindy Torres, a member of the Sorority Alpha Omicron Pi. “It’s really about networking and meeting a lot of new people on top of the community service.”

Some students expect the worst when they transition into college, but at times those notions are unfounded.

“I thought there would be a lot of stereotyping, but there is not,” said freshman Junior Nunez.

For some, the less structured nature of college life can be surprising.

“It’s a lot more laid back. People don’t do it like they did in high school,” said freshman Alexandra Casanova.

Some, however, think students continue to stereotype. Take the group of male students who hang around in the Graham Center playing video games. In passing, one would assume they are nerds playing a video game all day. But for those who take the time to talk to them one-on-one will realize they are just students passing time in between classes.

“A lot is based on how you look,” said senior Robin Butkovitz. “If you deviate from the normal appearance, people assume things about you.”

While stereotypes are not as prominent as they were when you were in high school, they still linger. If you take a walk around campus it’s likely you’ll see a group you won’t find hard to label.

“Use stereotypes to help us categorize others and understand the world better,” Stephens said.

At best, higher education is a form of learning to view events and people in a new light. So before you go assuming the jock is an airhead or the sorority girl is a bimbo, go talk to them. You may discover something new.

Tact necessary when confronting friends about body odor

STINK, page 8

like a youth fair pony ride, this is unacceptable. And no matter what the Constitution says or doesn’t say about smelling bad, air pollution is a very real amendment punishable by law.

Telling someone they stink is a sensitive issue. When you say, “Your smell hurts my nose,” it’s comparable to “Your face hurts my eyes.” Both of these statements end with the speaker hitting the offender a secret Santa gift you can get or whatever. This is probably one of the only true examples of a gift that keeps on giving.

Use your resources to your advantage. I know that college freebie fairs give out mini-sticks of deodorant. You can approach the offender with, “Hey, look what I got in GC!” and offer the person one, or five or as many sticks as you can carry.

You know now things have really gotten bad when you start coughing violently as your coworker reaches past you for a stapler.

If things really get desperate you can always mail this drawing to the offender. I think it’s to the point:

If anything, I hope this article can be a catalyst for action. We can always clip this article out of this newspaper and give it to the offender attached with a note that reads: “Hey Bob! Read this funny article. Aren’t you glad we don’t know anyone with this problem? Haha!”

Just don’t forget to cut off this paragraph. I can’t be held liable for that. Good Luck.

STRATEGIC THINKER. FINANCIAL GURU. UM MBA.

Jose Hernandez-Solaun Vice President — General Electric Capital Solutions

The University of Miami’s MBA Program was ranked 1 in Florida by corporate recruiters in The Wall Street Journal. Which means you’ll gain more than the knowledge to lead, manage and motivate. You’ll be part of a renowned alma mater that can open doors across the nation — and around the world.

And you can do it with the convenience of choosing from a One or Two Year program. Both programs are fully accredited by AACSB International — the most prestigious accrediting association for business schools in the world.

CAMPUS VISIT
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20TH AT 11:30AM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ROOM 4CB 530 ONE YEAR PROGRAM BEGINS JANUARY 2007.

RSVP 806.531.7137 MBA@MAMI.EDU WWW.BUS.MIAMl.EDU/GRAD
If you haven’t heard of Citizen Cope, picking up their newest album, Every Waking Moment, is not a good way to introduce yourself. But, if you think you’d like hip hop-infused urban blues-rock a bit reminiscent of Everlast and Arrested Development and rapped out by Greenwood’s smooth John Legend-esque pacing, by all means pick up this very self-titled debut. Sadly, since then Greenwood has been gradually losing his creativity, and Citizen Cope’s new album is leagues below its two predecessors.

The good news is that the first track is the most musically ambitious, so the ones that follow sound better. … until you sit down and listen to the whole album in one sitting. Greenwood has never been a strong lyricist, and his band couldn’t pick a style, so they haphazardly borrowed from genres only to wind up sounding confused.

The minute people find out I am half Thai they ask me the same question, “Where is the best place to eat Thai food?” Although there is an array of decent Thai restaurants that dot the Greater Miami area, few stand out as more authentic fare. Panya Thai in North Miami Beach may be unframed and low-key but the food has an authentic flare that few others are able to boast about.

Panya’s relaxed atmosphere and characteristically soft-spoken Thai waitresses both lend well to a pleasant Thai experience. If you don’t frequent Thai restaurants, their small staff will be more than happy to explain the dishes and alter them to suit your taste buds. Don’t be scared by the notion that Thai food is extremely spicy. Although Thais love the heat of the bite of hot peppers, practically any dish can be made milder and yet still retain its flavor.

Panya’s menu is extensive, offering food that is accessible to both the play-it-safe individual and the bold eater. Its appetizers range from the everyday to dishes that even I was surprised to find they offered. Its beef satay (thick slices of beef marinated in soy sauce, peanut butter and garlic) is a Thai favorite and often a hard find. Don’t be pleased. The best track is a sore thumb. Greenwood isn’t joking. It is “A, E, I, O, U.” And no, Greenwood had shelled out a little cash to get the real thing. This is evident in this entirely instrumental tenth track, “Awe.” There are no synthetic sounds or layering, and the band’s talent is showcased in their finger-snapping, horn and cymbal-infused four-minute arrangement. It is also painless. Though there is no hip hop or blues or rock on this track, it is jazz, wonderfully pure jazz.

The worst example of this last track, “Left for Dead;” the entire chorus is “A, E, I, O, U.” And no, Greenwood isn’t joking. It makes you wish this unintentional humor came at the middle of the album to break up the monotony of the other less humorous choruses, which eventually evolve into the only lyrics for their song.

The only bright spots on Every Waking Moment are the musical arrangements. Few groups can pull off hip-hop infused blues-rock well, and while Citizen Cope is close, it’s not quite a good album.

Although the music arrangements are beautifully simple with perfect, not overly percussive beats, the instruments sometimes fail. Many tracks feature synths strings and a synth

---

**FOOD**

Panya Thai
520 NE 167 St.

LALINDA DE LA FUENTE
Staff Writer

The minute people find out that I am half Thai they ask me the same question, “Where is the best place to eat Thai food?” Although there is an array of decent Thai restaurants that dot the Greater Miami area, few stand out as more authentic fare. Panya Thai in North Miami Beach may be unframed and low-key but the food has an authentic flare that few others are able to boast about.

Panya’s relaxed atmosphere and characteristically soft-spoken Thai waitresses both lend well to a pleasant Thai experience. If you don’t frequent Thai restaurants, their small staff will be more than happy to explain the dishes and alter them to suit your taste buds. Don’t be scared by the notion that Thai food is extremely spicy. Although Thais love the heat of the bite of hot peppers, practically any dish can be made milder and yet still retain its flavor.

Panya’s menu is extensive, offering food that is accessible to both the play-it-safe individual and the bold eater. Its appetizers range from the everyday to dishes that even I was surprised to find they offered. Its beef satay (thick slices of beef marinated in soy sauce, peanut butter and garlic) is a Thai favorite and often a hard find. Don’t be pleased. The best track is a sore thumb.

---

*This article includes dates and prices where applicable. For more information, please visit our website.*
If you’re looking for the family film of the year with the celebrity cast and the
11
of the year, you can’t go wrong with Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit

Gentilis of Nazareth” is most
certainly not your destination.

Without doubt, one of the most offen-
sive movies ever made, Borat insults just
about everyone – Jews, Gays, Women,
Christians, Gypsies, Blacks, Hispanics,
Asians, the American government, the
American national anthem and even the
country of Uzbekistan, not to mention
Kazakhstan, the home nation of Borat.

However despite offending all of the
above, the movie is still the funniest
thing I’ve seen in my life. Don’t believe me?
What other movie would feature a seven
minute physical fight between two
butt-naked Arab men (Borat and his obe-
se manager) battling it out in a hotel room?
The fight moves from outrageous and
disgusting to outright ridiculous as Borat
and his obese manager take their physical
and sexually suggestive fight from their
room into the hotel lobby and finally into a
Mortgage Brokers Convention at the hotel
ballrooms. Oh, and during this whole time,
they’re cursing at each other and screaming
like girls in an incomprehensible Rus-

Films

Borat

Unub Periera

Asst. News Editor

Book deals, movie adaptations underscore professors’ careers

bun.

light” introduces Thorn, a
hermit living in Key Largo
who has a dark secret hidden
in his past. It is about
March 1, 2007. It is about

Hall scored his first book
contract after an agent read a
short story he had published in
a literary magazine. The agent approached Hall and asked if he had written any
novels. The agent was in
luck, because Hall happened to have written one.

He published his first novel, “Under Cover of Day-
iight,” in 1987. The novel is noteworthy not only because
it would be the first of 20
books he would go on to
write, but because he intro-
duced a character that wouldecome so popular, he would feature him in eight other
novels. “Under Cover of Day-
night” introduces Thorn, a

Hall explained.

The most recent novel Hall
is publishing is “Magic City,”
which is scheduled for release
March 1, 2007. It is about
Thorn getting involved in a
political intrigue in Miami.
The novel begins in 1964 and
although it is fictional, it
is anchored in real events.

Although he primarily
writes mysteries and
thrillers, Hall has shown diversity
in his writings by publishing
four books of poetry, one
collection of short stories and
one book of essays. Hall also
wrote a column for the Sun-

He later put these columns
together and published them
in 2001 under the title,” Hot
Dunn.”

Currently, Hall is work-

ing on his 15th novel, titled
“Hell’s Bay,” in the book,
Thorn, who usually makes
a living out of lying f I shes,
takes on a new job in a
houseboat taking people
on fishing adventures in the
back corners of the Everglades.

Hall said he identifies with
his loner character, Thorn.

“I like to do my little fish-
ing and do my art and
stay apart from the world, but
like Thorn, who keeps getting
dragged back into the world,
the book business forces me
to come back into the world
on a regular basis,” he said.

Hall also talked about how
writing can be “a very private,
lonely business,” but,
writers have sometimes put
their privacy aside and dealt with the public.

“You want the books to
be read, but it sort of runs
counter to most writers’
personalities, me included.
We have to deal with the
public-speaking part of the
business,” he said.

Aschok Armitraj, who
wanted to turn the book into
a feature film.

The movie was directed by
The final product of the
data film did not please Standiford,
but that for the first
10 minutes, the film is
“not bad.”

Stanford’s feasts

Standiford made his debut
as an author in 1991, when he
published his novel, “Spill.”
The book is about a biological
warfare spill in Yellowstone
National Park. Standiford
obtained his inspiration for
the novel from working one
summer as a ranger at Yellow-
stone and talking to the
people Borat comes in contact with,
which is about the
first terror attack on American
soil. He hopes to release it by
next year.

professors’ page 8

papers, to even having a book
turned into a movie.

Hall said he identifies with
his loner character, Thorn.

“It has been a great job,
a Judith Miller who
‘burned the kill’ to
curse a career in both
academics and in the novel.”

He later put these columns

“In your proudest moment.
What other movie would feature a
seven minute physical fight between two
butt-naked Arab men (Borat and his obe-
se manager) battling it out in a hotel room?

As an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard, every day you’ll be
putting your training, education, talents and leadership
to the test. Saving lives, protecting the environment,
enforcing the law, patrolling our ports, keeping America
safe and making yourself and your country proud. Explore
officer opportunities, eligibility, benefits and application
process at GOCOSTA GUARD.COM or call 1-877-NEW-USCG.

U.S. COAST GUARD & COAST GUARD RESERVE
THE SHIELD OF FREEDOM

Homesick, page 8

cooking food,” she said.

For college students, the
definition of homesickness can be misleading because
a homesick student doesn’t necessarily want
to go back home. Usually students have left
home out of their own choosing and
probably made the decision expecting a certain
degree of homesickness. Not only that,
but some students often don’t even return to
their hometowns after graduating, which
means that homesickness is a part of life’s
natural progression, and that most people
consider it worthwhile.

“it’s hard enough to pub-
lish in this city,” he said.

Standiford’s current proj-
3
ect is a work of non-fiction
called “Miami No-Neat,”
which is about the
first terror attack on American
soil. He hopes to release it by
next year.

As an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard, every day you’ll be
putting your training, education, talents and leadership
to the test. Saving lives, protecting the environment,
enforcing the law, patrolling our ports, keeping America
safe and making yourself and your country proud. Explore
officer opportunities, eligibility, benefits and application
process at GOCOSTA GUARD.COM or call 1-877-NEW-USCG.

U.S. COAST GUARD & COAST GUARD RESERVE
THE SHIELD OF FREEDOM
Think boldly.
Act decisively.
Contribute immediately.

Investment Banking • Capital Markets

Full Time Presentation
Wednesday, September 27, 2006
6:00 p.m.
Graham Center • 241A, 2nd Floor
Open to all Florida International University Undergraduates

Our momentum is your advantage.
Join us for an insightful look at our competitive edge and what it means for your career. Gain an insider’s perspective on how Bank of America professionals are making their mark on some of the largest, most complex deals in global corporate and investment banking today.

bofa.com/careers
Howard’s bat will put him with elite company

**HEALTH, page 16**

if he continues to improve and maintain this production.

Hall of Famer Cal Ripkin Jr. is the only other player in baseball history to win Rookie of the Year and MVP awards consecutively. Howard should definitely be the second.

Besides the numbers, an MVP candidate has to have some type of game breaking ability that will help his team when they are needed the most.

Great hitters like San Francisco Giants slugger Barry Bonds, and Boston Red Sox slugger David Ortiz have that ability and Howard is just beginning to master this craft.

Among the 57 balls he had driven out of the park, 23 of them have helped put the Phillies ahead in a game when they were down and five of them have tied games.

Late in the season is when MVP winners separate themselves from the pack. They put their teams on their shoulders and carry them into the postseason. Rowand is no exception.

On July 30, the Phillies were 47-54 and no one expected them to be playing in November.

Their star player, right fielder Bobby Abreu, was traded to the New York Yankees ideal for a rebuilding team.

In August, he had his best month batting .348, slugging .400, driving in 41 runs and hitting 14 home runs.

The former fifth round amateur draft pick from Southwest Missouri State is his way to greatness and it can begin with an MVP award this year.

He’s currently tied for 13th for the single season homerun record with Alex Rodriguez and Luis Gonzalez and is on pace to finish the season with 60 or more home runs.

Only five players in the history of baseball have ever accomplished the feat: Bonds; former St. Louis Cardinal Mark McGwire; former Chicago Cub Sammy Sosa; New York Yankees Roger Maris and Babe Ruth.

Can you say MVP?

**PUJOLS, page 16**

Howard has the ability that will help his team when they are in the race for the NL wild card. And with the season winding down, they are relying on his bat to get them into the postseason. The Phillies haven’t won a World Series since 1980 and, with Howard batting a cleanup, the chances don’t seem so slim anymore.

He is peaking at the right time.

His play propelled the Phillies back into contention since his rookie season of 2001.

Although the Phillies have scored 71 more runs than Pujols’ team, it means Pujols’ RBIs are more important to his team – even though he has less than Howard.

Also this season, Pujols became one of only 16 players in MLB history to have two 3-homerun games in the same season.

Out of those 16 players, Pujols is one of only four to accomplish the feat in the same stadium.

Pujols also set the record for most home runs in the month of April with 14 this season and became one of only 20 players in MLB history to hit four home runs in four consecutive plate appearances.

Continuing with Pujols’ 2006 home-run-related accomplishments, he became the fastest player in MLB history to hit 19 homers in a season and the third fastest to hit 25 – behind anti-role models Barry Bonds and Mark McGwire, his former teammate.

Sadly, it’s come to a point in baseball wherein a player with Pujols-type numbers – 6’3” and 235 lbs. – can be accused of using performance enhancing substances.

You can’t blame people for this mentality, but you still have to follow the rule of law enforcement: everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

So, despite his spectacular numbers and his muscular physique, Pujols has done nothing to be suspected of wrongdoing and that’s a sigh of relief.

Even though the MVP is chosen based on what a player has done in one particular season, you have to take into consideration, if only in the back of your mind, that Pujols has been putting up great numbers consistently since his rookie season of 2001.

But what the NL MVP race will ultimately come down to will be which team makes the playoffs, and Pujols’ Cardinals have the best shot.

Besides, you have to hope Pujols wins, if only to hear anchors pronounce his last name, Poo-Holes, which makes little kids giggle.

Oh, who am I kidding? It still makes me giggle, too.
on the next game,” Patrick said. “But I know that there is only a certain amount of time you have before your season is done.”

“She has a lot of leadership qualities that help the team,” sophomore defender Kia Rigsby said.

As a leader, Patrick knows it is important to maintain a level of toughness both on herself and on her younger teammates.

“The younger players really look up to her,” Dieke said. “And they should. She gives 100% every time and has become a more demanding player.”

That persistence may come from Patrick’s reliance on her dad, who also played soccer and pushes her when she feels that she is losing focus. He also provided her with optimism and some overall constructive criticism.

“He has always pushed be to be a better player,” Patrick said. “He will tell me when I am doing well. But he will tell me flat out when I am not doing so well and would have me do things over until I would get them right.”

Patrick hopes to leave an impact on the FIU team prior to the end of the season.

“I want to be remembered as a leader,” Patrick said. “I also want to make sure that the girls know that soccer is fun. If you work hard toward your goals, you could get to them. And of course, win the conference.”

Her teammates will also remember her for her personality.

“She has really brought a level of excitement to the team,” Rigsby said.
Face Off

Student Tickets FREE*

Student Tickets

October 14, 2006 • Orange Bowl

*For information on obtaining free tickets, please call 1-866-FIU-GAME

Fun for the whole family with the Golden Panther DJ, dancing, FIU mascot Roary, games, giveaways, face painting, catered food, prizes and more.
SUPER SENIOR
Midfielder attempts to leave mark at FIU

JANNEL PALENZUELA
Contributing Writer

Coming into her senior year, Valerie Patrick has earned a starting position in 58 of 59 games throughout her women’s soccer career. As a freshman, she was one of only two whose hard work was rewarded by starting all 17 games. It was during her first season that the midfielder from Littleton, Colo., scored her first goal. It was the only goal FIU could manage to come up with in a match against Denver in October 2003. Prior to that, she recorded two assists on a pair of goals in a win against Charleston Southern in September 2003.

“I didn’t expect to get so much playing time at first,” Patrick said. “I was shocked and I especially didn’t expect to start every game.” Throughout her second season as a sophomore, Patrick scored four goals on the year. Three of those goals were game-winners. That same year she was named to the Sun Belt All-Tournament Team after two goals in a quarterfinal win against Western Kentucky in November 2004. Although Patrick did not score a goal during the 2005 season as a junior, she was one of only 3 players that played in and started all 16 games. She recorded two assists and 24 shots that year.

As her career has progressed, Patrick realizes that there are many goals she has achieved. Despite all her accomplishments, there is still one that she is working harder than ever to reach. “Winning the conference has always been our main focus,” Patrick said. “It’s my last year and it would be great to win it. We have a good feeling this year.” Assistant Coach Ifeoma Dieke added, “This is her last year and it is important for her to be able to lift the team. She and [Kristy] Webb are our most consistent players, and we need that from them.”

While working toward winning the conference, there are games that will not go as good as hoped for. As a senior, Patrick knows you can’t win them all. It is during those times that the team as a whole looks for ways to pick themselves up.

“I try to keep my mind focused. To be quite honest, both of these candidates would be worthy choices, but neither are right now. The worthy candidate would be Philadelphia Phillies first baseman Ryan Howard. Howard was almost traded after they signed former Cleveland Indian slugger Jim Thome. In his first two years, Thome put up the numbers that were expected of him, which caused Howard to sit in the minors before he had a chance to show his capabilities. While Thome began dazzling the home crowd with his home runs, many teams tried to trade for Howard. Luckily for the Phillies, they stood by their prospect. As last year’s Rookie of the Year recipient, he has fans in Philly salivating over what could be. Why all the hype? Consider this: he batted .312 with a slugging percentage of .670, belted 57 home runs, and drove in 140 RBIs. All of this at the age of 26 and he’s only making $355,000 this year. Talk about a bargain.

Barring no set back, he has the capability of being a Hall of Famer this season. His numbers that were expected of him this season: 46 and 129 to 57 and 140, respectively – his team is almost certainly guaranteed a playoff spot. Howard’s Phillies are stilllighting for the NL Wild Card, despite Howard’s gaudy numbers. You can argue that the Phillies wouldn’t even be competing for a Wild Card spot if it wasn’t for Howard, but you can also say that the St. Louis Cardinals would be leading the Central Division if it wasn’t for Pujols. If the Phillies don’t make the