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Florida International University

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**FIU prodigy dies in motorcycle accident**

**BETSY MARTINEZ AND REUBEN PEREIRA**
Beacon Staff

Derek Jacobs was a child prodigy. At age 12, he became the youngest person to receive Microsoft certification, allowing him to run a professional computer network.

He was also one of the first people in the world to receive a medical identification chip implant.

This year, he was scheduled to graduate after only two years at FIU’s School of Engineering.

However, Jacobs, 18, died around 4:40 a.m., Sept. 30, in the 8000 block of the westbound Palmetto Park Road, according to a Palm Beach County Sheriff’s report. Jacobs was driving a 2005 Yamaha motorcycle when he lost control, slid along a guardrail and struck a wooden pole, the report said.

Jacobs was wearing a helmet when the crash occurred and wasn’t believed to be speeding.

The Sheriff’s office did not rule alcohol as a factor in the crash.

For the last few months, Jacobs had been examining medical school options.

He wanted to pursue a career in neurosurgery.

Friend Jillian Gerena remembered the night Jacobs found out his medical entrance exam scores.

“It was an unforgettable night full of good times,” said Gerena. “He was an inspiration because I believe he truly lived his life to the fullest.”

She said he partied hard, but worked harder academically.

“The loss has opened my eyes and shown me that life is something to cherish because it could end in a second,” Gerena said.

Not only was Jacobs described as “an amazing friend,” he was also a devoted brother of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, commonly known as FIJI. He served on various FIJI committees and was committee event coordinator, scholarship chair and recruitment chair assistant.

A few months ago, Jacobs devoted hours of preparation to host a party for his brothers at the Ohio State Bar in Miami.

Before moving into the FIJI house about a year ago, Jacobs lived in Everglades Hall for about 18 months.

That’s where he met Andrew Chin, the FIJI president at the time of Jacobs’ initiation into the fraternity and his residential assistant.

“When they told me I was getting a 16-year-old I was like, ‘What?’” Chin said.

But Chin was surprised at Jacobs’ helpful spirit and eagerness to become involved.

“Having a gentleman get his hands in the cookie jar,” Chin said.

The FIJIs will be hosting a ceremony Oct. 12 to celebrate Jacobs’ life.

The time and place of the ceremony have not yet been set.

**THE CLEAN UP**

Janitors’ salary increased after struggle with administrators

**MARIA CHERCOLES**
Staff Writer

In between scrubbing toilets and picking off chewed gum from the Green Library carpet at University Park, Maria Isabel Frias, one of many janitors who help keep FIU clean, attended union meetings at the UP English Language Institute’s Labor Center.

She worked for Vista, one of the companies FIU has been outsourcing its cleaning services from for the last 10 years, and received a minimum wage payment of $6.40 per hour with no benefits.

“In the four years I’ve worked here, I had no vacation or sick days,” Frias said. “I have a small girl, so I had no choice but paying my own health insurance. If I ever had to take her to the doctor, I just wouldn’t be paid that day,” she said.

However, after FIU announced Sept. 27 that it would turn janitorial jobs in-house instead of outsourcing them, life for the approximately 150 current employees who work for Vista and Best cleaning companies is changing.

The decision will cost the University an estimated $1.8 million a year, setting a new custodial worker’s starting wage at $9.58 per hour.

“We have decided to make this significant investment because this is an opportunity to leverage existing operating and address employee concerns simultaneously,” said CFO and Senior Vice President for Administration and Human Resources Vivian Sanchez in a press release.

After investigating similar situations around the country, Sanchez persuaded the administration that hiring the workers as FIU employees was the best solution.

The decision was reached after pressure from workers, student clubs like United Students Against Sweatshops and representatives from the Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of State, Federal and Municipal Employees, who began organizing meetings last summer to improve worker benefits.

Still, some janitors were scared.

“I knew about the union meetings,” said Ary Crespo, a janitor who has worked for Vista for four months, “but I feared losing my job, so I never went,” she said.

Frias was not so fearful.

“I knew I could get in trouble,” Frias said. “But, if we didn’t get together on this, we would never get any benefits, so I went to a couple of meetings.”

According to Townsend, more than 80 percent of the cleaners at FIU wanted to form a union — making SEIU their bargaining agent.

In early September, the FIU Joint Labor Council sponsored a meeting.

**JOSE DE WIT**
Opinion Editor

Like many other student clubs, B-HIVE Project, an organization dedicated to HIV education, depends largely on pizza sales to reach its fundraising goals.

Members of the B-HIVE Project set up tables in the Graham Center at University Park almost every weekday to sell slices of pizza. Although they participate in other fundraising activities, losing pizza sales as a source of income would be devastating to their budget.

“If we’re not allowed to sell pizza, we will not be able to raise funds. We will have no money, basically,” said Tamara Marryshow, co-founder of B-HIVE.

However, student organizations that depend on selling pizza in the GC to reach their fundraising goals may need to rethink their business plans due to a recent initiative from the FIU Business Services office.

Director of Business Services Felicia Townsend approached Student Union Board Chair Michael Jado a few weeks ago with the suggestion that student organizations find ways to raise funds other than selling pizza in GC.

According to Townsend, allowing students to sell $1 slices of pizza only a few feet away from Bène, the recently opened pizza venue in GC, is a disrespectful gesture toward the University’s business partners. Bène sells a slice of pizza with one topping for $2.69 plus tax.

“I want to make sure that we fulfill our contractual agreements and act in a way that is respectful and sensitive to our business partners,” Townsend said.

Bène is operated by Aramark, the company that provides most food services on campus, including Fresh Food Company. Aramark is the University’s largest business partner, according to Food Services Consultant Jonathan Garcia, as well as

**PIZZA, page 2**
Groups may turn to campus pizzeria

PIZZA WARS: Students interested in raising funds for their clubs may soon have to start selling pizzas bought from on-campus Béné pizzeria.

PIZZA, page 1

one of its largest financial supporters. It gives FIU about $2 million annually in contributions, and in exchange, the University grants it the right to sell food on campus.

Aramark has a contract with the University, which grants it exclusive rights to most kinds of for-profit food sales on campus, which leaves room for student organizations to sell food for fundraising purposes, since the proceeds are immediately invested back into students’ educational, social and philanthropic activities.

What specific changes clubs will need to make in their fundraising activities, and whether and how the University will implement and enforce the initiative, is still to be determined. In fact, Townsend notes that it is only an idea at this point, which Townsend plans on developing in cooperation with the Student Government Council at University Park.

“However this idea formalizes will be a joint effort between the office and the students; we want to try to find a healthy medium,” Townsend said.

According to Townsend, developing the initiative may include finding out how other universities have handled similar situations, or perhaps trying them out on a small scale in which students can offer student organizations of fundraising opportunities, or even necessarily of the chance to sell pizza. Possible solutions could include relocating pizza sales to places such as the Green Library, which is further away from Aramark’s venues, diminishing the amount and frequency of student food sales and encouraging students to sell other products that do not compete with Aramark’s products.

SGC-UP members have ideas of their own. Jadoo and Leon see a feasible option in negotiating with Aramark so that student organizations can sell Béné pizza to raise funds. This)

Gandhi event brings record crowd

NABHOR GONZALEZ
Contributing Writer

A group of FIU students recently participated in the largest student-led volunteer event ever recorded in Miami-Dade County history.

National Gandhi Day of Service took place Sept. 30 around the world. Nationally hosted by the South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow, the event was locally coordinated by area universities which succeeded in also making the Miami NGDS the largest in the country.

NGDS’s goal is to embody the famous quote by the Indian leader, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” It does so by bringing together huge numbers of people to volunteer and celebrate in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi.

Since 2003, FIU’s cross-town neighbor, the University of Miami, has organized the event. In what began with only a few dozen students, National Gandhi Day of Service has expanded tremendously. Last year, UM had over 600 students come together for the event.

This year, over 900 UM students gathered along with over 400 students from FIU, Miami-Dade College and Nova Southeastern University combined.

Assistant Director of the Center for Leadership and Service Patricia Temino explained how FIU came to partake in NGDS.

“This year we got involved because [UM’s Butler Center for Volunteer Service and Leadership Development] called us and asked us if we wanted to be a part of this event they were hosting,” Temino said. “They really wanted to reach out to the college-wide community.”

FIU accepted the invitation and began recruitment in early September. Over 70 students from FIU signed up to attend, but only 30 actually showed up.

Two buses took students from FIU to UM. The event was kicked off by Mayor of Coral Gables Don Steinack as he said to students, “You are the ones to make a change in the world!”

Breakfast and t-shirts were given out as groups dispersed to various volunteer sites around Miami. Sophomore Mikana Maeda was among the 30 students who volunteered.

“I feel that service is very important and I wanted to be a part of honoring Gandhi, who was such an important part of the world peace movement,” Maeda said. “I will definitely do it again next year.”

Other FIU students served as site leaders to one of the 26 locations where groups volunteered. Site leaders received special training prior to the event.

Junior Lillian Marquez, co-director of Alternative Spring Break, was one of three FIU students who received training.

“This was a lot like ASB since the training covered education, conflict resolution and reflection time to help us go over the service with participants,” Marquez said.

Marquez’s site took twenty students to Oleta State Park in North Miami, minutes from the Biscayne Bay Campus. There, volunteers helped clean up the shoreline.

CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

In this case, we will find a way to make it work, even if it makes a compromise. Right now, we have to

“I mean, we need to find a way to find the best situation for students,” Marryshow said.

SGC-UP’s plan involves communication with students and clubs to determine which solutions are best for the clubs, and negotiating with Business Services to find a solution that is acceptable to the University.

Foley was represented parts of Palm Beach County for 12 years until he abruptly resigned Friday after being accused of sending lurid Internet messages to teenage boys who served as pages on Capitol Hill. The FBI and Florida law enforcement officials are investigating whether he violated any laws.

FOLEY

Foley says he was sexually abused as a teen

Disgraced former Rep. Mark Foley announced through his lawyer on October 4 that he was sexually abused by a clergyman as a teenager, but accepts full responsibility for sending computer messages to teenage male pages.

Foley’s attorney also acknowledged for the first time that the former congressman is gay, saying the disclosure was part of his client’s recovery.

Foley “does not blame the trauma he sustained as a young adolescent for his totally inappropriate e-mails” and instant messages, Roth said. “He continues to offer no excuse whatsoever for his conduct.”

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FIU students from diverse disciplines come together every week to discuss hot issues in public policy.

The Student Honors Mentor Program, part of the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies, offers students non-graded, non-credit learning experiences each semester. This Fall semester, students are focusing on either low-scoring high schools and educational reform or national security and the American media. The program includes DNA testing, environmental policy and civic engagement.

Small groups of students, generally in the single digits, meet weekly for two hours with a professor who has expertise on the topic.

Meetings should not be called classes, however. They resemble more informal conversations where ideas and opinions are freely and sometimes hotly exchanged.

At the first meeting, Sept. 28, students engaged in a debate about the achieve-
ment gap. They discussed the impact of immigrant children with their mentor, Professor Brian Peterson of the history department.

“Parents who come to America want their kids to partake in the American dream, and they want them to do well in school,” said Peterson.

Students immediately disagreed, some passionately stating that many poor families encourage their children to work and place work above education.

The dynamic of the conversation remained ardent throughout the rest of the meeting, as Peterson and his students tackled other issues, including disciplinary problems in schools, uniforms and school vouchers.

Instead of bending down to take notes, students raised their voices to debate, and in the place of a lecture outline, Peters-
son’s contact information was placed on the board, including his home telephone number.

“This is a nice change from the usual large classes,” noted senior Sharayna Rolle, one of the participating students.

“I decided to participate to be with people from different disciplines and be exposed to some current issues in educa-
tion.” Rolle said.

Junior Tanesha Rankine agreed.

“It’s just different,” Rankine said. “I like the mentoring aspect of it, too, and want to learn about problems in high schools in the area.”

This particular group will focus on three area high schools: Jackson Edison and Central, which many of the students participating are familiar with.

“I wanted to do this because I realize that it’s something that is a real problem in South Florida,” said Junior Charmaine Hardly, a public administration major.

Rankine, who wants to work with high school students once she graduates, was hopeful about the future impact of the program on participants.

“Hopefully some of us can then go out there and make some changes,” she said.

The Student Honors Mentor Program recruits small numbers of high-achieving students to participate every year. It works with the Registrar’s Office to obtain a list of juniors and seniors with a minimum 3.2 GPA and consequently contacts them via e-mail to tell them about the program.

The outcome of the curriculum will determine whether or not the program is expanded or continued.

As of now, the only paper available through the service will be the New York Times, though other national papers like the Chicago Tribune, the Washington Post and perhaps even the Miami Herald may be added to the program.

FIU students seem to have mixed feelings about the program. Some have higher hopes for the program, whereas some have more of a pessimistic point of view.

“I think its good [the newspaper is] available here because many students spend a great deal of time at school. I don’t have time to watch the news on TV,” said student Sarah Doe.

Student Caonex Abreu disagrees.

“It doesn’t sound bad, but I don’t see FIU students really reading that many newspapers,” Abreu said.

- Additional reporting by Reuben Pereira, Beacon Staff
University janitors unite to voice grievances

GANDHI, page 2
FIU may host next year’s Gandhi Day of Service

The transition will take place immediately. However, state laws require that these positions be posted and opened to all applicants. Current workers will be granted the first interviews, but some worry that the positions could be filled by other applicants.

“If we need to be vigilant that cleaners who were outspoke and emerged as leaders in the struggle do not become victimized,” Gummerson said.

“We wanted to increase the caliber of Gandhi National Days of Service this year and to empower others to get involved and make it a huge Miami-scale effort.”

Neither Shah nor Temino discarded the possibility of FIU one day hosting NGDS on one of its campuses, both saying that they hope it happens.

“I think starting next year FIU will want to be involved in the planning aspect and take more of a leadership role,” Temino said.

I think the university reacted fast to avoid negative publicity. Before I call this a victory, I want to see all these employees who struggled so much actually being hired by FIU.

Sept. 29 that the university will rebid a contract involving 390 workers, which could make them have to re-apply for their jobs.

“It is important to highlight the role of the students in giving voice to the workers,” said Senator Pablo Avendano, a political science major and member of the FIU United Students Against Sweatshops club. “They are part of our University, so as students, we are responsible for their well being.”

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“I think the university reacted fast to avoid negative publicity,” Avendano said.

“Before I call this a victory, I want to see all these employees who struggled so much actually being hired by FIU.” Vista representatives were unavailable for comment.

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“UM put in about $9,000, and then a lot of it was donated or subsidized. We called on a number of different companies and this year, other colleges too,” Fletcher said.

In addition to its 30 sponsors – including Pizza Hut, Inilead Italian Bistro, Publix, Costco, and Krissy Kreme, to name a few – the event was partially funded by participants, who were asked to make a $5 donation.

UM student Shawn Shah, an executive board member of Be the Change NGDS – the club that planned the event – explained the process.

“We started planning in the spring of last year and continued on into the summer, fundraising, getting sponsorships, making all the materials and recruiting sites,” Shah said. “We wanted to increase the caliber of Gandhi National Days of Service this year and to empower others to get involved and make it a huge Miami-scale effort.”

Neither Shah nor Temino discarded the possibility of FIU one day hosting NGDS on one of its campuses, both saying that they hope it happens.

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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 it is also the perfect place to celebrate sweet sixteen parties, Quinces and theme parties, retirement parties, and more. The conference center is also known for hosting corporate events and is famous for having some of the best views in Miami Beach.

The couple decided to have their cocktail hour and reception at the conference center mainly due to the scenery it offered. “We wanted a wedding by the water,” said Gonzales. “The view 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 hors d’oeuvres while listening to a flamenco guitarist as the sun set over the bay.

Elie planned the wedding with a budget of $1,000 for catering. “We really were very helpful. We were very courteous 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 gazebos decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

For more information on The A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, visit www.internationalanswer.org or check out the FIU student chapter at facebook.com. Meetings are held every two weeks.
C. Joel Marino  
Editor in Chief  
Christopher Necuze Production Manager  
Jose de Wit Opinion Editor

**Tracy: Should the University cater to students, not businesses?**

Student organizations have long used pizza sales as a source of revenue. With arrival of Bène Pizza on campus, these organizations are now being told by the University that they must find another means of funding.

According to Felicia Townsend, director of Business Services, allowing students to sell $1 slices of pizza just a few feet away from Bène is a disrespectful gesture towards the University’s business partners.

What’s disrespectful is Bène’s profits taking precedence over student clubs’ opportunity to raise funds. Pizza sales provide a steady flow of funding to organizations such as the B-HIVE Project, which educates students about HIV, and other student-run non-profits at FIU.

According to Student Government Council at University Park, President Alfonso "Alfi e" Bène’s profits taking precedence over student clubs’ needs to understand that, as an educational institution, its primary goal should be to benefit the students and not the University’s pocket books.

One solution suggested by SGA is that clubs sell pizzas in locations other than the Graham Center. However, the traffic through GC during lunchtime is higher than in any other part of campus.

Another proposed solution is that Bène sell student organizations boxes of pizza at wholesale prices. In view of Bène’s retail prices, it is hard to envision their wholesale prices being anywhere near those of the outside vendors where clubs buy their pizzas now.

SGA’s solutions are toothless and ineffectual, and they seek to please the administration rather than find the best possible solution for the students. If Bène – a well-funded, well-equipped professional operation – finds itself in a bind as a result of competition from student food sales, it must be doing something wrong.

If a few students hawking cold pizza for $1 can bite into Bène’s profits, its pizza must be either overpriced or undercooked. Simple economics dictate that, by selling a quality product for a reasonable price – a goal presumably within its reach – Bène should have nothing to fear.

More importantly, it is not the University’s place to shelter Bène from the consequences of doing mediocre business in a free-market economy. And under no circumstances should that come at the cost of the livelihood of student clubs.

Granted, Aramark, Bène’s parent company, might be a good business partner and financial donor to the University, but the administration needs to understand that, as an educational institution, its primary goal should be to benefit the students and not the University’s pocket books.

### Opinion

**Gulf oil find threatens the alternative fuel development**

A group of geoscientists led by Chevron tapped a petroleum deposit four miles beneath the ocean floor and 270 miles south of New Orleans in the early days of September. The company estimated that the region contained between 3 billion and 15 billion barrels of oil.

While this discovery may sound like great news in light of the high gas prices and instability in the Middle East, the discovery in the Gulf of Mexico makes it unlikely that we will move away from oil any time soon.

Chevron’s oil discovery, which is expected to become operational as early as 2010, could boost U.S. domestic reserves by half and decrease our dependence on foreign sources of oil and natural gas. However, that independence from foreign sources may not last long, according to government figures.

The U.S. Energy Department estimates that the U.S. consumes roughly 5.7 billion barrels of crude oil a year, while its reserves currently exceed 29 billion barrels. Combined, that makes for a maximum of 44 billion barrels.

Assuming that our oil usage remains stagnant, the country will still only have a little less than eight years’ worth of supply. Then we’re back to foreign dependence and more involvement with Middle Eastern politics.

And though lower gas prices may be met with enthusiasm, it’s important to think in the long term. Higher gas prices will generate more incentive for people to switch to alternative fuels, which is the only true solution to the oil crisis.

Keeping prices at $4 per gallon will help the United States remove itself from its oil addiction and make the switch to alternative fuel sources, but that seems improbable with the new findings.

Oil has many possible replacements. Biofuels, electric automobiles, renewable-source electricity generation, fuel cells, and various other technologies exist and are waiting to be improved.

These technologies cannot contend with our addiction to cheap and available sources of energy.

As a Miami resident, I witness the shocking nature of America’s oil addiction every day.

The daily sight on the Palmetto or I-95 is the horde of giant automobiles—occupied by only one passenger—stacked in traffic and spewing exhaust all over the city.

It’s an immensely inefficient and dirty system, and one that we must remove ourselves from quickly.

The sooner our country begins to move away from oil, the better off we will be in the future.

Do we really want our children or our grandchildren to be dealing with the same oil crisis we face now?
There are some who would have you believe that America has descended into a satanic epoch of moral depravity. Don’t be fooled. The moralists who are proclaiming our imminent slumbering at the hands of a vengeful god are the ideological descendants of those who said the exact same thing in the early 20th century. Back then, they claimed the key to our salvation was prohibition. Today, they say we need a more “Christian” government that is committed to banning abortion, stuffing homosexuals back into the closet and stopping schools from teaching “evil-lution.” The truth is that American society is not in “moral decline,” and, as history has shown us, breaking down the separation between church and state will not make us more godly—it will just politicize religion, corrupting both the church and the state.

First of all, to state that America is in moral decline implies that this nation was once a bastion of morality. Most of the moral doomsayers point to the 1950’s as the high-water mark for American values. In reality, self-proclaimed “Christians” in government supported segregation. Lynchings were also very common. Women were widely treated as inferiors. Hispanics were treated unequally, even in Miami, where many businesses displayed signs that read “No Pets, No Kids, No Cubans.” This country has actually drastically improved in its morals when it comes to its treatment of women and ethnicities.

When some claim this nation has become too secular and that we must become more “Christian,” they’re not talking about Christians like Martin Luther King Jr., with his support of liberal social policies and his opposition to the Vietnam War. What they really want is “conservative Christianity.” The effort to convince Americans that they’re all deprived miscreants is nothing more than a political tool. Religion should not be politicized in this way. After all, religion can be twisted to justify any belief.

Religion is tradition. However, just because a few violate the religious freedom of all other groups. Even the beliefs of different Christian denominations contradict each other.

The fact is, this country has thrived as a secular democracy for over 200 years. I see no reason why we should abandon the constitution that has served us so well to become a theocracy.

The United States is at war; it is at war with secularism. In our personal lives, we Americans enjoy the freedom of religion promised to us by the First Amendment. Publicly, however, this is not the case. Unfortunately, our nation’s morality is at stake.

The issue of morality in the United States is complex and intricate. Its story is not so much about the fall of morality, but about the rise of secularism: a political philosophy that rejects all forms of religious faith and worship. As God is removed from our public life, it is no surprise that morality among the youth of this country and the citizens in general has begun to deteriorate.

A study conducted by the Josephson Institute of Ethics documented the deterioration in moral conduct of American youth. The study, administered in 2002, found that students were 13 percent more likely to cheat on exams than they were 10 years ago. The study also found that 93 percent of teens admitted to lying to their parents, up 10 percent from 1992.

The rise of secularism in America has almost single-handedly undermined traditional moral values in America. Liberal lawmakers and organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union distort the constitution to suit their agenda. They strive to destroy any reference to God in the public eye, calling it separation of church and state. The founders of the constitution included in the constitution a clause barring the government from exclusively endorsing a specific religion. The problem herein lies with the fact that God himself is not an establishment, but God is not.

Few can forget the ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California, which stated that the word “God” in the pledge of allegiance was unconstitutional, or the proposed idea of removing the phrase “In God We Trust” from American money by those on the left. Around 99 percent of Americans believe in some type of higher deity, or God. Can somebody please explain to me why the vast majority must conform to accommodate the views of a few?

I am not suggesting in the least that anyone be forced to believe in anything; everyone is entitled to his or her own beliefs. However, you do not believe in God does not mean that you are entitled to keep others from professing their faith, even in a public arena.

In the United States, a relatively secularized society, religious ways of thinking are seen as inferior to science. People who speak out against social standards that they believe are anachronistic are shunned by society as fanatics, and, in some cases, is viewed as hindrances to the advancement of technology.

The deterioration of the American family can also be blamed for the erosion of morals in America. With divorce rates through the roof, children are not receiving the proper care, supervision and morals necessary to become a functioning member of society. The United States is at war; it is at war with secularism. The Catholic Church is an establishment, but God is not. The fact that we are even discussing morality is evidence that something has changed.

The more we remove God, the deity – not the Church – from society and the more we ignore His impact on the lives of the vast majority of Americans. If this continues, we have only ourselves to blame for the decline of morality in the United States.

Christopher Cabral
OPINION
The Beacon – October 5, 2006
www.beaconnewspaper.com

Turnpike location best site for proposed FIU Metrorail station

As a student of FIU and someone who has attended the public meetings concerning the placement of the station, as well as the alignment of the proposed east-west extension of Metrorail, I feel confident that the 107th Avenue alignment is not the best choice for FIU or the overall community.

If the 107th Avenue alignment were to be followed, the station at FIU would become an end-of-the-line station. Those stations tend to be the busiest stations on transit lines. The design for the 117th Avenue station called for an increase of parking for roughly 1,200 cars. Under the 107th Avenue alignment, we would lose the parking lots south of the east parking garages and the Wertheim Performing Arts Center to transit parking.

Security in the lot immediately to the east of the Wertheim Performing Arts Center is a problem. On the UP campus alone, during 2005 there were over 90 incidences of burglary or auto theft. By placing a Metrorail station on campus, the campus police would be stretched even thinner than they are already. As the closest police entity, no fewer than 60 officers of the station is placed, they would be the first responders. Placing the station on campus, though, is one way of keeping drivers in their vehicles and extending the line.

A transit station on the FIU campus would have traffic worse. If one imagines the traffic FIU faces already, plus transit-related traffic, the image becomes one that is very frightening. Already, parking is at a premium on campus. As mentioned earlier, FIU would lose two constantly filled parking lots to transit-oriented parking. In other end-of-the-line stations on the current Metrorail system, such as Dadeland South on any morning during the week, the station quickly fills with cars. When that happens, people travel past FIU possible.

All of this alone is reason enough to consider the turnpike 117th Avenue alignment. When it is coupled with those arguments made by the City of Sweetwater and its residents, the proposed idea of extending Metrorail further south to the ever-growing Kendall area. The 107th Avenue alignment does not make extending the line beyond FIU possible.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Steve P. Williams
Senior Music Performance
Halloween Horror Nights attempts to turn horrible dreams into life, but the reality is, after sawing off an arm and a leg for subpar scares, what you’ll have left in your wallet is the true nightmare.

Granted, the elaborate design, atmosphere and makeup for the park is top-notch and it has come a long way since it’s humble beginnings in 1991 as a three-night stint called “Fright Nights.”

However, with the million-plus dollar budget allotted to the event, the money seems as though it’s spread out too thin, not focusing enough on the actual operation of the haunted houses, the event’s flagships.

“We use the park’s landscapes to influence design,” said T.J. Mannarino, leader of entertainment art and design for the event, explaining the use of Universal Studios this year versus Islands of Adventure, which is where the event was held for the past two years.

Mannarino said the sets of San Francisco and New York allowed for better and more realistic “scare zones” – which are places in the park where “scareactors” are free to jump out from behind just about anywhere to scare patrons.

The scare zones did in fact make up for what the houses lacked.

UNIVERSAL STUDIO’S HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS attempts to turn horrible dreams into life, but the reality is, after sawing off an arm and a leg for subpar scares, what you’ll have left in your wallet is the true nightmare.

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Asst. Life! Editor

For students like sophomore Arnold Colina, watching the evening news can be a bore.
"It's just not interesting," he said.

The next time you're flipping through channels because you're trying to find an interesting newscast, you might find one in an unlikely place: Comedy Central.

"Fake" news shows and periodicals such as "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and The Onion offer the public an alternative to the hard news format of shows such as "CNN Newsroom" and MSNBC's "Hardball with Chris Matthews."

One way that fake news differs from serious news is the comedy aspect, according to international relations professor Christopher Brown.

"The shows are attractive to college students because they mix entertainment with real news," said Brown. "I think there are so many serious media outlets for people that it helps to have a bit of sarcasm in your news."

While someone (or something) like Kermit the Frog would not be a special guest on a serious show like "Meet the Press," the opposite holds true on "The Daily Show," where host Jon Stewart sat down with the famous amphibian and asked him some questions; comedic situations such as these random Muppet guest appearances are common sights in satirical newscasts.

The same humorous elements can be seen in print media.
The Onion uses sensational headlines such as "Report: Majority of Americans Unprepared for Apocalypse" to capture audiences' attentions.

In the world of fake news, nothing is sacred.
Even though fake news has comedic elements, it does have a serious side.

Sophomore Alejandra Ramirez agrees that such cynical news sources can be just as informative as other authorities in news reporting.

"If a person only watches [fake news], I think they're just as informed as someone who watches CNN," she said. "Both put their own spin on the news, and both inform people of events."

Despite their similarities, both mediums are set apart by a particular trait: tact.

While authentic news is intended to be unbiased, fake news often attacks topics from every imaginable angle, consequently resulting in the audience's surprise and laughter.

Although fake news consistently pokes fun at certain political figures such as President George W. Bush, FIU students such as junior Juan Vega do not believe that the coverage is biased.

"Sure, fabricated news constantly targets specific people as the butt of jokes, but I don't think it's biased because the insults aren't limited to a particular group," Vega said. "Everybody is a target."

Regardless of whether fake news is biased, individuals such as Brown still believe that such news is another source that the public can use to get their information.

"This type of news appeals to people who don't have the patience for regular news," Brown said. "Real journalists have to learn to respect it because it's here and that's what people watch."
Early investing influences future finances

When it comes to finances, students such as freshman Janell Benzaquen feel that societal pressures encourage the idea of “spend now, save later.”

“Today’s society gives us the idea that spending excessive amounts of money at a given time gives us some sort of self worth,” Benzaquen said. “People that identify with that type of wasteful mindset are in for a surprise when we get older.”

Others predict a bleak future without government aid, such as sophomore F. Mauricio Artavia.

“In the long run, stocks pay a lot more than bonds – purchase between five and 10 stocks.” — Professor Shahid Hamid

Financial planners emphasize the importance of doing your research before investing in a particular stock, since educated decisions will prevent you from making investing any riskier than it needs to be.

They also stress the need to diversify one’s portfolio, balancing the types of stocks purchased, for example between large-cap and small-cap stocks.

Large-cap stocks are those in big, secure corporations, while small-cap stocks belong to newer, fledgling businesses. Large-cap stocks are safer, but small-cap ones may come with greater potential for increasing returns.

Whether you choose stocks, bonds or just a simple savings account as your mode of investment, it’s recommended that you save 15 percent of your pretax income every year, unless you’ve started investing later in life, in which case you should raise that figure to 25 percent.

Saving this much, or any amount, is difficult but not impossible, as Artavia and Benzaquen show by example.

“My sister does bankruptcy law, so it had been instilled in me to save, save, save,” Benzaquen said.

Artavia admits he could do more, but is still saving in two different ways.

“Currently, my plans for my financial future is confined to bonds and savings in the bank,” Artavia said. “Other resources, in a few years, will be most profitable and efficient in securing my financial future.”

— Compiled by Maria Chercoles

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer
Career Growth and Success

Grow your career in the right direction.

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HORROR NIGHTS, page 8

Long lines, disorganization affect theme park experience

the “Deadtropolis: Zombie Siege” area, the pasty-faced undead sneak up on you pretty well. But the costumes mostly makes you want to stop and say “Cool!” instead of shriek.

Once you circle the park after avoiding the 100-minute wait times for the haunted houses, the clear inferiority of Universal to IOA is apparent. The few rides that were open were not impressive. While it was scheduled to operate, the Revenge of the Mummy rollercoaster was out of commission, leaving the mildly amusing Men in Black: Alien Attack as the next best ride.

The other attractions are barely worth mentioning, especially as severely outdated rides like Jaws and Earthquake weren’t scary 10 years ago, much less now.

This places even more of an expectation for the haunted houses to be terrifying, and unfortunately, they did not live up to it.

In “Psycho Path: The Return of Norman Bates,” you are accosted at nearly every corner by men in drag talking about their mothers – nothing that you couldn’t get in certain areas of South Beach at 4 a.m.

“Run: Hostile Territory” attempts to recreate the horrifying scenes of movies like “Saw” and “Hostel.” The only thing this house was hostile to were my heels as they tried to jam too many people through the house at the same time. This was a sign of disorganization that was apparent in the houses as well as the express lane, which led you to the middle of the line only to wait another 20 minutes to get through.

Despite these flaws, the park actually succeeds in one vital area – it knows what’s scary. From men with chainsaws to creepy old ladies, the park tries to reach all bases and cover as many niches as possible (even the author refused to go anywhere near the clowns).

However, it’s this desire for mass appeal that results in showing as many people as possible into a haunted house to reduce wait times, as well as the goriest scenes in movie history played on a loop in the middle of the park. Eventually, you become desensitized and the novelty of the concept gives way to reveal the annoyances that come with attending any amusement park.

The ticket cost is $59.95 without tax, and the park is only open for five and a half hours on random days. With wait times averaging an hour, the average attendee can expect to only see four out of seven haunted houses, and that’s with forgoing any show like the Bill & Ted horror show or Beetlejuice’s Graveyard Revue.

Yet, the experience is not all bad and as a group activity could be quite fun as long as you have about $200 to spend overall. But, the scares are nothing you couldn’t accomplish by having a horror movie night in a friend’s living room.

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Volleyball to play Sun Belt Conference foes at home

Freshman Yarimar Rosa led all players with 21 kills in the match and an outstanding .515 hitting percentage.

Freshman Olga Vergun added seven kills and junior Keila Oliveira set a match-high 39 assists.

“We have one of the best setters in the nation [in Oliveira] and that makes a big difference in the success of your team,” Tomic said.

FIU out-attacked its conference foe hitting at a .358 clip, while Troy hit just .080.

FIU 3, USA 0

Rosa again led all players in kills with 14 and recorded nine digs.

“[Rosa is] one of those players that you come across once as a coach,” Tomic said. “The excitement that she brings is just contagious to the rest of the team.”

Oliveira again led all players in assists with 38 and added 12 digs and six kills. Junior Alyse Santisi had a match-high 16 digs and junior Anita Szymanska had three service aces, also a match-high.

As a team, the Golden Panthers had seven service aces and out-attacked the Jaguars (5-12, 0-5) .276 to .152.

FIU 3, FAU 1

Oliveira laid proof to her coach’s words as she recorded a career-high 71 assists – just two off the school record – and a match-high 19 digs, as well as seven kills.

Freshmen Arasay Guerra, Rosa and Vergun recorded double-digits kills with 24, 29 and 16, respectively.

As a team, FIU had 91 kills to beat the Owls (7-9, 4-2).
ANDREW KAMEKA
Staff Writer

FIU nearly overcame the absense of two starters and its head coach, but an overtime goal from SMU forward Scott Geppert crushed the Golden Panthers’s bid to upset the top-ranked Mustangs.

No. 1 SMU (11-0-1, 1-0-0 C-USA) won 3-2 thanks to Geppert’s strike in the 102nd minute. The golden goal preserved SMU’s undefeated record and ended a volatile Sept. 29 match that included 39 fouls, five yellow cards and three ejections.

FIU (4-4-2, 0-1-0 C-USA) played more than 30 minutes with only nine men. Senior forward David Hope received a red card for fouling an SMU defender in the 67th minute, and so did head coach Karl Kremser when he protested the call. Sophomore defender Phill Fisher joined the pair four minutes later after he was sent off for a hard tackle.

"I'm still at a loss of words because of the officiating," Kremser said. "I thought we had turned the game around and were starting to take it to them before those calls. It's unfortunate that the game ended that way."

FIU fell behind 1-0 in the 39th minute after junior defender Raoul Voss fouled an SMU forward 25 yards from goal. On the subsequent free-kick, forward Chase Wileman arched a shot that bent around the defensive wall and into the top left corner of the goal.

FIU later equalized when SMU defender Leone Cruz accidentally knocked in a cross from Hope in the 66th minute. Moments after players celebrated their own goal, the series of ejections began. Despite the two-man disadvantage that followed, FIU went ahead in the 77th minute. Junior midfielder Dadi Kristjánsson fired a penalty kick straight into the top center of the goal to give FIU a 2-1 lead.

"Oli [Birgisson] was fouled and I just wanted to take the penalty kick more than anybody else," Kristjánsson said. "I had to put it away when we got that chance."

SMU then out-shot FIU 5-0 in the two overtime periods. The Mustangs held a 29-9 shot advantage in the game, as well as a 9-2 lead in corner kicks. Though FIU put up a brave fight, SMU’s two-man advantage and pressing offense proved too powerful to overcome. After stopping several advances in the first overtime period, the Golden Panthers allowed the game winner to Geppert, who knocked in a pass from Guarda seven yards in front of the goal.

"We worked so hard and played 30 minutes 9 on 11 against the No. 1 team in the country," Kristjánsson said. "I don't think we could have played any better than that, but we shouldn't have lost like this. Those calls were just wrong."

Many FIU supporters shared Kristjánsson’s frustration with the referee’s decisions. Following Fisher’s ejection, loud chants of obscenities in both English and Spanish nearly resulted in a penalty being assessed against FIU. Police officers later escorted the officiating crew to their cars after fans hurled insults at referee Reggie Rutty.

Despite the uproar, Kremser stressed the value of his team’s performance and perseverance in the match.

"I told them all that I couldn’t have been any more proud of them," he said. "The effort of every player on the team has to be commended. Anyone who stepped on that field for FIU – I’m extremely proud of them."
it blocked at the line of scrimmage.

ASU, who ran a two pronged attack at quarterback with freshman Corey Leonard and sophomore Travis Hewitt, took a two-touchdown lead with 6:01 to play in the first half as Leonard ended an 11 play 67 yard drive with a seven yard scamper.

Down by 14, the Golden Panthers got a breath of life from sophomore defensive lineman Jonas Murrell who tipped a Hewitt pass at the line of scrimmage and returned it himself 25 yards to midfield.

Padrick’s nightmare start to the season, one which has seen him throw just two touchdowns coupled with eight interceptions, continued as he threw another interception with 50 seconds left in the second quarter, ending the Golden Panther drive and crushing any momentum that could have carried over into the second half.

“Our quarterback didn’t play well,” Strock said. “We didn’t make catches when we needed to. We had our opportunities but it didn’t happen.”

On their opening drive of the third quarter, the Indians rolled down to Golden Panther 23 before ending their drive with a 40-yard field goal attempt miss.

On the ensuing drive, the young, inexperienced Golden Panther offensive line gave way to ASU’s Koby McKinnon who flew in and sacked Padrick and caused a fumble. Fellow ASU defensive lineman Jamarron James recovered the ball at the FIU 19.

With little field to work on for the second time following a turnover, the Golden Panther defense was unable to contain freshman running back Reggie Arnold, who rushed 26 times for a blistering 146-yards on the night.

Three plays later, Hewitt rushed for 7-yard touchdown run to extend the lead to 21-0.

The FIU offense, which managed just 186 yards all night, including nine yards on 19 carries, was unable to produce anything and looked primed for its first shutout of the season.

“After playing pretty well for the first four weeks and having opportunities to win in the fourth quarter, we didn’t have an opportunity from the first play of the game tonight. It started there and ended with the last play,” Strock said.

With 5:47 to play in the third quarter, Arauco was blocked, this time from 37 yards, and the Golden Panthers looked to have gained some momentum with a big hole to dig themselves out of.

They took advantage despite of terrible field position and drove 84 yards before A’Mod Ned punched in the first FIU points of the night from five yards away with 1:40 to play in the third. Rivest’s extra point attempt was blocked, bringing the score to 21-6.

ASU place kicker Josh Arauco opened the final frame by connecting successfully for the first time in three attempts from 19 yards out, putting FIU in a 24-6 hole.

A second Hewitt touchdown, this time from two yards out with 4:14 to play, would seal the game but not before Padrick was intercepted for the third time that night by Dominique Williams, his eighth turnover against the Indians in two career games.

Chandler Williams, who coming into the night was leading the Sun Belt in receptions and yards, solidified those league leading numbers with seven catches for 72 yards. Samuel Smith grabbed six for 65.

ASU dominated all facets of the game as they dominated possession 35:57 to 24:03 and out rushed FIU 222 to 9. The Golden Panthers also shot themselves in the foot, committing 12 penalties for 121 yards; four of which were personal fouls.

The kickoff for the Oct. 14 tilt between FIU and Miami at the Orange Bowl was also announced. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.
The first play of the game should have been a sign of things to come for the FIU in their 31-6 drubbing at the hands of Arkansas State.

Senior quarterback Josh Padrick’s interception set the tone for a game that was all-around ugly.

Coach Don Strock said after the game that there was enough blame to go around, so it would be unfair to put all the blame solely on Padrick, who threw three interceptions in the game.

The defense didn’t come out nearly as effective as it had against its four previous opponents. Senior linebacker Keyonvis Bouie admitted to players becoming complacent after the close call against Maryland. He said they were overlooking the Sun Belt Conference opponents because they had kept the game so close against an ACC opponent.

Obviously, a team that is 0-4 cannot afford to be overlooking opponents, but this team did and now FIU is 0-5.

Even when the game was well within reach at 21-6 in the third quarter, FIU players were noticeably out of the game – kneeling on the sidelines with their heads down. Apparently they were shocked to be losing to a team that beat them 66-24 last season.

At the post-game press conference, both Strock and Bouie said that they knew the Indians were going to try and run the ball. And the Indians still amassed 222 rushing yards – compared to nine from FIU.

That definitely sounds like a team who was over-looking its opponents.

So the fact that you’re 0-4 can’t motivate you. The fact that you lost to this team by 42 points a year ago can’t motivate you. Then, what will?

Now, I’m in no way saying every player was overlooking ASU; there had to be some players giving it their all. But if the captain of the defense says there were players doing just this, I’m going to believe him – especially if FIU showed some signs of it.

At this point, it’s hard to try and stay positive about this team, especially with Miami and Alabama coming up on the schedule.

With the team 0-5 and not even half-way through the season, you would think it can’t get any worse than this. But looking at the seven remaining games, which also features a Troy team that almost beat No. 17 Florida State, it quite possibly can.

It’s really hard to pinpoint what this team needs to improve on. One week it’s the special teams, one week it’s the offense and now, this week it’s a bit of both combined with the defense.

All those issues have been addressed, such as the place kicker, but FIU doesn’t have enough personnel to make changes at every single position and some players aren’t ready to take the field full-time yet.

So what to do then? There’s really no definitive answer, but Strock did say something else at the post-game press conference.

“Strock says he is staying with the same game plan for the next game against North Texas.

Now let’s hope that North Texas will be the ones to make the mistake of overlooking its opponent.
Football suffers another loss

ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA
Staff Writer

Before FIU took on the defending Sun Belt Conference Champions Arkansas State Indians (2-2,1-0), who were riding a five-game conference win streak, one could have argued that the Golden Panthers had played worthy enough to have their 0-4 start be at 3-1 or even 4-0.

Following the second home game of the year Sept. 30, however, there is no doubt that FIU is a 0-5 team.

The Golden Panthers (0-5, 0-2) suffered their fifth straight loss as they were humiliated on their own field by ASU 31-6.

Right from the start there was no doubt that it would be a long day for FIU as on the first play of regulation, senior quarterback Josh Padrick stepped back and found a wide-open Tyrrell Johnson at the FIU 30-yard line. Unfortunately for Padrick, Johnson was the Indians’ starting safety.

Padrick finished the night 18-of-35 for 177 yards with no touchdowns, three interceptions and a fumble.

ASU, who had intercepted the FIU signal caller four times in a 66-24 whitewash in Jonesboro, Ark., last year, wasted no time, and quickly rolled down the field before freshman backup running back Cedric Wilkerson capped off a quick eight play drive with a one-yard touchdown run.

“Games are won in the trenches,” coach Don Strock said. “They won the trench game and congratulations to them. We’ve got a long way to go but we have a lot of improving to do. We’ll come back to work Monday just like we do every week and work to improve. Believe me, we have a lot of improving to do in some areas.”

Down 7-0, FIU’s first chance came with under three minutes to play in the first quarter. Following prior drives that ended in punts, Padrick found his groove by completing a quick 20-yard pass to senior wide receiver Chandler Williams at midfield. From there, the Golden Panthers would reach the ASU 19-yard line before the drive stalled.

Freshmen place kicker Dustin Rives attempted a 37-yard field goal only to have it blocked.

FOOTBALL, page 14

Volleyball undefeated in Sun Belt

XAVIER VILLARMAZERO
Sports Editor

The volleyball team continued on its best start in Sun Belt Conference play after three straight road wins over Troy, South Alabama and Florida Atlantic Sept. 29, Oct. 1 and Oct. 3, respectively.

The victories put FIU 14-4 on the season overall and 6-0 in conference play. The Golden Panthers have won seven consecutive matches – the team’s longest winning streak since 2001.

“This team doesn’t care who they’re playing against,” said coach Danjiela Tomic. “They take it one play at a time and they’re out there being worthy enough to have their 0-4 start be at 3-1 or even 4-0.

The Golden Panthers have swept seven matches this season, including four of six conference matches.

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Volleyball

VOLLEYBALL, page 12

New stadium brings more than recruits

STADIUM, page 12

FOOTBALL, page 14

FIU Stadium at University Park is about to get a face lift and coaches, players, administrators and students are buzzing about the possibilities it can bring to the 5-year-old football program.

“Our students voted for a football program that all of us can take pride in,” said University President Modesto A. Maidique. “This is a major step in that direction.”

FIU’s Board of Trustees unanimously approved the construction of a multi-purpose university complex Sept. 29 that includes renovations to FIU Stadium and construction of a student center. The stadium renovations are expected to approximately cost $34 million while the student center will be $24 million.

School officials are hoping to have the project completed by 2010 and have broken the project into four phases. Phase one will be completed before the start of the 2008 football season. It will include a wrap-around concourse with a full field view, 14 luxury suites, 1,400 club seats, a video score board and a stadium club.

Following the completion of phase one, FIU Stadium will be able to accommodate 20,000 fans and 45,000 upon the completion of the entire project.

“I’m excited about it,” freshman running back Devon Freeman said. “We’ll have a lot of fans coming in by then.”

FIU football home games will be played at the Orange Bowl next year while renovations are being made.

The second phase of the project includes the construction of a six story 100,000 square-foot student services building that will house undergraduate advising, admissions, financial aid and a welcome center.

Many of these offices and departments are currently located in Primera Casa and will be moved to the new student services building when construction is completed in the fall of 2009.

Once all of the student services have been moved to the new student services building, all the empty office space in PC will be converted to classrooms, which will open sometime in 2010.

During the last two phases of the project, 25,000 additional seats will be added to the stadium.

Coaches and players believe that the renovations made to FIU stadium will give the Golden Panthers more of a home field advantage.

GRAND PLANS: FIU Stadium will hold 45,000 fans upon completion of the renovations.