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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 was around 4:40 a.m., Sept. 30, when Jacobs, 18, died after only two years at FIU’s School of Engineering. However, Jacobs, 18, died around 4:40 a.m., Sept. 30, after a medical identification chip implant.

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 him around got my 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 up 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 operations 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 students, 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 working conditions.

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 getting a 16-year-old I was like, ‘What?’” Crespo said. “I knew I could get in trouble,” Crespo said.

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Clubs asked to move pizza sales

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 Jadoo 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 the administration.

SQUEAKY CLEAN: Vista employee Aida Vechot, 59, disinfects a Primera Casa bathroom. Along with other janitors, she’ll be receiving new benefits.

American Federation of State, Federal and Municipal Employees, who began organizing meetings last summer to improve working conditions.

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.”

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

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PIZZA WARS: Students interested in raising funds for their clubs may soon have to start selling pizzas bought on campus Béne pizzeria.
Non-credit program addresses debated issues

The FIU Readership Program, part of the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies, offers students non-graded, non-credit learning experience each semester. This semester, students are focusing on either low-scoring high schools and educational reform or national security and the American media. The topics include 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 in 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 of immigrant children with their mentor, Professor Brian Peteson 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, Peterson’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 education.” Rolle said.

Junior Tanesha Rankine agreed. “It’s just different,” Rankine said. “I like the mentoring aspect of it, too, and I 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 Charity 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.

“If hopefully we 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.

Admission into the program is limited, as it aims to keep the groups small. Spots are filled on a first come, first serve basis.

By working closely with students and professors from different academic areas, the program seeks to achieve the larger objectives of the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies.

The institute was founded in 1985 by Senator Jack Gordon.

Its mission statement says it intends to “help students and faculty understand the impact public policy has on their daily lives and in their career pursuits.”

Though in his department Peterson specializes in European history, he is also interested in policy analysis dealing with public schools in Miami.

Peterson explained his participation in the program.

“This is just what I do,” Peterson said. “Beginning with my participation in the civil rights movement during the 1960s, I have always had an interest in public policy and trying to make things better.”

Professor John Stack serves as director of the Institute and teaches in the department of political science.

He specializes in public law and domestic and international politics, and this semester will serve as the mentor to the National Security and the American Media group.

Although the program is not for academic credit or for a grade, students are expected to make a commitment and be engaged.

...Non-credit program addresses debated issues...
University janitors unite to voice grievances

FIU may host next year’s Gandhi Day of Service

Several hundred students, workers and faculty members attended the 2006 Gandhi Day of Service on Oct. 28.

The event was hosted by Community Relations and featured keynote speakers and activities aimed at educating students about the legacy of the late Indian leader.

The day included speeches, workshops and a performance by the FIU chapter of the Students for a Culture of Peace.

Among the participants were FIU psychology professor Marvin Dunn, who introduced the event, and FIU United Students Against Sweatshops chairperson Stephanie Avendano, who spoke about the importance of ethical consumption.

Before I call this a victory, I want to see all these employees get involved and make it a huge Miami-scale event," she said.

"We need to be vigilant that cleaners who were outspoken and emerged as leaders in the struggle are not victimized," Dunn said.

"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," she said.

Vista representatives were unavailable for comment.

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.

"This is really cool to see," said Marquez.

"I hope it's not a one-time thing, but something that they plan on doing annually.

"I think it's a great thing for the community," she said.

"It's really important to highlight the role of the students in giving a voice to the workers," said Senor 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.

The transition will take place immediately. However, state laws require that these positions be posted and opened to any applicant.

Current workers will be granted the first interviews, but some worry that the positions could be filled by other applicants.

"We need to be vigilant that cleaners who were outspoken and emerged as leaders in the struggle are not made to disappear," Dunn said.

"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.
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, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, theme parties, retirement parties, events. Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, only known for hosting corporate events.

Gonzales met future husband Jonathan Gonzales in graduate school at Notre Dame and they later wed on March 25 at the St. Francis De Sales church 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.

Following the cocktail hour, the guests were ushered into the inside of the conference center to wine and dine.

All of the tables were decorated in fuchsia and sage green, and the vases of the centerpiece were lined with lime slices.

“The people who work there are wonderful and very professional. Everything ran so smoothly. It was the best day of my life,” she said.

The conference center boasts 5,508 square feet of wedding space, a sweeping terrazzo-tiled terrace for weddings and wedding receptions, accommodations for up to 300 people and panoramic bay-views.

Couples must first draft a contract with the center prior to planning their event and give a deposit of $500. There is a separate deposit of $1,000 for catering.

The conference center requires of every wedding they host to use their catering service, Thierry’s Catering and Event Design.

“We have a beautiful location here and the location itself makes a beautiful venue and the perfect setting for a special occasion like a wedding,” said Seemi Ramalingam, director of conferences for the Kovens Center.

Leslie Germana Elie, who held both her wedding and reception at the center, said it everything she requested for her wedding, but the “icing on the cake” was the view of the bay.

“Every window you opened had a view,” she said. “It was an amazing view.”

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 for the tables, and go over the budget for the wedding.

“They were very helpful. They 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 gazebo decorated with red and ivory roses was constructed in front of the altar where the couple said their vows.

Elie said she would recommend the conference center to anyone who is planning a wedding, especially with treatment she received from the staff.

“You get to know them and they get inside of your heart like family,” she said.

Kovens Center serves as chapel for couples

A.N.S.W.E.R answers questions

The Distinguished African Scholars Lecture Series, the lecture is made to honor Williams, the late prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

Refreshments will be served before and after the lecture, and music will be provided by Steel Away.

This event is free and open to the public.

Concert celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Latin Explosion Concert will be held at the Wolfe University Center Ballroom from 8 p.m. Oct. 13 through 2 a.m. Oct. 14.

The concert will feature music groups Fulanito and Proyecto Uno.

This event is free for FIU students, and tickets for the outside public cost $5.

Tickets are available at the Campus Life Office in WUC 14.

For more information, call the Campus Life Office at 305-919-5680 or call the Student Programming Council at 305-919-5280.
**Editorial**

**FIU should 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 fundraising.

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 Program, which educates students about HIV, and other student-run non-profits at FIU.

According to Student Government Council at University President Alfonso “Alfie” Leon, SGA hopes to find a common ground to make sure students can somehow fundraise without “offending the pizzeria or the University.”

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 ineffective, 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.

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**LETTERS**

**What do you think? Would you use the proposed Metrorail line to FIU?**

- Yes – I’ll save myself the time and money.
- No – It wouldn’t be any cheaper or faster for me.
- No – Eww, the Metrorail is dirty.

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

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**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 anytime 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 present 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 find.

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 sliding 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 to rule by “divine right.” Many of our forefathers were from fundamentalists. Ben Franklin was a deist. Thomas Jefferson edited his Bible by cutting out all the parts he disagreed with. He once said: “Question with boldness even the existence of God.” Were he alive in their time, he would have dismissed their ideas as the musings of “godless heretics.”

This country is filled with moral and immoral people of all religions. We’re not in moral decline, and to say this country was once entirely moral is incorrect. Moreover, to say that we are too secular and must become “more Christian” in order to end this decline implies that people who aren’t Christian have made this country less moral.

If laws were passed based solely on the religious beliefs of a certain group, then the Christian, Muslim or Buddhist, it would 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.

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. The more we remove God, the deity – no matter where the station is placed, we would be the first responders. Placing the station on campus, though, would offer opportunities for even more to outsiders who may be there for unjust reasons.

A transit station on the FIU campus would make 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-related parking. In other end-of-the-line stations on the current Metrorail system, such as Dadeland South on one morning during the week, the station quickly fills with cars. When that happens, people travel the half a mile to the next station, Dadeland North, and park there. When that lot fills, drivers end up parking in the Dadeland Mall and Dadeland Station parking lots. If a station is built on campus, when the two proposed parking areas are full, drivers will instead park in campus parking.

Additionally, transit officials want to extend Metrorail further south to connect with the ever-growing Kendall area. The 107th Avenue alignment does not make extending the line beyond FIU possible.

All of this alone is reason enough to consider the tunnelpie.117th Avenue alignments. When coupled with those arguments made by the City of Sweetwater and its establishment, the Catholic Church is 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 90 percent of Americans believe in some type of higher deity, or God. Someone 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, just because you don’t 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 unethical are shunned by society as fanatics, and, in some cases, 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. Should the church and state be an independent entity? Indeed an essential part of this country’s tradition. However, when the actions of a few violate the views of the masses, something is wrong.

The fact that we are even discussing morality is evidence that something has changed.

We chose to abandon God, the deity – not God 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.
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.

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.

DEAD MEN WALKING: Halloween Horror Nights takes place at Universal Studios in Orlando throughout the month of October. Tickets cost $59.95, but they offer several discounts for Florida residents. Hours are from 6:30 p.m. to either 12 a.m. or 2 a.m., depending on the day. Visit www.halloweenhorrornights.com for more information on the event.

CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

ALICIA BUSTAMANTE
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 news shows.

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. "Fake" news programs parody real news, should such shows be considered a valid news sources? Brown believes so. "I consider these programs real news sources because you're gaining information even though you don't realize it because you're being entertained," he said. "While the shows aren't in-depth, at least they offer some information that viewers can later research for themselves."

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 stuff like 'The Colbert Report,' 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 unbiased, 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."

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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.

"Unless balanced by an analogous system, [this] would damage the population of our country in the future," said Artavia. "In the long run, stocks pay a lot more than bonds – purchase between five and 10 stocks."

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.

"People that identify with that type of wasteful mindset are in for a surprise when we get older."

"Today’s society gives us the idea of “spend now, save later.” The first step to getting ready is knowing just where your finances stand in the present.

"Use a spreadsheet to build a budget for yourself," said Hamid. "Include what your expenses are and how much debt you have. It’s a simple exercise but you learn a lot from it."

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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 commision, 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 in 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 at an hour, the average attendee can expect to see four of the 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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Stadium renovations priced at $34 million

STADIUM, page 16

advantage when opponents come to play. “All the freshmen are looking for to it,” said freshman quarterback John Paul Fraites. “That was one of the big keys that they told us about on our recruiting visits. [The stadium] should give us more of an edge noise wise and it will also make it more fun for the fans.”

Coaches and players are hoping that stadium renovations and improved facilities will help bring in more talent to the program. “To be competitive in [Division] I-A, you have to have facilities,” said FIU athletic director Rick Mello. Besides its uses for football, Mello said that the renovations will allow FIU to bid for high school football playoff games and even soccer games.

The University has even had preliminary discussions with Major League Soccer about using the stadium if another soccer franchise were based in Miami. Officials are hoping to break ground in March.

Volleyball to play Sun Belt Conference foes at home

VOLEYBALL, page 16

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

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

“[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 Alysye 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 Arasyay 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).

The Golden Panthers will return home and continue conference play Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. against North Texas and Oct. 8 at noon against Denver.

THIS WEEKEND IN FIU SPORTS

OCTOBER 6

M Soccer vs. SMU* (7p.m.)
W Soccer vs. Louisiana Monroe*
Volleyball vs. North Texas* (7p.m.)

Home games in bold

OCTOBER 7

Football vs. North Texas* (7p.m.)

OCTOBER 8

W Soccer vs. Louisiana Lafayette*

Volleyball vs. Denver (6p.m.)

Golf

Lady Paladin Invitational
Greenville, S.C.

M Soccer vs. South Carolina

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University of St. Thomas
MINNESOTA
Men’s soccer nearly upsets top team in nation

ANDREW KAMEKA
Staff Writer

FIU nearly overcame the absence 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 ejects.

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. 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 quickly answered with a goal from midfielder Bruno Guarda in the 79th minute. Guarda booted in a loose ball inside the penalty area and sent the match into overtime.

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.”

HOLDING ON: Sophomore defender Cory Kendall tries to shrug off a SMU defender in an attempt to retrieve the ball.

If sports are the only thing on your mind, come write for The Beacon and get paid to watch games!

Stop by GC 210 or WUC 124 and fill out an application.
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 Jarmany James recovered the ball at the FIU 19.

With little field to work on for the second time following a turnover, the Golden Panther offense 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 their 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 3:47 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.

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.

On Offense, the offensive line needs to pass protect better and open up holes for running backs. Most of senior Josh Padrick’s interceptions have come while scrambling or taking a hit.

On Defense, the Golden Panthers should be looking for some payback after being embarrassed at home as ASU rushed for 222-yards. The defense should have their hands full with Mean Green running back Jamario Thomas, who is averaging 4.1 yards per carry this year.
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 Keyonis 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 overlooking its opponent.

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.

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.

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.
**NEW STADIUM BRINGS MORE THAN RECRUITS**

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 student center.

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.

“Troy, South Alabama and Florida Atlantic have a lot of fans coming in by then,” said Mike Alvarez, the center.

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

**FOOTBALL, page 14**

**FOOTBALL**

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.

Right from the start there was no doubt that FIU was 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.

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 Rivest attempted a 37-yard field goal only to have it blocked.

Volleyball undefeated in Sun Belt

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 Daniella Tomic. “They take it one game at a time and they’re out there to win.”

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

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