DEPLOYMENT DIVIDE

Increase in Iraq troops causes mixed feelings

HELLO, GOODBYE: (Clockwise from above) Sgt. Thomas Ketchum, 23, says goodbye to his fiancée Nikki Desarro, 22, before being deployed to Iraq for the third time on Jan. 16, members of the Virginia National Guard return after a year-long deployment; soldiers take position during a fire fight with insurgents on Jan. 14.

REUBEN PEREIRA
Senior Staff Writer

As President George W. Bush announced Jan. 9 that he planned to deploy an additional 21,000 troops to Iraq, FIU students and faculty found themselves divided in their opinions on the President’s proposed plan.

Senior Brian Swenson greeted the plan with approval, saying that the decision was a positive one that needed to be undertaken to solve the problems in Iraq.

“I think the decision to increase the number of troops was a good one because we really need to get sectors of Iraq under control,” Swenson said. “I think the deployment of additional troops will help protect Baghdad from the insurgents and make it stable. However, I do think the troops should be sent towards the Iranian borders to stop the influx of terrorists from other countries.”

Swenson, a Republican, realized that the majority of Americans could see the decision as a bad idea because according to him, most Americans think that by adding soldiers in Iraq, the war would be prolonged.

On the other end of the spectrum, Abraham Lavender, a Democrat and professor of sociology and anthropology, thinks that the decision wasn’t a wise one.

“I think President Bush’s plan to increase the number of troops is terrible,” Lavender said. “We’re just digging ourselves in deeper at the potential loss of many lives and no potential benefits because of the civil war status in Iraq.”

Junior Jephren Perez, an independent, voted for Bush in the 2004 elections and supported Bush’s decision to invade Iraq. However, he conceded that the deployment of more than 20,000 additional troops was excessive.

“I don’t think we need to have an influx of over 20,000 troops. That’s a bit too much,” Perez said. “However, on the other hand, I don’t think we should withdraw from Iraq either. Withdrawing right now would leave Iraq in ruins with the civil war that’s taking place. The nation will crumble if America left it the way it currently is.”

Senior Muhammed Malik, president and co-founder of Act Now to Stop War and End Racism FIU, strongly opposed the addition of the troops. A.N.S.W.E.R. FIU is a local chapter of a national organization that has campaigned against the United State’s intervention in the Middle East, Asia and Latin America ever since its foundation in 2001.

“The troops must be brought home now. As in Vietnam, that is the only solution. Those who initiated the war and who funded the war should be held accountable for one of the great crimes of the modern era,” Malik said.

When asked about whether the Senate would approve or disapprove of the plan, Lavender said that Congress, including a good number of prominent Republicans and most Democrats, will oppose Bush and this will eventually end up hurting him.

“The opinions of the Democrats and the Republicans will matter in the long run because if the Republican Party doesn’t stop Bush, they will pay an even greater price in the next Presidential election,” Lavender said.

IRAQ, page 2

Author discusses book, Holocaust

NAHOBE GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

Rabbi Saj Freiberg of the Collegiate Learning Exchange was in the Graham Center promoting his organization when a student stopped in front of his table and exclaimed, “Oh my God, this is amazing!”

Junior Shira Azizollahoff’s eyes had just fallen on a picture of Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis, an international best-selling author scheduled to present “Spirituality and the Family: Life is a Test,” Jan. 22 at FIU.

“I’m reading one of her books [The Committed Life] right now in Spanish, and it is so amazing,” Azizollahoff said. “My 14-year-old sister read it and was so amazed that I had to read it, too.”

Freiberg gave Azizollahoff a copy of Rebbetzin Jungreis’s latest book, Life Is a Test, on which her lecture is focused.

“This is a premier event at FIU,” Freiberg said. “It’s especially relevant to Jewish students but anyone who comes will be extremely impressed and will come away with something very special.”

The Hungarian-born author is also a Holocaust survivor. While she was an inmate of Bergen Belsen, most of her family was killed in Auschwitz. In the last 40 years she has become an inspiration to the thousands of people she reaches through her organization — Hineni — her books, lectures, weekly columns, television shows, and even her role as an appointee of President George W. Bush.

Rebbetzin Jungreis agreed to telephone interview with The Beacon.

Q: You receive hundreds of letters from around the world thanking you for your wisdom and guidance. How are you able to touch so many people’s lives?

With my heart. The heart is a powerful instrument. Everything I write and say is based on the Torah. The Torah is the word of God, and the word of God is universal.

When people hear an authentic truth, it resonates. It doesn’t matter what background they have, what gender they are, or whether they’re young or old.

Q: A reviewer of Life Is a Test wrote of the timeliness of your work in what he calls a grotesque age of materialism and decadence. Do you agree?

Unfortunately, yes, and worse. When you look around you see the craziness in the world, the materialism, greed, corruption and brutality. … and that’s not what people want. They want something good but they receive so many confusing messages. … It’s difficult to find authentic values.

Q: You have said that hatred against

AUTHOR, page 2

AP Wire
Elections Board (Judene Tulloch):
Speaker of the House’s Report (Rocio Perez):
Vice President’s Report (Providence Okoye):
President’s Report (Alfonso “Alfi e” Leon):

• Appropriation A07-01. In support of Women Who Read Conference. $500 to
Health Center now has extended hours to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays.
Ticket Master may be coming to GC in the summer.
Goal for the new year: Increase interaction with University Community, through
registration Due

THURSDAY • JANUARY 18
SGA New 3-day schedule forum: 2 p.m.,
GC Ballroom

SPC British Culture: 12 p.m.,
GC Forum

Women’s Basketball vs. North Texas:
5:30 p.m., Golden Panther Arena

Men’s Basketball vs. North Texas:
7:30 p.m., Golden Panther Arena

SPC Coffee House: 6 p.m., GC Piano Room

“Researching and Preserving Black Ecclesiastical Records in Cuba” presentation by Jane Landers:
Room

Dedication:
11 a.m., Lakeview Housing

SGA General Meeting:
2 p.m., GC 150

JUNIORS

SFC Winter in Wonderland Bus Trip
SPC Leadership Housing Complex Dedication:
11 a.m., Lakeside Housing

—Compiled by Resulwen Pereira

New Iraq plan received with skepticism

Swenson disagreed.
“I don’t think anything is going to happen. The Democrats are going to
criticize it. If the Republicans push the Democrats to vote on the
plan, no one is going to do anything against it. No one is going to vote
against the troops,” Swenson said.
“I think the war is getting so much publicity because of the Democrats.
They’re adding fuel to the fire. Defeatism is the solution of the
Democrats. They prefer defeat. There are a very few leaders who
have the guts that Bush did.”
Swenson went on to point out that
the media had blamed in portraying
the war as another Vietnam when it
hardly resembled that war.
“They publicize it as another Vietnam and they want to compare it to Desert Storm,” Swenson said.
“When you’re fighting these ter-
rorists with no nation behind them, you’re fighting idealism, not a
nation. That’s completely different from Vietnam and the Gulf War.”

In their statement responding to
Bush’s War speech, Malik stated
that the Democrats are not much
different than the Republicans.
“They want to posture as opponents of Bush’s surge with-
out taking responsibility for winning the war to a close,” said Malik.
“They’re merely preparing for the 2008 elections hoping to take
advantage of the public dis-
credit.

Who would like students attending your lecture to know about your latest book, Life Is A Test? The book is a trilogy. The first section is a test of self-discovery, because we all go through that ... the second section speaks of tests of relationships ... and the third section is on political tests, like the Holocaust and 9/11. It’s a book for everyone no matter what their personal persuasion may be.

Jungreis will present her lecture Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Graham Center, room 243.

Writer concerned with rising anti-Semitism

Jews today is reminiscent of Europe in 1938 but not
everyone might agree.
What makes you think
so?
There is a lot of anti-
Semitism around the world.
Only thing is that people
call it anti-Israelism, but
it’s one and the same ...

Today The Protocols of the Elders of Zion [a book
with forged evidence of a
Jewish plot for world domi-
nation] has become one of the most popular books in
Muslim countries, and in
Europe anti-Semitism has
escalated to proportions
unprecedented ... Even here
in the [United States], you
see men like ex-President
[Jimmy] Carter bashing
Israel. And in the
United Nations, nothing
has been happening.
Iran has threatened to wipe
Israel of the map and
nothing has been done
about it.

Q: Last year you
were appointed by
President Bush, to
the Holocaust Memorial
Council and have been
declared the one
invited to deliver the ben-
efit at the Republi-
can National Convention.
What makes you differ-
ent from the majority of
Jewish voters who are
Democrats?
I identify with issues. When I see a platform that reflects
which I believe
from the point of
view of my Bibli-
cal origins, then
that is what I will
support.
As far as most
Jews voting Dem-
ocrat, the Demo-
icrat Party in
the past has been
the party of the
minorities, and
Jews are always a minority, so they identify with it.
Q: What makes you identify more with the
Republican Party?
It’s not a question of identifying one platform with
one party or another.
I don’t vote on party
lines, I vote on issues. And I
find often very that the
issues the Republican Party
representers are closer to my
Biblical values than the
issues the Democratic Party
represents.

Jan. 10 Call to order: 4 p.m., Adjournment: 4:52 p.m.
President’s Report (Alfonso “Allie” Leon):
Feb. 10 at 10:30 a.m., dedication of some named branch with College of Law for
the Pharmed Arena. Ruth Badger Ginsberg will be present as a guest speaker.
Vice President’s Report (Providence Ockey):
MWF-class schedule forum Jan 18. “Whether or not it’s going to change, I don’t
know, but come and voice your opinions,” Ockey said. Interim Provost Ronald
Berkmann will attend.
Speaker of the House’s Report (Rocio Perez):
Goal for the new year: Increase interaction with University Community, through
tings such as SGA CAREs campaign.
Feb. 1. Hurricane walkthrough with NOAA. Speak with A.J. Meyer, at large
representative if you want to attend.
Student Union (Michael Jadoo):
Ticket Master may be coming to GC in the summer.
Extra outlets installed in Food court and second floor of GC.
Student Health Advisory (Rebecca Loisour):
Health Center now has extended hours to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays.
Elections Board (Jadine Tallock):
positions open. Applications are due Jan. 19 at 5 p.m.
New Business (aye-nay-abstain):
Appropriation A07-01. In support of Women Who Read Conference, $500 to
cover the cost of the keynote speaker Patricia Ireland. (11-0-0).
Council Meeting Discussion: May change SGA meetings to start at 3:30 p.m.
because of Representative conflicts with 5 p.m. classes.

- Compiled by Angelina Troff, Beacon Staff
Celebration promises to entertain

By Begone Cazaus
Staff Writer

Panther Square will be filled with diversity as it celebrates the unity of cultures during the One World Celebration from Jan. 16 to Jan. 18. Cecilia Moran, a senior majoring in television production, said the event was put together at the Biscayne Bay Campus in order to “celebrate cultures and diversity in a uni-

“Attending FIU opens the eye of many students, this is a school that exposes you to diversity,” said Moran. “You see different faces, from different backgrounds. However, most students don’t get to get close to all of the students from the different cultures, which is an opportunity to get to know other cultures,” Moran said.

Anoush McNamee, the coordinator of the International Students and Scholar Services, said the One World Celebration will be different from other events at BBC that have celebrated diversity in the past.

“The One World Celebration promises to entertain with the performances,” McNamee said. The event scheduled for the Jan. 16, which are being held and sponsored by the Student Programing Council, will consist of a Brazilian drum line from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., surprise giveaways, and professional Samba dancers who will be performing in Panther Square. According to McNamee, in the past international events for diversity awareness was developed by the National Association of Foreign Students. Universities are to vote on what kind of events they want to perform.

“At FIU we decided to create events for the One World Celebration, the International Week, and maybe some events will come along the One World Celebration is very special,” Jakes said. “It will be right after Martin Luther King Jr. day where it is a time of peace and unity. We are expanding his message to the cultural diversity.”

SGC, SOC look to fill council positions

By Anna Davis
Staff Writer

While the Student Organizations Council is holding special elections to fill empty positions for their executive board, the Student Government Council at BBC will not be holding elections, said the advisor.

SOC will be holding special elections on Jan. 25 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. to fill empty positions in the executive board that have been vacant since last fall. Presently, the only executive board position filled is President.

The students who will be eligible to vote during the special elections are representatives chosen by their respective club or organization. Each student club is given one vote.

SOC President Camilo Silva said he is looking for responsible and motivated students to fill the empty executive board positions.

“I am looking for people on the campus. The duties are not heavy, my goal is to make them manageable,” said SGC President Jon Doozan.

In order to run for an executive position, the applicant must have at least a 2.0 grade point average, and be “in good standing with the University,” according to Siegel. All SGC officers are expected to hold a position of one year that will last from one Spring semester until the following Spring semester. Traditionally, elections are held the second to last meeting of every other Spring semester.

According to Doozan, all new members will work for approximately 10 hours a week, but the hours are flexible. Students will be able to schedule their own hours.

Advisor Iry Siegel has expressed the importance of filling the other executive positions in order to “get more help with running the SOC.”

“It is important to fill these positions to better help the student body. [Doozan] is currently running with one man band,” Siegel said.

Doozan, who was the SOC vice president in the fall, took over the presidency of SOC this spring after his predecessor, Yashica Heath, graduated from FIU at the end of the semester. Aside from Doozan, Heath managed SOC at BBC without an executive board.

SOC is the governing body of student organizations on campus.

They are responsible for allocating funds to student clubs and coordinating activities to promote student interests. According to Doozan, SOC is “the club’s council to go to in order to register a club.”

Students interested in running for an open position need to submit their applications by Jan. 23. Applications are available in the Campus Life office at the Wolfe University Center, room 141. SOC-BBC, on the other hand, will not be holding elections although a number of positions became available this spring.

Camilo Silva, SGC-BBC President said the reason is because they need temporary positions that will expire after this spring.

“We will wait until April for the general elections,” Silva said.

Students interested in any of the positions must apply by picking up an application at the Campus Life office. There is no deadline to submit an application. All of the empty positions, which are expected to be filled as SGC finds eligible applicants. In order to qualify for an SGC position, students must have 50 percent of their classes at BBC. They must also be available to attend all weekly SGC meetings and be in good standing with the University.

SGC-BBC Vice President Pamela St. Fleur said during the SGA weekly meeting Jan. 10 that all former SGC members who left after the Fall semester must left on good terms, but left for different reasons.

“For some transferred, some don’t have more than 50 percent [of their] classes in BBC which makes them ineligible to serve here,” St. Fleur said.

St. Fleur also advised other SGA members that remaining in the organization is very important.

“Get the word out, tell people to apply, to get involved and not be afraid,” St. Fleur said.

SGC Notes

Jan. 10 Call to order: 3:30 p.m., Adjournment: 4:45 p.m.
President’s Report (Camilo Silva):
• Three-Day Class Committee, present and will meet every other Friday. SGA members welcome to attend all meetings.
• Forum to discuss the changes brought by the new schedule cancelled until further notice due to ceremony honoring the memory of Dean Tony Marshall on the same day, Jan. 17. Vice President’s Report (Pamela St. Fleur):
• March 15, High Achievers Event. Theme will be “Recognizing our Shining Stars.” Applications are available in Campus Life office.
Advisor’s Report (Craig Cunningham):
• Feb. 2 Leadership Summit in FIU, Superhero Leadership Training. “Will be a wonderful experience, many guest speakers.”
• Event is open to all students in leadership positions (SGC, Club Chairpersons, Peer Advisors, etc.)
Finance Chairperson (Zachary Trautenberg):
• Athletics Fee committee meeting Jan. 23. Looking to raise athletic fee by five percent.

New Business
• Camilo Silva (President): University Wide Retreat will be held Feb. 9 at BBC. All SGA members must be in attendance.
• Gabriel Labrador (At Large Representative): Currently working on a draft for a new SGA constitution. Some issues will be approved or dismissed by students in SGA elections.

Compiled by Maria Chercoles
The problem with the case is that it took so long for him to die. Like Johnson and Landry before him, Diaz was essentially tortured to death.

DAVID A. FOCIL
Contributing Writer

In the course of our chaotic misadventure in Iraq, we have been consistently bombarded with distorted, naïve and outright dangerous views on how exactly to handle a war that by all measures is not clearly defined and lacks tangible conditions for victory.

While these factors combined, it is no wonder that we are in a situation that none of the best minds in political discourse and military strategy are able to resolve, either intellectually or practically.

And yet, new fears of an even more dire future for Iraq and the region, we press on, desperately clinging to the comforting illusion of control. But can our leaders, who are entrusted with deciding the fate of our service members and some 25 million Iraqis, afford to gamble with so many lives? Because that is exactly what President Bush is doing with his so-called "new strategy" for the war.

Among his proposals is to send an additional 20,000 combat troops to help secure Baghdad and the Anbar province. The US Soldiers and Marines sent into these areas will supposedly augment the current troop levels and establish more check points, more counterinsurgency operations, and attempt to overall suppression of the ethnic and religious violence that has plagued the country for so long.

What officials hope is that this will give the Iraqi government the time to train more troops and eventually take control from the militias and insurgents who stand in the way of peaceful development and stability.

However, what is often lost in the media discussion of this proposal is that all of these so-called new ideas have already been tried and have for the most part failed.

The increase will allegedly raise levels to around 160,000—yet since the war began in 2003 troop levels have fluctuated around this level with an average of around 150,000.

According to the Brookings Institution, troop levels in Iraq reached the 160,000 plateau in November 2005 before receding in 2006.

The administration is merely returning the scope of our deployment in Iraq to their previous levels, not launching an unprecedented new offensive to stabilize Iraq.

So where is the new strategy? There is none. This is simply a stalling tactic to see if the situation somehow can resolve itself. Bush has opted to change course in terms of rhetoric, while recycling most of his old plan.

This is not a new plan, it is merely the old plan reframed to make it seem like he has acquiesced to popular demands for change.

The President is in effect bluffing with a hand that can’t win, except the stakes aren’t just billions of dollars—they are thousands of lives.

The insurgents fight us not necessarily because they oppose a better future for Iraq, but because they oppose our occupation of their lands.

The Sunni’s and Shiites fight each other not because of some irrational hatred, but because they have struggled for control of Iraq and brutalized one another for so long that it seems the only reasonable course available to them.

These are problems of society, problems of how men and women choose to resolve their disputes.

Iraqis are fighting an internal war to decide what shape they wish their state to take.

Some want theocracy, others hope for a secular democracy, and still others cling to ideas that died with a man at his hanging two weeks ago.

How are we then to make these fundamental choices for people so far away, with experiences and attitudes we barely comprehend?

This is the greatest problem with the war, and no increase in troops, or false promises of a new direction will change that.

Disillusioned with his so-called "new strategy," the American public is fighting a war to decide what shape they wish their state to take.

The Sunni’s and Shiites fight each other, not because of some irrational hatred, but because they have struggled for control of Iraq and brutalized one another for so long that it seems the only reasonable course available to them.

These are problems of society, of how men and women choose to resolve their disputes.

Iraqis are fighting an internal war to decide what shape they wish their state to take.

Some want theocracy, others hope for a secular democracy, and still others cling to ideas that died with a man at his hanging two weeks ago.

How are we then to make these fundamental choices for people so far away, with experiences and attitudes we barely comprehend? This is the greatest problem with the war, and no increase in troops, or false promises of a new direction will change that.

Angel Diaz, an inmate in a Florida jail was executed for a murder he committed in 1979 on December 13, 1988.

Mr. Landry's injection catheter came out of his arm, leading executioners to reinsert the needle, starting the process all over. His death was slow and excruciating.

And what about the case of Elliot Rod Johnson on June 24, 1987? Due to collapsed veins, it took executioners almost an hour to administer the injection and officially pronounce Mr. Johnson dead.

These are just a few examples of bungled lethal injections. If you were to scroll through the reported cases of botched executions—including execution by electrocution, lethal gas, or hanging—you would be surprised to see that the majority of these failures were attempted lethal injections.

The Human Rights Watch website www.hrw.org states that 19 of the 37 states with lethal injection statutes consider it the least painful and barbaric method of execution, and it caused Mr. Diaz and others before him so much pain, something must be wrong.

The issue is not simply over the morality of capital punishment as an abstract concept, rather, the problem with the case of Mr. Diaz is that it took so long for him to die.

Like Johnson and Landry before him, Angel Diaz was essentially tortured to death.

Death penalty opponents have questioned why something was not done earlier, and why the steps taken in the aftermath of this tragedy have not been more dramatic. Even some who don’t necessarily oppose capital punishment can do little else but ask questions and be appalled at the suffering.

Those concerned with human rights can at least take solace in the fact that some states have taken steps to prevent another lethal injection related horror story from occurring.

But in the end, the death of Angel Diaz may only prove that capital punishment is inhumane.
Broad scope of graduate school exam causes SAT flashbacks

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Stellar grades and a flurry of campus involvement during your college tenure are much to be proud of, but they aren't the only necessities for students eager to step into the world of graduate school. Whether or not students agree with this system, the fact is that many grad school scales of acceptance are computer-based in all U.S. locations and its duration is determined weeks (or months) instead they should just spend some time at ETS.org, the homepage for Educational Testing Services. The possible scores for both the verbal and quantitative reasoning sections range from 200-800, while the analytical writing scale is one to six.

Milza Rosales, program assistant at FIU's Graduate Admissions office, points out that not every college and school at FIU requires the GRE, but that those who don’t are a minority. “It’ll be easier to list the ones that don’t,” Rosales said. “For [the School of Business] they require the [Graduate Management Admissions Test]. Several [majors] in education, dietetics, linguistics, history [don’t ask for the GRE].”

This, of course, is not an exhaustive list, but gives students some guidance about whether their field will ask them to hand over those scores.

As much as students may have crammed at the last minute for tests in high school – and may still do so now in college – chances are this will not work for the GRE, as one of the test’s goals is to measure knowledge that students have acquired through the years.

Char Eberly, writing director at FIU’s Learning Center, recalled the GRE’s uniqueness. “It wasn’t like any other standardized test I’ve ever taken,” Eberly said. “It seemed to measure more how you think, not how much you know … which is how the SAT is. I don’t know if that makes it a better test or not.”

Additionally, most students have by now become so immersed in their specific major that studying for the GRE may require brushing cobwebs off of concepts (like analogies and algebra) that they have not used very much since high school.

Jerry Pecknold, graduate student and teacher’s assistant in English, agreed that his academic niche naturally influenced his scores. “I’m in the English department,” Pecknold said. “I’ve always relied on machines to take care of my math … In the English section I did well.”

In light of this specialization that occurs both in undergraduate and in graduate years, Pedro Carvalho, assistant at FIU’s Learning Center, recalled the GRE’s uniqueness. “It’s a very broad series of questions,” Carvalho said. “Some of the areas aren’t as pertinent in your success in academia. Maybe [it would be better] to have, like the [Advanced Placement exam], specialized tests for the specific topics.”

However, noticing they have become rusty in some areas outside their major should not lead students to feel inadequate for grad school; instead they should just spend some determined weeks (or months) before the test reviewing.

ETS.org also offers a wealth of preparation material, of which the most helpful may be actual sample questions.

Entire practice books at a local bookstore are also dedicated to GRE prep, some of which are Barton’s How to Prepare for the GRE (2007) and Princeton Review’s Cracking the GRE (2007).

Eberly feels that such books are probably the most effective – and most economical – form of preparation. “I really recommend the prep books,” Eberly said. “They come with a CD that has entire practice tests.”

Students ready to sign up to take the test should know that it is offered year-round at University of Miami and Miami-Dade College (North campus), that there is a $130 fee involved, and that you can register at ETS.org.
The Shins take their sweet time making records. They came out of nowhere in 2001 with their debut album, Oh! Inverted. World and left newfound fansfasing for new material for nearly two and a half years. By the time they released a follow-up, Chutes Too Narrow, in the summer of 2003, expectations had been—perhaps justifiably—raised sky-high.

Fortunately, by most accounts, Chutes Too Narrow did not disappoint. It was a drastically different album from their first; it was tidier, cutting out the psychedelic interludes that littered the first album and instead focusing purely on strong, perfectly written songs. Some fans lamented the lack of those whimsy, atmospheric tracks, arguing that the contrast between melancholy and euphoria that made the first album so intriguing was gone. A deeper listen showed, however, that the band's songwriting had evolved and those same tensions were still there, though in a more sophisticated manner. The same good, ever.


**MOVIE**

Pan's Labyrinth

C. JOEL MARINO

Editor in Chief

In Pan’s Labyrinth, Mexican director Guillermo del Toro presents a fairy tale that closely follows the formula used in many children’s classics: a young girl who can’t deal with her new stepfather’s cruelty is whisked away into a magical quest full of peril and strange creatures with the promise that she will one day become a fairy princess.

In many ways, Ofelia (Ivana Baquero), the young girl, resembles timeless characters like J. M. Barrie’s Wendy, who escaped to Neverland to avoid the horrible fate of growing up, or C.S. Lewis’ Pevensie children who entered Narnia as the Germans bomed Lonie’s "Land of the Living." In those worlds, though, the dread presence of grown-ups was forgotten as soon as the adventure began, their rules only a catalyst for the magical times that lay ahead.

What makes this movie a great film is that the cruelties of the adult world are Ofelia’s perils—as much as she tries to escape into her dreams, reality’s shadow follows her and becomes as integral to the film’s plot as the magical elements.

The embodiment of that brutal reality is Ofelia’s new stepfather, General Vidal (Sergi Lopez), who is the leader of a small army trying to defeat rebels hiding in the Spanish countryside during Franco’s fascist regime.

Lopez portrays Vidal as a logical but cruel man who silently revels in the fear he inspires in others. His only cares in the world are the son Ofelia’s mother will soon bare him and his fanatical wish to see evidence of the new order die a painful death.

Though del Toro chronicles Vidal’s barbarism and battle scenes with the grit of a superb war movie, his masterpiece comes with the introduction of a bizarre, ancient creature simply called the faun (played with a wonderful, slightly menacing pounce by Doug Jones) who comes to offer an escape from that twisted realm.

Ofelia meets the faun in a decaying labyrinth near the fort where she now lives. A gaunt half-man, half-goat monster whose mischievous smile hides a trace of the sinister, the faun tells the girl that she is actually the reincarnation of a long-dead fairy princess.

Because the girl wants so badly to believe this, she agrees to fulfill the three dangerous tasks before the rising of the full moon to prove her royal worth.

Where another fantasy movie would have shifted focus to chronicle only these quests, Pan’s Labyrinth keeps us tuned to what the grown-ups are doing when the child recedes into the adventures.

There is fear and sadness in this movie, such as can be found in the original Grimm fairy tales or the latest Harry Potter books.

By focusing more on the tale than on the fairies, del Toro has crafted one of the most original, bittersweet stories in recent years, reminding us that though we can’t escape reality by dreaming, it is as equally impossible to escape our dreams through reality.

**GAME**

Legend of Zelda “Twilight Princess”

REINIER HERNANDEZ

Staff Writer

Fans of the much-lauded “Legend of Zelda” series waited patiently for the release of the latest entry into the franchise, “Twilight Princess,” released at the Nintendo Wii’s launch. With it came a sigh of relief from those wondering if Nintendo could incorporate their new technology while still maintaining the tight gameplay the “Zelda” series has become known for.

Following “Zelda” tradition, “Twilight Princess” begins with a new story, allowing gamers to jump right into the game on any Zelda experience. The game is set in Hyrule, the same land as the earlier titles, but with a twist: it’s the aftermath of the previous games "Zelda" tells us that though we can’t escape reality, the game serves as a tutorial to the game and the controls. In “Twilight Prin-

What appear to be deceptively simple tasks have never been as accurate or intuitive. Link’s sword and adds a level of immersion to the nunchuck attachment used for movement.

Aiming with the game’s various long-range tools is also used well with the Wii remote. Much like a computer mouse, you literally point and take aim at an object and release the B button to fire. Firing your bow and arrows is as simple as Link’s wolf form is similar to control as his human form, using the Wii remote to control his vari-

Veterans and newcomers alike can rest easy in knowing that while the controls have been simplified to allow new players to enjoy the game, the old fans can still appreciate the strategy, skill, and storytelling they’ve come to expect from "Zelda."
Men’s losing streak grows to five

Golden Panthers’ second half surge comes too late

LOSS, page 8

That as WKU answered with a 6-0 run started by two consecutive layups from junior forward Crys-
tal Kelly, who finished with 13 points and 11 rebounds.

The Lady Toppers were able to weather the Golden Panthers’ second half surge, shooting 47.3 percent from the field and 43.8 percent from three-point range.

Laquetta Ferguson, junior guard

We as a team were not moving. There was a lot of standing in the first half.

Golden Panthers’ lost game included both teams trading baskets with little defensive stops.

Free throws from the Lady Toppers and poor rebounding in the last minute of the game halted FIU’s comeback.

The Golden Panthers will attempt to snap their three game losing streak against conference rival North Texas on Jan. 18 and will take place at 7:30 p.m. at Pharmed Arena.

Aqu: Senior guard Johwen Villegas injured his knee during the second half after bumping knees with a Western Kentucky player.

JOIN OUR STAFF!

The BEACON is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don’t be shy. Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.
Short handed, men lose to Western Kentucky

With only three reserves on the bench – as a result of junior guard Dejon Prejean transferring to St. Thomas University, sophomore guard Elvis Lora’s suspension, and injuries to forwards Facundo Giorgi and Marlon Bright – a win against a Sun Belt Conference opponent, Western Kentucky, on Jan. 11 would have been just what the men’s basketball team needed.

The Hilltoppers (13-5, 5-1) didn’t show any remorse as the Golden Panthers (6-10, 1-5) lost their five consecutive game 86-74 at Pharmed Arena.

“We just weren’t lucky today,” sophomore forward Alex Galindo said.

Despite shooting 55.6 percent from the field and out-rebounding the Hilltoppers in the first half, the Golden Panthers trailed 38-35 at intermission.

Fuller lead all scorers at the half with 13 points, going 3-for-3 on 3-point attempts. He even managed to give his team some points, going 3-for-3 on 3-point attempts.

The Golden Panthers’ second half offensive attack. Jekabsone scored 13 of her team-high 15 points as she finished with 10 rebounds. Ferguson finished the game with nine points and seven rebounds.

The struggling Jekabsone was held to just two first half points on 1-for-5 shooting from the field due to constant double teams.

Lasma Jekabsone, was held to just two first half points on 1-for-5 shooting from the field due to constant double teams.

The Lady Toppers’ defense didn’t allow the Golden Panthers to get comfortable in their offense.

Junior guard LaQuetta Ferguson recorded just three points, three turnovers and one assist in the first half.

“We as a team were not moving,” Ferguson said. “There was a lot of standing in the first half.”

Although the Golden Panthers failed to develop an effective offense during the first half, the second half proved to be a polar opposite.

The struggling Jekabsone and Ferguson led the Golden Panthers’ second half offensive attack. Jekabsone scored 13 of her team-high 15 points as she finished with 10 rebounds. Ferguson dished out five of her team high six assists as she finished with nine points simultaneously switching from shooting guard to point guard in the second half.

“I’m comfortable playing any position on the court,” Ferguson said. "Coach wanted me to play the point so I did.”

Ferguson was moved to point guard after coach Russo elected to bench sophomore starting point guard Iva Ciglar, who finished the game with three points and three assists, one minute into the second half.

Russo said that Ferguson would remain the starting point guard.

“We’re going to try different things,” coach Russo said. “We’re going to mix it up.”

The Golden Panthers scored just eight points six minutes into the second half until sophomore forward Marquita Adley sparked FIU’s comeback attempt with a steal and fast break lay-up. Adley finished the game with nine points and seven rebounds.

Freshman guard Monika Boscilj also hit two consecutive three-point shots as she finished with 10 points.

“The bench was very instrumental to our comeback,” coach Russo said. “They play well together and they’re always ready.”

The Golden Panthers’ bench outscored the Lady Toppers’ bench 14-3 in the second half.

Two minutes following Adley’s lay-up, the Golden Panthers began a 15-5 run to bring the score 50-54. However, the Golden Panthers could not help the Golden Panthers snap their five-game losing streak. The Golden Panthers gave up a season high 86 points, in a loss to Western Kentucky.

The Golden Panthers’ misfortunes continued as the Hilltoppers opened the second half on 11-4 run.

Worst off, senior guard Jowen Villegas went down with 10:49 left in the game.