Low student turnout marks first M-W-F forum

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Staff Writer

About 25 students and staff members attended the first of an undetermined number of forums that allowed FIU students to express their concerns about the Monday-Wednesday-Friday class schedule and its affects on parking, tuition, food venues and campus events.

One of the Jan. 18 forum’s main speakers was Interim Provost Ronald Berkman, who answered multiple questions throughout the one-hour event.

“With the new three-day class schedule, there will be 455 more class meeting opportunities a week,” Berkman said. “$491,000 has also been put aside for improving classes as well.

When compared to other universities, FIU has one of the lowest class utilization rates — roughly at 40 percent, according to Berkman.

According to past research, the switch to the new system will optimize class usage and put FIU class scheduling into the mainstream.

FIU is one of the few universities in Florida and the country that hasn’t conformed to the three-day class schedule.

However, with new bills being passed in the Florida legislature, if FIU doesn’t change to the new schedule, the University wouldn’t be eligible for construction funding from the state, according to Berkman.

Corinne Webb, the vice president of Enrollment Services, said that with the new schedule students would be able to sign up for classes an entire semester in advance.

“Students will only be charged for the current semester,” Webb said.

“FIU does not have the authority to disperse financial aid in advance.”

Tuition prices will also not be affected by the switch, according to Berkman.

During the meeting, Fridays were described as slow days on campus.

Alfonso “Allie” Leon, president of the Student Government Council at University Park, said food venues close early and events are not scheduled on Fridays due to the low number of students on campus.

According to Leon, the new schedule will give more opportunities to clubs on Fridays.

Parking was also a hot topic during the class schedule forum.

“Parking is an issue and the University is dealing with it,” said Vice President of Student Affairs and Undergraduate Education Rosa Jones. “Two parking garages are being planned.”

Though two new garages are being planned.

MEAL DEAL

With a swipe of their Panther ID card, commuter students and faculty will be able to receive up to a 50 percent discount at the cafeteria.

As with all other meal plans, the Flex 5 will not offer roll overs — whatever is not used does not transfer into the following semester.

According to Ximena Cordero, marketing manager of Panther Dining Services, the idea for the Flex 5 came about after many commuter students requested a cheaper meal plan.

Cordero used focus groups during the development of the Flex 5, paying close attention to students’ lifestyles. These focus groups were advertized to students via e-mail as a way for students to help Dining Services provide satisfactory programs.

This study, conducted during the beginning of the school year, questioned five groups of 10 to 12 students on what their wants were regarding meal plans.

“(Before the Flex 5), meal plans were more catered to housing students, but now, we can include more students and fit other needs,” said Cordero.

“It sounds like a good idea,” said freshman and commuter, Maria Pena. “The other plans are too expensive. [The Flex 5] is appropriat for students who are not here five days a week.”

Pena, who is not currently signed with a meal plan, believes other options should be made available as well.

“I think they should make other plans earlier so I would have had the chance to participate in such a good deal.” Pena said.

Senior Alex Torres expressed his support for the plan, believing other options should be made available as well.

“We should have more options. I think students should look at the Flex 5.” Torres said.

“[The meal plan] would make a lot of students’ days easier. Students wouldn’t have to leave campus and re-park just to get lunch across the street.”

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Though two new garages are being planned.

Cafeteria offers new meal plan

KELLY POVEROMO
Contributing Writer

With a swipe of their Panther ID card, commuter students and faculty will be able to receive up to a 50 percent discount at the Fresh Food Company with the new Flex 5 meal plan.

Effective as of this Spring semester, the Flex 5 meal plan offers commuter students five meals per week at the University Park cafeteria.

Although commuter students have always had the choice of purchasing a meal plan, the Flex 5 sells for $718.33 per semester for an additional 100 Panther Bucks. The formerly cheapest meal plan, the 100 Block, costs $1,125.95 per semester for 100 meals and 500 Panther Bucks.

Panther Bucks can be purchased to use items at other on-campus eateries.

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“[The meal plan] would make a lot of students’ days easier. Students wouldn’t have to leave campus and re-park just to get lunch across the street.”

As part of the week of events, Career Services will also have resume critiques on a walk-in basis.

“We offer many resources to help students find that dream job,” said Daniela Ciffoni, mental engineering. Employers for all other majors and fields will be present during the second day of the fair.

Some of the companies and organizations that will be present include BankUnited, Burger King, the FBI and the CIA, among others. All companies will be interviewing and answering questions for students who are seeking future employment.

However, in today’s competitive environment, just showing up to the Career Fair will not guarantee that dream job. Because of this, Career Services is hosting Mega Career Week before the fair.

Mega Career Fair will be running through Jan. 29, and as part of it, Career Services as well as some of the employers who will attend the fair, will be providing a series of career-related workshops and information sessions.

“All services are to help students from choosing their major to resume critiques, practice interviews, internships, full-time employment and alumni services,” said Lauren Hubeck, special events coordinator for Career Services.

As part of the week of events, Career Services will also have resume critiques on a walk-in basis.

“We offer many resources to help students get [where they want], such as prepare them to find that dream job,” said Daniela Ciffoni,

Students seek jobs at Career Fair

MARTA CONCHA
Contributing Writer

For students, working in a high-tech computer lab with Bill Gates or designing an airport in China may be a dream, but it takes more than just dreaming to achieve success. Career Services hopes to help students achieve those dreams by hosting its Spring 2007 Career Fair at University Park next week.

This year’s Career Fair will be held Jan. 29 for technical majors and Jan. 30 for non-technical majors.

Employers there will not only be recruiting for full-time, part-time and internship positions but will also give students the opportunity to network, learn more about specific companies and find out about job opportunities and new trends in their field.

During the fair’s technical majors day, employers will be recruiting for fields such as biomedical engineering, civil and environmental engineering. Employers for all other majors and fields will be present during the second day of the fair.

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IT’S OFFICIAL

Recruiters look for students at fair

SPC General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 140
‘Wild Succulent Women’ – The Barbie War – Creating a Positive Body Image:

SATURDAY • JANUARY 27
SPC Film – “The Prestige”:
ENGAGE Leadership Workshop:
SPC General Meeting:

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 24
Rec. Center Fitness Fair: 11 a.m., FIU Recreation Center

THURSDAY • JANUARY 25
GSA Gradskeller:

FRIDAY • JANUARY 26
ENGAGE Leadership Workshop: 11 a.m., GC 305

SATURDAY • JANUARY 27
Honors Council Community Service Project

CORRECTIONS
In the issue dated Jan. 18, 2007, the page number should be credited to Fernando Garcia.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4723.

This Week on Campus

CAREER, page 1

Recruiters look for students at fair

The career consultant in Career Services and professor of the Career Development and Leadership class, Dana DellaCamera, career consultant for Career Services, recommended some key points to students who plan to attend the fair, such as taking at least 25 copies of their resumes with them, having a positive attitude, and having note cards with the companies they are interested in working for.

She also pointed out the importance of being well-prepared when talking to a company representative, suggesting to have a “30-second elevator pitch” prepared.

“This is basically a short commercial about yourself so that the employer knows who you are and what you are looking for very quickly,” DellaCamera said.

According to DellaCamera, the elevator pitch should include the student’s name, class level, major, the type of position he or she is looking for, as well as any experience he or she may already have in the field.

“It is best to write this out before hand so that you are prepared the day of the event. You can offer a handshake when you first approach a recruiter, but make sure it is firm but not crushing. Do not get offended if a recruiter does not want to shake your hand. They sometimes choose not to due to sickness,” DellaCamera said.

Hubacheck also noted not saying anything negative about a past employer, nor complaining or sounding desperate.

“It’s also better to research ahead of time to know which companies are going to be there and the positions they are looking for,” Hubacheck said.

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“It’s also better to research ahead of time to know which companies are going to be there and the positions they are looking for,” Hubacheck said.

According to Hubacheck, who go inappropriately dressed are not going to be allowed entrance to the event.

The fair will take place in the Graham Center Ballrooms from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Career Services is also organizing a career fair at the Biscayne Bay Campus for Feb. 28.

The Career Services is located in UP at GC 230 and in BBC at the Wolfe University Center, room 255.

SGC-UP Notes

Jan. 17 Call to order 4 p.m., adjournment 4:51 p.m.

President’s Report (Alfonso “Alfi” Leon):

• Diplomatic internship available. One-on-one with Washington insiders.

• FIU Day March 7 for administrators and March 8 for students. SGA will take 35 to 40 students to Tallahassee. If interested, contact Phillip in the GC 211.

• Faculty Senate meeting yesterday. Dr. David Lee recently printed an abstract on the Career Development and Services and professor of Career, page 1

It’s Official

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Lecturers discuss Cuba’s post-Castro future

JOSH LEPREE
Contributing Writer

With the recent stir caused by Fidel Castro’s emergency intestinal surgery last July, there has been widespread speculation about Cuba’s immediate future. The Cuban Research Institute at University Park stands at the forefront of addressing the issues at hand.

The CRI has two presentations planned for this week that will shed light on many of the questions that have been on the minds of the public since Fidel Castro transferred power to his brother, Raul Castro.

The first of the presentations is entitled “Between Fidel and Raul: What’s Next for Cuba?” and will be held Jan. 23 at 12:30 p.m. in the Graham Center, room 243.

It will be presented by FIU Professor Marifeli Perez-Stable, who serves as the vice president for Democratic Governance at the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington, D.C.

Perez-Stable also chaired the FIU Latin American and Caribbean Center’s Task Force on Memory, Truth, and Justice, which in 2003 issued the Cuban Reconciliation Agreement and agreements with Chile, Singapore and Australia.

The CRI is the nation’s leading institute for research and academic programs on Cuba and Cuban-American issues.

In an effort to further expose FIU students to what may happen in a post-Castro Cuba, the CRI will also host a second presentation entitled “Corruption in Cuba: Castro and Beyond.” Jan. 24 at 7:30 p.m. in GC 243. This lecture will be based on a recent book titled Corruption in Cuba, co-authored by Sergio Diaz-Briquets and Jorge Lopez-Perez. The presentation will be in Spanish.

Diaz-Briquets describes, “The book... examines Cuba’s corruption experience, both from historical and contemporary perspectives, and tries to anticipate how corruption could evolve under various transition scenarios. It also discusses measurements a post-Castro Cuba must implement if wide scale corruption is to be averted... and the foundations laid for a prosperous, stable and democratic nation.”

Both of the authors have served as presidents of the Board of Directors for the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy. They have also collaborated on many previous occasions on academic papers and books, addressing a wide array of topics concerning Cuba.

The authors will lecture on their view of the institutionalized system of corruption that Castro’s government has fostered over the span of decades.

“The consequences of [corruption] were so dire that many analysts have concluded that had corruption been controlled the transitions would have been far smoother with far less adverse political and economic consequences,” Diaz-Briquets said describing the conditions following the collapse of the United Soviet Socialist Republics.

Diaz-Briquets currently works in Washington, D.C. as president of NTS Consulting LTD. Perez-Lopez is currently the executive director of the Fair Labor Association, after having spent more than 30 years within the U.S. government.

He spent 18 years as the director of the Office of International Economic Affairs, where he helped to negotiate labor components of several free trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement and agreements with Chile, Singapore and Australia.

The CRI is the nation’s leading institute for research and academic programs on Cuba and Cuban-American issues.

The institute draws on the expertise of more than 40 faculty members, which constitute the largest nucleus of faculty experts on Cuba and the Cuban-American community of any university in the United States. The CRI, which specializes in Cuban diaspora studies, benefits from the fact that there are more than 700,000 Cubans in Miami.

FIU holds the largest population of under-graduate students of Cuban origin, according to the CRI website http://crie.fiu.edu.

For more information about these and future CRI presentations, call 305-348-1991.

Schedule may have benefits

FIVE DAYS A WEEK: Senior Carlos Oleachea (right) asks a question at the SGA 3-Day Schedule Forum Jan. 18. Rosa Jones, vice president of student affairs; Corinne Webb, vice president of enrollment services; and Interim Provost Raul Berkman, (back-left) answer students’ concerns. About 25 students attended the forum, which questions whether students really care about the changes.

Worsdale was totally against the new schedule, said Worsdale, a freshman. “After it was over, I was convinced it was a good idea. The new schedule will make FIU a better school.”

The new three-day class schedule change is set to take place Fall 2007.

Despite the low turn-out, students like Simone Williams and Worsdale, were able to get most of the answers they were looking for.

“We don’t have a class every day,” said Worsdale, “before I came here, I was a good idea. The new schedule will make FIU a better school.”

The new three-day class schedule change is set to take place Fall 2007.

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Faulty lights leave students in the dark

JOSE MAYA  
Staff Writer

As problems with lighting increase around Biscayne Bay Campus, issues brought to light since last semester have not been addressed.

According to Bill Foster, director of parking and transportation, there are currently 20 parking lots around BBC that are not working due to their bulbs not being replaced.

There are also two lights that require more than educational maintenance, with only poles left where the lights once stood due to hurricane damage from 20 years ago. One is near the parking lot, the other around the information station near the campus entrance.

When we have critical situations, such as the one we had this week when the parking lot lights went out, it is usually related to problems with power," Foster said. There are five lights in the Academic II parking lot that are either constantly flickering or going out due to power outages.

Too many people were using electricity on campus at one time causing the contractor to go down. I fixed several lights but we must wait for the bucket truck to fix the rest," Foster said.

Though Foster said that his department is currently working on a deal to rent a bucket truck to allow them to work from an elevated point on the lights, a company has not been confirmed yet.

Nonetheless, he assured, "[The lights] should be done by the end of the month.”

BBC Student Government Council Vice President Pamela St. Fleur brought up the lighting issue during a parking and transportation student forum at the end of last year.

At that forum, Foster mentioned that at a Safety Week would be held in the Spring semester, as well as calls for maintenance and have the lights fixed.

When contacted by The Beacon Jan. 18, Comptroller and Finance Chair Zachary Trautenberg said he was unaware that the problem was still ongoing, especially since he usually leaves BBC before 8 p.m.

"I haven't heard [St. Fleur] saying anything about it since that day, so I don't know if this is a new matter or if it's the same problem that hasn't been dealt with," Trautenberg said. St. Fleur was unavailable for comment.

Foster and Rodriguez were both unavailable for comment after their Jan. 16 interview with The Beacon, though both said they were also unaware of the situation.

Trautenberg said Foster, Rodriguez and Fernandez are working together with facilities management to fix the lights, but they do not know when the lights will be fixed.

Students such as junior Yanetza Camacho and senior Tamara Adrien both said they are uneasy and fear for their well being when they have to walk through the AC II parking lot at night.

"We need more lights. It’s unsafe," Adrien said.

As junior lovely Manny commented about the lack of lighting in the parking lot adjacent to the Academic II building on the evening of Jan. 17, one of the pole lights flickered away.

"It’s definitely too dark. Hey, one of the lights just turned off," Manny said.

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FOND FAREWELL: Friend and colleague Dean Joseph West watches a video honoring the late Dean Anthony "Tony" Marshall’s career.

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Mourners honor dean’s memory

JESSICA SOUS  
Staff Writer

Before he died, Anthony “Tony” Marshall, dean emeritus of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, told his longtime friend and colleague Charlie Savarese that he wanted his memorial to be a light-hearted affair.

He said if I didn’t keep [the memorial] light, he’d haunt me the rest of my life,” Angelo said. “We balanced each other out.”

It was Marshall’s signature philosophy on common sense and quick wit that inspired former students like Charlie Savarese to carry on Marshall’s charm and his participation at hospitality seminars.

Some of the most memorable scenes included Marshall relating his audience by dressing up as a cowboy or a police officer to demonstrate important points of the hospitality industry to students.

Joseph J. West, current dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and Marc Itzkoff, class of 1992, saw Marshall as a man “clearly distinguished from all the rest.”

“Six weeks before he passed he was playing tennis. He wasn’t going to let a damn thing get him down,” West said.

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SGC-BBC Notes

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THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • JANUARY 22
IVFC Bible Study: 3 p.m., WUC 245

TUESDAY • JANUARY 23
SOC-BBC Lead/ENGAGE Workshop: 12 p.m., WUC 157
IVFC “Know Why You Believe” Group Discussion: 12:30 p.m., WUC 159
SPC General Meeting: 4 p.m, WUC 159

WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 24
WUC Time Capsule Social Function: 10 a.m., WUC Panther Square
Panther Power Meeting: 1 p.m., WUC 157
CCC Impact Movement Lunch: 2 p.m., WUC 245

SGA General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 155
African New World Studies - Vincent Mantoo Lecture: 6 p.m., WUC Ballroom B

THURSDAY • JANUARY 25
SOC Special Election: 12 p.m., WUC 159
SMJC Club Rush: 3:30 p.m., WUC Panther Square
CSA - Catholic Mass and Fellowship: 5 p.m., WUC 245

FRIDAY • JANUARY 26
FilMOTEKA Film Festival Series: 7 p.m., WUC Ballroom A

SUNDAY • JANUARY 28
Jose Marti Breakfast Scholarship: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., WUC Ballroom B

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Compiled by Reuben Pereira

Jan. 17 Call to Order: 3:35 p.m., Adjournment: 4:51 p.m.

President’s Report (Camilo Silva)

“In the Zone,” intramural tournament begins Jan. 31. Encouraged students to participate. The tournament will take place through the semester.

High Achievers: looking for a new theme.

“Recognizing our Staying Stars” conflicted with a Student Life event.

Comptroller (Zachary Trautenberg)

Need to reschedule SGA retreat. Original date, Feb. 9, overlaps with Relay for Life. New choices are Feb. 16 or Feb. 17. Informal vote: 10 in favor of Feb. 17, five in favor of Jan. 16.

Cabinet Reports

• Intern Coordinator (Yseland Pierre): “Saga Days,” an event scheduled to recruit prospective graduate students will take place March 26. Volunteer fair will take place Feb. 7 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

• Director of Technology (Wes Wells): Upgrading computer lab in WUC 200. The room will be upgraded with “top of the line equipment including dual monitors…the goal is to make you comfortable.”

Days,” an event scheduled to recruit prospective graduate students will take place March 26. Volunteer fair will take place Feb. 7 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

• Director of Technology (Wes Wells): Upgrading computer lab in WUC 200. The room will be upgraded with “top of the line equipment including dual monitors…the goal is to make you comfortable.”

New Business

• Representative At-Large (Gabriel Labrady): Asked SGC for opinions regarding donating funds to the Science Club to cover the cost of entertainment for the Joe Marti Breakfast, Jan. 27. No official decision was reached.

Compiled by Ana Davis
College can change beliefs

CELINÉ PELÔFI
Contributing Writer

Every person has their own religion or set of beliefs and ideas. Whether influenced by their upbringing, by their own studies or way of thinking, the decision is always personal. In this, what happens in college? How does one’s religious background and the religion of one’s parents’ views side by side? I found that my own beliefs were similar to that of my parents; however, I did view many different things differently, and became more open minded to various arguments that I knew my parents were not always in agreement with. For the first time in my life, I started to question why I believed what I did and put my parents’ views aside. I found that my own beliefs are what looked like police uniforms and operating in clock-synchrony.

Education Minister Abed Dhiyab al-Ajili attempted to suspend classes in public universities as a result and threatened Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki “to protect the teachers of the nation.” Against the wishes of al-Ajili, Iraq’s besieged universities remained open. A day later, Iraq’s Education Minister submitted his resignation underscoring “the government’s inability to protect teachers.”

The education crisis in Iraq is much broader than the consequences of one incident. On Jan 2nd, NPR reported that more than 1,000 professors have fled the country since the beginning of the war, just as many being killed. Abdul Majid Saddoun, an exiled professor living in Syria, has opened a university in the neighboring country. The faculty is comprised of some of the best exiled Iraqi educators – charged not by threats and violence. So what are we to conclude? It is evident that sectarian leaders are suppressing higher education and their advocates; some say it is because their customs contradict Islamic law.

I think this suppression is a great hindrance to the achievement of our stated goal to bring democracy to the Middle East.

Keep Iraq’s from attaining a decent education will only perpetuate the ignorance that is spreading throughout the Middle East. It is that ignorance that helps extremists recruit youth, it will only escalate the civil war that is already brewing in Iraq. Iraqis will be more divided and the sectarian violence that already permeates every aspect of Iraqi life will only magnify. We must advocate not just electoral democracy, but also the other components that make a free society – this includes education, freedom of expression, etc.

With this in mind, we may change the course of this conflict and improve our prospects for success.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Have your religious beliefs changed as a result of your experiences in college?

- Yes – Now I have a greater appreciation for my faith.
- Yes – Thanks to college, I have converted to another religion: Atheism.
- No – Nothing can change my religious beliefs.
- Huh? What religious beliefs?
- Yes – Now I worship the Golden Panther

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com
Students speculate on death of Castro, communism

LEONCIO ALVAREZ  
Staff Writer

Some have called him the Devil himself. Others have said he is the Hitler of our generation. You’ve been hearing his name since you were a baby and many can’t wait for him to pass.

“My family has been waiting for Fidel [Castro] to die for like two months now,” said junior Roxanna De Los Rios. “My grandmother says she wants to move back to Cuba as soon as Fidel is dead. I keep telling her it’s a bad idea but she won’t listen. She’s set on it.”

Most of the older folk who lived in Cuba in the past share similar feelings to those of De Los Rios’ grandmother, but the future of Cuba is not set in stone.

“It seems increasingly peculiar each day to me how people can watch others suffer and do nothing about it. Now I’m no bleeding heart liberal. I’m often quoted as saying “hippie ideals are a product of a culture too drugged up to know better.” However, with the recent death and near deaths of prominent dictators Saddam Hussein and hometown-hero Fidel Castro (or Fidelito, as he’s known on the street), it’s apparent the need for organization is now.

I’ve come to the conclusion that it’s not oppression people don’t have the will or the strength to overcome, it’s just they don’t have a wicked MacGyver idea to pull them through. That’s why I’ve done the world a service and made a guide on how to get rid of such vermin. Living with my mom for 20-something years has taught me how to count for something.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

This key idea has been touched upon by battle experts such as Sun Tzu to militant rap-metal bands. Translated, it means better be aware of the situation or you’ll end up like those creatures from Signs. Silly aliens.

If you’re willing to take the risk of taking out a heavily armed and guarded dictator, I assure you if you’re caught there won’t be any siocom-esque air vent you can escape through. And Bob Saget definitely won’t be there to smooth things out and make you shake hands.

Besides knowing your consequences, knowing a little about your target is good, too. Why hasn’t anyone used the fact that Castro is allergic to shellfish? Squirt some clam juice into a Cohiba and that guy’s head’ll explode. No one remembers the failed ‘82 Clam Chowder Potluck Dinner between Kennedy and Castro? I’m pretty sure.

At the Beacon – 6

Students speculate on death of Castro, communism

LEONCIO ALVAREZ  
Staff Writer

Some have called him the Devil himself. Others have said he is the Hitler of our generation. You’ve been hearing his name since you were a baby and many can’t wait for him to pass.

“My family has been waiting for Fidel [Castro] to die for like two months now,” said junior Roxanna De Los Rios. “My grandmother says she wants to move back to Cuba as soon as Fidel is dead. I keep telling her it’s a bad idea but she won’t listen. She’s set on it.”

Most of the older folk who lived in Cuba in the past share similar feelings to those of De Los Rios’ grandmother, but the future of Cuba is not set in stone.

“My whole family is Cuban so of course I would love to visit it one day, but I don’t think it would be a good idea to go any time soon,” said freshman Cristina Andrade. “Once Fidel dies, the people of Cuba are going to go into panic mode.”

Some believe that not only will Cuba go into ‘panic mode’, but Miami will probably encounter a lot of commotion as well.

“I’m pretty sure Miami will look a lot like it did when the Marlins won the World Series,” said De Los Rios. “I’m sure there will be a lot of people on the streets and a lot of traffic and noise everywhere.”

Just because Castro is supposedly close to death does not necessarily mean that communism will be on its way out of Cuba any time soon. Castro plans on leaving his power to his brother Raul Castro, who is almost 30 years younger, meaning the Castro regime may be far from over.

According to an article by Miguel Faria on Newsmax.com, Raul Castro is known for his hatred toward the United States and would prefer a free-enterprise socialist government, similar to that of China’s.

“I’ve heard from a lot of people that the main thing that has helped Fidel keep control for so long is his charisma, and charisma is something that Raul apparently lacks,” Andrade said.

Even though Castro’s regime seems to be coming to a close, there are still sources that say his health is improving. According to The Miami Herald, Castro’s doctor said on Wednesday that he is showing “some progressive improvement.”

“It really upsets me that some people say he’s doing fine while others say he’s never been worse,” said junior Marion Velez. “All we can do is wait for news that he is dead.”

It is rumored that the U.S. might have
Prescription diet pill not a cure-all for fat cats, dogs

According to Mladenobic, pets frequently reflect their owners’ lifestyles. “They’re like a mirror of their owner,” Mladenobic said. “If the owner is not fit and overweight, it is very likely that their pet is going to probably be 95 percent of the time out of shape, unless the animal is really young.”

A recent Food and Drug Administration study showed that 30 percent of U.S. dogs are overweight and 5 percent are obese. The FDA also recently approved the first prescription drug to combat obesity in canines. Stentrol, a drug produced by the Pfizer pharmaceutical company, aims to reduce the appetite of dogs and their ability to absorb fat.

Just like humans, Dr. Mladenobic believes that it will take more than a pill to get pets into better shape. “The secret to staying fit is eat less, exercise more and that same applies to an animal,” Mladenobic said. “Most of these people never let their dogs and cats outside, so of course it’s going to lead to some problems. I just can not see that one medicine would do to get rid of the problem.”
Dictator’s possible demise catalyst for change

CASTRO, page 6

Military intervention once Castro dies, but if those are the plans, then it should have occurred already, Velez believes.

Castro transferred power over to his brother in late July and no major changes or problems have occurred, yet.

“It’s not news that Cuba is a communist country. If the U.S. really wanted to see a change in Cuba, they would have gone there a long time ago,” Velez said.

When asked whether or not the U.S. should intervene with Raul Castro’s control, Velez said the U.S. should stay put and mind its own business.

We’re not stupid. We have too many problems to deal with. Why would we go into Cuba when we haven’t cleaned up our own mess in the Middle East?” Velez said.

The U.S. seems prepared for any situation in Cuba, though. Even the Coast Guard is said to be ready to handle a flood of refugees once the dictator dies.

“The truth is that no one knows what will happen except for Raul,” said sophomore Sebastian Thomas. “Cuba is about to undergo a major change, and all we can do is wait for it. Of course it would be great to see Cuba prosper back into the great place it once was, but only time can tell what the future has in store.”

AND NOW TO RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

The only way to win against “the machine” is to look like – well, the machine. I have a lot of friends who are rebel-without-a-cause minded and apocalypse-now bodied. It’s like they’re inspired by El Chef versus El Che, if you know what I mean. Ideally, a routine integrating cardio and toning is the best combo for the revolutionary on the go.

Also, one has to be ready to engage in melee combat in case technology fails. You could know how to make plastic explosives until next Tuesday but if someone punches you in the face you can’t respond with “Ow, that really wasn’t cool, man!”

Sometimes I like to go to the local nursing home and just start pummeling the elderly, just to see if I could take on Fidel in his current state. Let’s just say I won – just not the manslaughter suits.

Good Luck
Golden Panthers defense and shooting extend streak to two

After exchanging turnovers, the Golden Panthers came out of a time out with 28 seconds remaining in regulation. The Mean Green defended point guard Michael James well, and shut Villegas down in the corner, but Galindo was able to step back and bury what turned out to be the game winner in front of Watson.

The Mean Green had one more chance to steal the victory with just 1.2 seconds left, but Villegas picked off an in-bound pass by Bell to secure the Golden Panther win.

“Two were trying to switch everything. I saw Galindo getting pushed out under the rim so I moved up and was able to get the ball. We keep playing ball and we have confidence in ourselves, that’s all it is,” Villegas said.

Essola finished the game with 12 points and eight rebounds. Villegas added 11 points and five boards. Watson led NTU with 18 points. Wooden added 14 points and seven rebounds. Davis finished with 10 points -- seven points under his season average.

The Golden Panthers shot 50 percent from beyond the arc and 41.5 percent from the floor for the game.

After dropping five straight, the Golden Panthers have now won two games in a row -- both in thrilling fashion.

They will look to keep up their winning ways as they head to the road to face Louisiana-Monroe Jan. 20 and New Orleans Jan. 25.

**Men’s Sun Belt Basketball Standing**

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**Women’s Sun Belt Basketball Standing**

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**NEXT FOR Men’s Basketball**

- **MON** @ LMU 3:30
- **TUES** @ NOU 8:00
- **WED** ASU 7:30
- **THUR**
- **FRI**
- **SAT**
- **SUN**

**Women’s Sun Belt Basketball Standing**

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**NEXT for Women’s Basketball**

- **MON** @ LMU 1:00
- **TUES** @ NOU 2:30
- **WED** ASU 5:30
- **THUR**
- **FRI**
- **SAT**
- **SUN**

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Cristobal fills coaching positions with colleagues

SPORTS

The Beacon – January 22, 2007

Head football coach Mario Cristobal said recruiting was the key ingredient for success in division I college football. Besides luring 18 year old high school football players to FIU, Cristobal has been gingerly putting together his staff as well.

Cristobal cleaned house as soon as he arrived to FIU, only retaining linebackers coach Vernon Hargreaves and offensive graduate assistant David Tabor from the Don Strock’s staff.

Defensive assistant Bernard Clark was Cristobal’s first hire. Clark was part of the University of Miami’s 1987 and 1989 national championship teams.

This is his second stint at FIU after serving as the Golden Panthers’ defensive coordinator from 2004-2005 season before leaving the program to be the University of South Florida’s defensive line coach.

“I may end up coaching d-line or may end up coaching linebackers, we’re not exactly sure yet,” Clark said. “It depends on how defensive coordinator [Phil Galiano] wants to maneuver the defense.”

Cristobal’s next two hires came from his former team, UM. Former UM graduate assistant Mike Cassano was hired as running backs coach and recruiting coordinator, and Jeff Papovich was hired to coach special teams.

Cassano worked mainly with the running backs while coaching at UM, and helped develop running back Javarris James become one of the most productive freshman running backs in UM’s history.

“We want to be known as an extremely aggressive team. A team that gets after [other teams], a team that lays it on the line and plays together,” Clark said. “Guys that are going play hard. The worst thing a team can say about you is that ‘you guys are soft.’ That’s the last thing you want a team saying about you. I want to make sure people know that we’re tough and we come to play every game.”

All of the coaches Cristobal is hiring have some type of recruiting ties to South Florida, like offensive coordinator James Coley, who won the 2002 Florida 6A State Championship while serving as the head coach at Norland High School.

Coley then served as an offensive assistant and quality control coach for the Miami Dolphins.

Cristobal said the offense will be exciting under Coley.

“You have to implement a couple of systems that are going to take advantage of those athletes. It’s going to cater to what you can bring to the program. There’s not going to be any limits or handcuffs on either side of the ball,” Cristobal said.

On the defensive side of the ball, Phil Galiano will inherit one of the top defenses in the country.

Galiano served as an assistant coach at Rutgers and guided the Scarlet Knights defense to dominance as the unit was ranked fifth in the country last year with 3.15 sacks and 7.92 tackles for a loss per game.

The latest addition to the staff is offensive line coach Greg Laffere, who comes from division I-AA football program Illinois State.

Laffere will be responsible for reviving a rushing offense that struggled much of last season.

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Jekabsone leads women’s team
to victory over North Texas

MAGALLY ESTRELLA
Contributing Writer

At the sound of the buzzer, it was apparent that FIU wanted to win this game. The usually mild mannered Senior center Lasma Jekabsone fired up her team before tip-off. The Golden Panthers improved to 10-8, (4-4 Sun Belt Conference) snapping their four game losing streak. North Texas 4-12, (1-5 Sun Belt Conference) fell 67-55 in a game dominated by FIU Jan., 18 at Pharmed Arena.

FIU shot 45.5% from the floor and limited North Texas to a measly 36.7% shooting. The Golden Panthers also had the edge on free throw attempts. FIU shot 83.3% from the line while North Texas only shot 60%. FIU also out-rebounded North Texas 41-29.

Jekabsone led the game with 23 points and added four steals; Jekabsone was perfect from the line, going 4 for 4. Sophomore guard LaQuetta Ferguson scored 19 points and knocked down nine boards, she was one assist shy of tying her career high eight assists.

This women’s basketball team was the complete opposite of the team that had lost four in a row. This time FIU led by as many as 19 points, didn’t fall behind by more than two points and owned the court. “It feels good to win again, we didn’t let [North Texas] do what they usually do, we didn’t let them score as easily and that’s why we won, they are a tough team, they are really athletic and they have a strong post presence but our post did an excellent job taking away their inside game,” Ferguson said.

FIU played with intensity and passion, two things that had been missing since their last win on Jan 4, was determined to elevate her productivity along with her team.

“We had two team meetings and we decided we were going to have a fresh start and start from the beginning and just play good and really re-bond together as a team,” Ferguson said, this game we hustled more, rebounded more and knocked down our shots, as a senior, I thought to myself that there are only 11 games left, I didn’t need to step up,” Lasma Jekabsone said.

In the opening two minutes of the game, North Texas enjoyed their biggest lead of the game, two, for 23 seconds. Then came the Golden Panthers looking to slash North Texas’ lead. In minute four, of the first half, FIU took the lead, and kept it for the remainder of the game.

It was a close match, the first 15 minutes of the game, it seemed like North Texas wasn’t going down without a fight. With four minutes until halftime, and two back to back three pointers by Jekabsone and Ferguson, that sent FIU on an 8-2 run, which stole any momentum North Texas had as they trailed 35-24 going into the second. The Golden Panthers deverted North Texas in the second half. In minute four, Jekabsone scored off an assist from Ferguson, and was fouled earning her trip to the free throw line. This started an 8-0 run for the Golden Panthers and gave FIU their largest lead of the game, 19.

“This was a must win for us, to boost the girls confidence,” assistant coach Desma Thomas said. We played with a little more energy and as a team.”

The win over North Texas only wet the Golden Panthers appetite as they look to build on their success on the road against Louisiana-Monroe Jan., 20 and New Orleans Jan. 25.

Victory:
Sophomore guard LaQuetta Ferguson runs the offense as she finished with 19 points, nine rebounds and a team-high seven assists.

Jessica Manassa/The Beacon

Full speed ahead.

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MR. BIG SHOT: Sophomore forward Alex Galindo admires his game-winning 3-pointer with 1.5 seconds left. He finished by matching a season-high 24 points and 5 rebounds.

In their first game after a seven-day break, the Mean Green came out of the gates looking every bit like a squad that was well rested. Riding the hot hand of forward Calvin Watson, the Mean Green opened the game on a 12-5 run and had the Golden Panthers on their heels early on.

However, that back pedaling was quickly halted as Galindo buried two early long balls to keep the Golden Panthers in contention.

Unfortunately, with the exception of Galindo, no Golden Panther player had their shot coming early on and The Mean Green quickly took advantage on the offensive end. Instant offense of the bench from sixth man Michael Sturns, coupled with good shooting from leading scorer Kendrick Davis, allowed NTU to open up their biggest lead of the game at 26-18.

Sensing the game slipping away, freshman point guard Erick Nsongou began to break down the defense with his penetration.

The Cameron native, who was coming off a 10 rebound, eight assists performance in the previous game against Denver, hit two crucial buckets in the lane to tame the Mean Green’s offensive run.

Freshman center Cedric Eissola, who was also coming off his best game of the season against Denver, also made good on consecutive lay-ups inside, while Galindo and senior guard Johwen Ville-gas took turns burying 3-pointers to give the Golden Panthers a slim 38-37 lead at halftime.

With momentum on their side, 3-pointers continued to rain for FIU, who opened the second half with an 11-4 run to garner their biggest lead of the game at 49-41.

But, thanks to the penetration of point guard Ben Bell, and the emergence of center Keith Woodin in the paint, the Mean Green were able to get back into the game.

Wooden began to attack the basket in the paint and hit the go-ahead bucket with just under two minutes remaining to put his team up 66-64.

His game winning shot against North Texas has established him as the official leader of this team.

From now on, he will be looked for during crucial situations and expected to knock down shots like he did against the Mean Green. He makes the offense go and everyone around him better.

He came from hear Kansas University with a lot of hype and he is beginning to live up to it, just under two minutes remaining to put his team up 66-64.

This kid made big shots for us this year and he’s made a lot of big shots throughout his career wherever he’s played. He wanted the ball at the end of the game," Rouco said.

And he better, because his team’s season counts on it.