Vendors bid for soda contract

VANESSA A. ALVAREZ
Contributing Writer

A new soda vendor could be providing FIU students with its services as early as the beginning of this upcoming Fall semester. FIU’s vending contract with the Coca-Cola Company has been on a month-to-month basis for the past year, and University administrators are looking for a more permanent partnership.

FIU is now in the process of evaluating all of its potential choices before reaching a decision. “Our desire is to choose the best provider that would give us the best service, that would give us the best price and that would be a true partner,” said Felecia Townsend, director of Business Services for the University.

The school has formed a committee that will be in charge of making recommendations to CFO and Senior Vice President of the Division of Business and Finance Vivian Sanchez as to which vendor would benefit the University the most.

The committee is comprised of three members of the Student Government Association, faculty members, Business Services, Student Affairs, Financial Planning and Athletics. There is a total of seven voting members – the three students’ votes only count as one.

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Cugu Seguristian, owner of Los Angeles salon, first introduced to Paula G. Gracey and her artwork at a Verner Cultural exhibit on Eighth Street about three years ago. A student of Seguristian who had not only displayed the 23-year-old FIU student’s artwork at her own gallery, but she had collected several pieces for her own portfolio has literally fallen in love with Gracey’s work. “What [Gracey] had was very different. I was impressed with the fact that she was a chemistry student that just could translate what she’s learned in the lab onto a canvas,” Seguristian said.

Gracey, who defined Gracey’s work as biochemical art with bright candy colors, said she has seen the chemistry major expand and refine her brushwork and color palette over the years. “Her work has definitely developed. It’s now more defined, stylized and unique mark of art and science, which makes it stand apart from other artists. How many artists use chemical elements in their compositions?”

Gracey has also exhibited pieces in the art department and has worked with paints and sculptures and her father, who has a doctorate degree in nutrition, brought home science controls. It’s a giant science project,” Gracey said. “I enjoy it so much and I’m still learning, I still haven’t found my final painting project and that I’m continuing to find out about different paints.”

Gracey also incorporates new chemistry themes into her courses to complete her upper division classes for her major, such as organic chemistry and thermodynamics. One such example of her work, titled “Ocean Around Us,” was painted using oils on acrylic. The waves in the painting are outlined by a golden double-helix, which represents DNA. Within the waves are several fish, which Gracey said represents lycopene, an uniiacid necessary for the growth and repARATION of human beings. Overall, she said the painting represents the joy of life as a whole, a theme she tries to represent in all of her paintings.

“Your strive to be different from other artists. By applying what I learned in chemistry is another area of life. As a result, you can teach people not what I learned in chemistry throughout my four years [at FIU] but the gist of it. And its more artistic and its like lysine or central amino acids,” Gracey said.

Although Gracey feels her artwork is very descriptive, she has also been told that it is by people such as Robert Parense, director of the Office of Minority Affairs and cultural affairs for the City of Miami. Parente said when he met Gracey at another Verner Cultural exhibition about five years ago, her artwork impacted him like a lightning bolt.

“Gracey uses great colors, a lot of texture and movement [in her art] and that’s for me is enough to want to buy her work. You look at her work and wonder ‘What is that?’ and ‘What does it mean?’ and it’s fun to look at and conjure up what you want to look for.”

Gracey, who graduated this month, said she hopes to continue experimenting with basic art supplies and eventually become an expert on what she calls a unique and colorful type of abstract art, as well as learn more about the human body and its properties going back to school to study pharmacy.

Aside from balancing school and time to paint, Gracey, who is married, also finds time to care for her 10-month-old daughter, Beanie.

“Everybody always asks me, ‘How do you do what you do?’ I guess you have to stay really sane. My family comes first before anything else. I do a lot of walking or crawling. I don’t want to miss it. [As for the chemistry and painting, any time I have during the summer, I open up a book, I don’t waste time,” Gracey said.

“Gracey will be displaying her artwork in galleries throughout the fall. For more information visit www.MySpace.com/paolaart.

“It”s more of an abstract, I think. I paint things and create things,” Gracey said. “I paint me, it’s fun to look and stare at and just wonder ‘What is that?’ and ‘What does it mean?’ But to someone else, it’s lysine or central amino acids,” Gracey said.

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“Will it be the first state with mandatory health insurance for students? Florida will not be the first state with mandatory insurance lowered or must show proof of it. Nursing and health-related research students are required to have health insurance because they are exposed to different viruses. International students need it because of university rules.

“If the measure is adopted, Florida will not be the first state with mandatory health insurance for students. Massachusetts already has the registration requirement, states which Dollinger referred to as ‘the university trend-setters.’

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New cafeteria’s opening delayed due to lack of funds

Nicole Acosta
Asst. News Director

While students can look forward to working out at a new fitness center this fall, a new dining facility will not be part of the Biscayne Bay Campus’ food options until possibly next spring.

Victor Citarella, associate vice president for the department of Facilities Management, said construction of the new cafeteria and fitness center began in August 2004, but was delayed due to “unforeseen underground conditions” which required a redesign of the building’s foundation.

Citarella said the structure built by the Stobs Brothers construction company, is part of an approximately $5.4 million project. According to Citarella, the shell is scheduled for completion this month pending the final construction of the “punch list.” This punch list could include painting or plumbing adjustments. Completion of the punch list, however, is “not determined at this time,” he said.

The new cafeteria, which will have an army of different “grab-and-go” vendors rather than traditional cashier’s stands, will file indoor galleries, a view of Biscayne Bay and outdoor porches. According to Citarella, both the cafeteria and new fitness center is scheduled to be legally accessible to students by mid-December.

“FIU’s Athletics Department and Aramark Food Services have been working on a proposal for the interior tenant improvements for these areas since February 2007. However, the scope of work has not been agreed upon at this time, and Auxiliaries is still investigating alternate options. Therefore, tenant improvements for a full cafeteria will not be ready for the coming fall session,” Citarella said.

The University’s 10-year, $2.8 million contract with Aramark, put together about three years ago, specified the basic building of the University’s food services.

Townsend said, however, that the contract did not have enough funds for future food service buildouts, which includes BBC’s new cafeteria. According to Townsend, most of those funds have already been spent, which left about $550,000 for Aramark to contribute to the buildout of the new cafeteria.

The rest of the funding will come from an FIU food service reserve accumulated monthly through a percentage of Aramark’s revenues.

But according to Jona-

than Garcia, resident district manager for dining services for the University, Aramark’s contract with FIU guaranteed a commission to the University each year for 10 years. Due to those negotiations, any new buildout for new projects would have to come from the University. He said, in the past, the original contract never specified Aramark giving a specific amount of money for BBC’s new cafeteria.

Garcia said Aramark is currently trying to come up with creative solutions to the cafeteria’s funding issue. According to Townsend, most of those funds have been spent, which left about $550,000 for Aramark to contribute to the buildout of the new cafeteria. The rest of the funding will come from an FIU food service reserve accumulated monthly through a percentage of Aramark’s revenues.

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Proposal for mandatory healthcare problematic

CHRISTOPHER CABRAL
Staff Writer

If only poor and working class students can afford health insurance. Recently, a group of 25 administrators, professors and doctors, giving themselves the imposing and authoritative title of the Student Health Insurance Task Force” met with members of the Board of Governors at FIU and proposed a plan that would supposedly help Florida’s students.

After the group concluded that many students drop out of school due to medical expenses. The next group would come up with a novel solution: make health insurance mandatory for all college students. Sadly, many students that can’t afford insurance would be barred from attending any of Florida’s public universities.

This proposal would be a boon for the insurance companies, giving them thousands of new customers – but it is being sold as a magical solution to the problem of uninsured students.

Millions of people around the country cannot afford health insurance.

Finding a way to make sure that all of Florida’s students have access to health care is a noble goal. But this proposal would only add an additional barrier in front of these students who are struggling to get an education.

Many of these students struggle to hold a job, attend school, pursue their career and pay their bills, and at the end of the day, they just don’t have enough money to buy health insurance.

It’s ironic that this proposal, which is being sold as a way to help curb dropout rates and help the uninsured would only raise the costs of getting an education for them, thereby making it harder for them to get good jobs that offer benefits-like health insurance.

Students fortunate enough to be able to purchase health insurance if forced to do so would provide insurance companies with thousands of new customers, who are younger, healthier, and less likely to need insurance.

Health insurance companies, who already can’t afford health insurance, would be the main beneficiaries from this plan.

They’d make millions and ultimately, many of those who already can’t afford health insurance may have to sacrifice their education because of it.

There seems to be a fundamental lack of understanding among those who endorse this proposal. Students who live without health insurance do so not because they don’t want it, nor because they don’t think it’s important, but because they need a way to go to school and purchase it – but because they simply cannot afford it.

Passing a law that would keep them out of college and hurt their chances at a better future would be foolish, if not downright ridiculous.

The task force claims that 4,000 students drop out a year due to high medical bills. That’s why everyone should have insurance, they say. You’ll find no argument with me there.

Everyone should have health insurance – but passing a law keeping the uninsured out of college would hardly accomplish that goal.

How many drop out because they don’t have enough money to cover the cost of college? How many students drop out because they can’t pay their rent, go to college and work at the same time?

Many studies performed by independent groups show that college students who come from low and middle class families are substantially more likely to drop out.

Financial reasons and the demands of employment are the most oft cited reasons.

A law requiring students from these groups to pay for health insurance, or fining students $1,500 for lack of coverage, as Florida State University has done, would only increase the number of students who drop out for these reasons.

There is no question that such requirements would keep many students from going to college.

There is a strong argument that the state government would support a multi-million dollar effort to increase college access for Florida’s working class students. Some members of the task force say that if all students get health insurance, the premiums will drop. This too, seems unrealistic and naive.

Private insurers are in business to make as much money as possible for their owners and shareholders.

If a law passing required thousands of people to do business with them, why on earth would they choose to lower their rates? They’d make more money if they kept their rates high.

FIU offers a health insurance plan for students who can’t afford their own plans. The cost? $1,700 per year. And that’s with FIU paying for 75 percent of that cost.

With the state planning to cut back on the budget, would they be able to continue paying so much of the cost, for thousands of students? That too seems unlikely.

The bottom line is, making health insurance mandatory for all students without raising financial aid significantly, would be a disaster for the students who can’t afford it and it is those students who need an education most of all.

Depriving them of an education essentially because they are too poor to afford insurance would be perverse.

FIU and the BOG should follow the lead of schools like California State, Old Dominion University and Kent State University by rejecting this proposal. Maybe working class students should start a “task force” to get them to listen.

Coke’s questionable practices must be considered in contract bid

The recent controversy that has surrounded Coca-Cola’s international business practices brings numerous concerns about the University’s decision to renew its contract with the company.

A story published in The Beacon, March 29, 2007, made reference to the American Anthropological Association’s findings that Coca-Cola had collaborated with guerilla factions and had some complicity in political assassinations and labor abuses.

These same allegations have been suggested by various student organizations and critics of Coca-Cola, among them is the United Students Against Sweatshops – who have spearheaded the Killer Coke campaign on campus.

It is our belief that in the interest of the University’s reputation as a respected institution, these accusations be taken into consideration during the entire renewal process.

In the past, the University has made it a point to distance itself from any breaches of ethics or morality; we advocate that these claims be investigated to insure that no unsavory practices have transpired and that FIU has not bought into any criminal activities through its support of Coca-Cola.

Also, the University must follow its own precedent under such circumstances and maintain such sort of consistency in its policy when dealing with matters of ethics.

Furthermore, the student body should have a stronger say in the process than has been the case thus far, with only two Student Government Association representatives attending the proceedings.

SEA should do its part and get feedback from the rest of the student body, as ultimately they will be the consumers buying the product.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Would a small raise in tuition be accepted if it meant receiving a better quality education?

• Yes – My education is most important. The cost is not an issue. 35%
• Yes – FIU could improve in certain areas. 16%
• No – FIU should not raise tuition. 3%
• Sure – I really don’t care. 25%
• No – I’m satisfied with the education I’m receiving as well as the cost of tuition. 8%
• No – There is no way the University is getting anymore of my money! 38%

Total participants: 37
Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com
I spent the Fourth of July with my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally
dreamt many times of being free.

One of the characteristics of stepping is the “cane,” which was first introduced by Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., during its
inception in 1911 and was later incorporated into the step routines of this fraternity. The cane is made of wood, wrapped in the
fraternity’s particular colors and has a hook on the end.Used by fraternities such as Kappa Alpha Psi and Phi Beta Sigma, the cane
is used for tapping and twirling, but it also holds a very strong Christian belief for some, particularly the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi.
The J-book cane was used by shepherds to tend to their flock; symbolically, the shepherd is Jesus Christ leading his people.
The cane upside down represents a “J” for Jesus, while the red represents the blood of Christ and the white represents purity.

Stepping isn’t the only dance form performed by fraternities at the University. FIU has many Hispanic fraternities and sororities on
campus that perform their own unique moves.

Junior Stephanie Poyck, a member of the predominantly Hispanic sorority Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc., emphasizes the fact that the sorority members don’t step—they “stroll,” which consists of a line formation that is
similar to a train and incorporates signature moves and dance steps.

“We don’t step. We stroll because the roots of stepping are from African culture and that’s not our roots. We don’t want to
disrespect what isn’t ours,” she said. “[Strolling] displays the unity and bond between sisters. It’s a display of our passion through our organization. It’s something that’s yours and no one can take that away.”

This Fall promises to bring many events to campus that feature stepping and strolling, including the Homecoming Step Show that features most of the black fraternities and sororities at FIU.

Various “stroll-off” competitions and a diverse assortment of parties are also planned. Despite the fun from performing and competing in such shows, stepping isn’t easy.

For Sophomore Alex Miller, a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., stepping takes passion and commitment.

“It’s hard work and it takes time, but it’s fun.”

For the rest of the holiday, I wondered how we tend to use freedom as a synonym for independence.

We move away from our parents and we think we’re free; the Americans gained independence from the British, so they must’ve been free.

But freedom is more than a severing of ties—it’s the understanding that life really can bring joy, even if it’s not foolish to hope for this.

The woman in the wreck found freedom in the wet grass just outside her overturned car.

For Johnston, freedom was a haircut, a drink with friends and a walk through familiar places. As for me, freedom became
eating steaks with my parents on a rainy Fourth of July and loving it.
MOVIE Transformers

BEN F. BADGER JR.  Ast. News Director

There is so much more than meets the eye in Transformers, which brought lovers of all things retro into theatres July 3.

The film, an adaptation of the 80’s cartoon, will keep you on the edge of your seat from start to finish – you’ll either be laughing or waiting in anticipation for something to explode.

Essentially, the film is about two robots (called the “Allspark,” a device that could recreate their world that was destroyed. Two robot factions, the evil Decepticons and the good Autobots, will do anything to get the Allspark, which happens to be under the care of the human race.

It sounds like a really cheesy sci-fi movie, and in some ways, it is. Nevertheless, Transformers delivers a satisfying movie experience.

The acting is top notch through-out the movie, especially that of actor Shia LaBeouf, who plays the main character of Sam Witwicky, a kid who somehow ends up being paired up again.

As the name implies, Pokemon: Battle Revolution is a real shame considering that the game has are overshadowed by the game’s obvious shortcomings.

There are some interesting rules, however. In one coliseum, your team of pokemons is selected by roulette; you could end up using one of your opponent’s creatures.

The game really should have had more special rule battles such as this – it would have made the game a lot more enjoyable.

One saving grace that the game does have is the ability to log onto the Internet via Nintendo’s wireless connection and fight random opponents; a feature that was missing in the Nintendo DS games. Once logged on, all you have to do is wait for the Wii to locate a potential opponent.

Once the battle is over, you can even register the person as a friend, so if you ever want to battle again, you won’t have to rely on randomly being paired up again.

Despite the game’s Internet capabilities, this game has no replay value whatsoever.

Once you clear all of the coliseums and win a special Pikachu that can be downloaded to your Pokemon DS games, there isn’t much left to do.

Speaking of downloading, the interface between the Wii and DS is remarkably smooth and easy to use in this game.

One feature of Battle Revolution is the ability to copy pokemons onto the Nintendo Wii. Although this feature is great, there are other accessories to customize your avatar; within the game, you can adjust your avatar to look however you want.

The downside is that the items and clothing accessories are very expensive.

In order to get the points you need to buy the items you have to play through the coliseums, a process that is boring. Overall, this is not a stand-alone game.

If you don’t have Diamond or Pearl, do not get this game under any circumstances, as it will be a big waste of money.

Sad, the few good features the game has are overshadowed by the game’s obvious shortcomings.
Playing Catch: Former Golden Panther defensive end Antwan Barnes, who was the first FLU player to be selected in the NFL Draft, shows his natural ability by throwing passes to the participants of the first annual Miami Beach Blitz Youth Football Camp at Memorial Field. The camp was put on with help from Miami Beach resident Drew Rosenhaus and the Miami Beach Bulldogs youth football team.

Best players with no links to steroids should be All-Stars

Bonilla, page 8

In MLB this season, he is a one dimensional player. His 42-year-old knees have wasted away his speed and hindered his fielding abilities as he has yet to record an outfield assist this season. His offensive production has not been potent enough to overlook that his fielding and running are a liability.

In addition, the player he edged out in voting, Alfonso Soriano, is batting .305 with 15 home runs from the lead-off position. Soriano has stolen 12 bases and transitioned well in his second year as an outfielder recording 10 outfield assists and committing no errors.

Despite having statistics aside, Bonds does not deserve to attend the All-Star game because if he attends, it would set a severe precedent in the way into the All-Star starting line-up. The only classic.

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CLASSIFIEDS

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A WORTHY ALL-STAR?

Bonds earned All-Star bid; biased media attacks him

So do you love to hate him or hate to love him? Make up your minds already!

At the voting San Francisco Giants outfielder Barry Bonds into the All-Star game, there has been debate among fans and those in the media whether the future ball of famer deserves to participate in the Midsummer Classic.

Isn’t that sort of like buying your little sister a present and then taking it back for yourself? It makes absolutely no sense but then again, the manner in which Bonds has been criticized makes no sense as well.

Pete Rose, who admitted to betting on baseball while he was manager of the Cincinnati Reds, said, Bonds is considered a cheater and slamming him as cheater and accusing him of embarrassing the game of baseball. What’s makes this debate about watching the best hitters in the game, it’s a rare occasion and one that is really, really critical to this universe. It’s about watching the best players compete at once.

Fans want to see the best pitchers strikeout the best hitters in the game, it’s a rare occasion and one that should be savored. With that said, Bonds is considered one the games best players this year.

A perfect example of a player being voted in due to the name stitched on the back of his uniform rather than his accomplishments of the given season is Barry Bonds.

His obscure and controversial biography to become the official home run king in MLB bought him a ticket to San Francisco to start in the All-Star game.

Fans love to see home run races, even one intertwined with steroid use. Fans also love storylines as he might play his final All-Star game in San Francisco where he has played for the last 15 years. So many blind voters hoping to watch the drama unfold rather than electing the most deserving players.

Bonds is worthy of an All-Star Selection by the virtue of his statistic alone. His 2007 season is formidable as he is batting .363 with 17 home runs and 42 RBIs. In addition, he has walked more than any player.

BARRY BONILLA, page 7

All-Star game can regain integrity by banning Bonds

Barry Bonds will be Major League Baseball’s all-time home run hitter by August. However, he does not deserve to attend in the 2007 MLB All-Star game.

The purpose of the All-Star game is not to only to determine home-field advantage in the World Series, but to exhibit some of the best current players in the world. Fans are allowed to vote for their favorite players, but their love for their players sometimes leads to faulty selections.

Every year there are several deserving players who are not chosen; conversely, select last luster seasons are overshadowed by reputation and name recognition.

A perfect example of a player being voted in due to the name stitched on the back of his uniform rather than his accomplishments of the given season is Barry Bonds.

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BONILLA, page 7

Our portion of it, which is the first 33.5 million, was bonds that were sold. What that means technically is that we’re going to have a mortgage to pay. In order to pay that mortgage we’re using student fees, sponsorships, sweets and club seats and season ticket sales. The bonds are all from the state and bonding agency.

Q: Have you heard anything about making UM vs. FIU an annual thing?

This contract was done by the Associate Athletic Director at UM, which happened to be myself at the time, and it was a two-year contract. It actually ends this year. Anything beyond that will have to be discussed in the future. And they’ll have to want to do that. We’re willing to play anybody anytime, anywhere. It’s never going to be an issue from us.

AD Garcia discusses FIU’s plans

Athletic Director Pete Garcia has made several changes during his tenure at FIU. He sat down with WRGP Radiate FM to answer a few questions regarding the new stadium and the future of FIU athletics.

Q: Do you believe that in three or four years, FIU’s football team will have enough support to fill 45,000 seats?

The first phase is very important and it will take approximately a little bit under 20,000 total fans that we can accommodate in there. The other part that is really, really critical to this university is the Student Support Center. That’s where everything is going to be housed from enrollment to financial aid to admissions.

We have different phases built into the schedule. We’re confident as we improve the product and the team and that means wins. We have over 41,000 alumni in South Florida. We have close to 40,000 students. We need to get our own people to come to our own events.

We’re supposed to open the first phase in Sept. of 2008 against the University of South Florida. The ultimate goal is to have a 45,000 seat stadium, but we have to have the demand for it. You have to walk before you can run.

Q: Where is the funding for the 58 million dollar stadium coming from?

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Former Gator Atkins found dead in aunt’s garage

ATH.. Wire Services

Former Florida and Bethune-Cookman football player Avery Atkins was found dead in his car in the garage of his aunt’s home Thursday in what police called a suspicious death.

The 20-year-old player could not be revived by paramedics, and Dorman did not elaborate on why police consider this suspicious. An autopsy will be performed.

Avery Atkins was a freshman linebacker on the 2005 Gators and was projected to start on the 2006 squad, the eventual national champion.

He was released from his scholarship last summer by Florida coach Urban Meyer because of a domestic battery charge against him.

He joined Bethune-Cookman as a transfer and played in three games in 2006 before being released from his scholarship.

“We are saddened to hear the news regarding Avery,” Florida coach Urban Meyer said in a statement. “We share our grief with the Atkins’ family and those close to them.”

Atkins attempted to rejoin the Gators this spring, re-enrolling at Florida while paying his own way.

Meyer said at the time that Atkins was arrested Monday on charges of possessed. He joined Bethune-Cookman as a transfer and played in three games in 2006 before being released from his scholarship.

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Meyer said at the time that Atkins was arrested Monday on charges of possession of crack cocaine.

He also was arrested in June when Daytona Beach police said they found him with cocaine, drug paraphernalia and a concealed weapon. He was charged in May with felony aggravated battery.

Last year, Atkins was charged twice with domestic battery on the mother of his child. He entered a deferred prosecution