1-7-2007

The Beacon, January 7, 2008

Florida International University

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Plane used to flee from Cuba donated as part of art exhibit

EVELYN DIAZ
Staff Writer

In 1999, a Cuban family fled to the United States on a vintage Antonov-2 Colt biplane, landing safely in Key West. Cuban American artist Xavier Cortada donated that Antonov-2 Colt biplane to FIU.

Cortada painted a representation of freedom on half of the biplane and purposely left the other half of freedom on half of the biplane. The Antonov-2 Colt biplane was painted to the two branches of truth, according to Cortada.

“Art and conception are the same thing, it’s not about making things pretty, its about making them real,” Cortada said.

Part of the plane’s exhibit are 46 pieces of luggage that surround the plane. Each piece is numbered in sequence from 1959 to 2004, which are the years that the Cuban community had been under rule by Fidel Castro.

“The individual accounts of a peoples’ journey to freedom can never be forgotten. Carrying their voices to future generations may prevent this tragedy from ever happening again,” Cortada said on his Web site.

CORTADA, page 4

Radiate FM, The Beacon launch new Web site for FIU community

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. News Director

Beginning Jan. 14, The Beacon newspaper, in cooperation with the Radiate FM student radio station, will launch FIUSM.com, a Web site dedicated to the two branches of FIU’s student media. The launch will coincide with a translator station being raised at the Biscayne Bay Campus. “The tower will have a radius of about 10 to 15 miles, which increases our audience into North Miami and South Broward,” said Pablo Penton, the station’s general manager.

FIUSM.com will also allow Radiate FM listeners to track what the station is playing. “We’d like to have playlists available so that listeners can go online and see what we played at any time during the day. It is something that listeners have really wanted and always asked us about,” Penton said.

For The Beacon, the new Web site will allow

WEB SITE, page 4

First phase of emergency phone system completed

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

The University began installing emergency phones in December during a three-phase initiative to help increase security on campus.

“We’re still on target,” said Charles Cyrille, FIU’s emergency management coordinator. “Phase two will be completed by the end of the Spring 2008 semester.”

Phase two of the safety initiative will include the installation of 80 additional phones in the Engineering Center, Green Library, the Chemistry and Physics building, the Deuxieme Maison building, Paul L. Cejas School of Architecture building, the BBC library, the Marine Biology building and Hospitality Management complex.

The phones can be used to simultaneously broadcast an emergency message to nearby people of imminent danger in the surrounding area as well as dial emergency services like 9-1-1 or Public Safety.

Phase one involved the installation of phones in 77 classrooms in the Primera Casa, Graham Center, Academic I and Academic II buildings. All of the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phones were installed in December on schedule.

“Ultimate goal is to have phones in all classrooms and labs,” Cyrille said back in the Nov. 29, 2007 issue of The Beacon.

Funding for the initial two phases of the safety initiative comes from a $250,000 grant from the state. Cyrille said that Phase-two’s budget is still being operated from the grant.

“Florida International University takes the security of its students, faculty and staff seriously and is continually finding ways to improve its response

EMERGENCY, page 4

EMERGENCY PHONES

PHASE ONE COMPLETE: Just one of the many new emergency phones installed in the Primera Casa building.

RUNNER UP FOR THE BEACON
**Parenting still comes first for students with double duties**

**CHARLIE GRAU**
Editor in Chief

Atypical day for Simone Bailey, 26, starts at 6:30 a.m. and doesn’t end ‘till midnight or later.

The senior, majoring in anthropology, provides a massage therapist for a few hours before heading to class.

In the late afternoon Bailey picks up her children before heading home.

Once home, Bailey prepares dinner and helps her children with homework. While they work they have before tending to her own studies.

“Between [switching to the three day class schedule] and the kids, I became a little overwhelmed at the end of last semester and felt like I needed to take this semester off,” Bailey said.

For parents enrolled in college with children, the difficulty of balancing responsibilities as a parent and student can be overwhelming.

With education becoming more available and flexible with universities offering more online classes, weeknight evening classes, more parents have attempted to tackle the dual roles as a mother or father and student. A recent study by the U.S. Department of Education showed that parents with children attending postsecondary institutions increased by 21 percent over the past three years.

Bailey, who raised her two children alone since divorcing her husband, will take it easy this semester.

“I decided I’m going to part go part time … I’m probably, going to take two to three classes this semester. I need to get my bachelor’s degree and render my belt,” said Bailey, who is just a few credits short of graduating.

Despite all of the challenges of life as a single parent and student, Bailey’s job as massage therapist gives her the flexibility she needs to juggle the many tasks of being a single parent.

“It’s my line of work that allows me to make my own hours,” Bailey said. “I can work a couple of hours in the morning, then go to classes, pick up the kids and then work some more in the afternoon. It’s really flexible [and] allows me to pay the bills.”

For other parents taking classes at FIU, like Michael Gonzalez, 33, getting a degree isn’t always a priority.

“It’s really tough especially when the kids are really small. They don’t really understand why you’re gone all the time,” Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez, who works as a day manager at a Barnes and Noble, said that after 15 years of working in retail he was tired of the rat race. It was time for him to go back to school and get his degree in information technology.

Gonzalez regrets not going to college right after high school.

“I feel really torn especially when the kids want you to be home to play with them, but you go back to school to do what’s best for the family in the long run.”

Gonzalez said. “The natural inclination is to go home after work and play with the young ones. It’s not easy. It’s not easy at all.”

Gonzalez often misses out on family functions, and family time in general, to catch up on his readings and homework.

“Putting in a full day’s work and then going to school at night, it’s tough. On the weekends, instead of spending time with the family, like you would like to, you have to spend time on school assignments,” Gonzalez said.

The Children’s Creative Learning Center (CCLC) at FIU offers parents the option to keep their young children close while they attend classes.

Located adjacent to the Graham Center, the CCLC serves children ages three to six who are toilet trained. The cost of using the center varies depending on family income and allows students with children to attend by part time degree seeking students children.

For more information on the CCLC and its registration fee, visit the CCLC Web site at www.fiu.edu/~children.

The Beacon is published on Mondays and Thursdays during the Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during Summer Semester. One copy per person. Additional copies are 25 cents. The Beacon is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. The Beacon is an independently published newspaper primarily serving students and services fees that are approved by Student Government.

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<td>House 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. WUC 253</td>
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<td>General Meeting 3:30 p.m. WUC 155</td>
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<td>Center for Leadership and Service</td>
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<td>Volunteer Fair 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. GC</td>
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<td>Dance Marathon “So You think you can dance” auditions Noon - 2 p.m.</td>
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<td>SPC Comedy Show Spring Kick Off! 8 p.m. GC</td>
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<td>SOC General Meeting 5:30 p.m. GC 150</td>
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<td>FIU Women’s Basketball vs Troy 5:15 p.m.</td>
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<td>Engage Leadership Workshop 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. GC 305</td>
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<td>SPC Movie “Across the Universe” 7 p.m. &amp; 10 p.m. GC 140</td>
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<td><strong>MONDAY</strong></td>
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**CONFUSED ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER?**

**LOOKING FOR ANSWERS?**

RADIATE FM’S COREY ANDERSON WILL BE ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS ON JAN. 8 AND 10 BETWEEN 11 A.M. AND NOON.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO CBACH1988@AOL.COM FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING ANY DEPARTMENT.
InformaCast improves University communication

and ensure the safety of everyone on campus specifically during emergencies,” said Vice President of Student Affairs and Undergraduate Education Rosa Jones in a December press release from Media Relations.

Cyrille said that the University Technology Services department, which installed the emergency phones, is performing field surveys on the emergency phones, is performing field surveys on the entrances of the University Park and Biscayne Bay campuses, and local news outlets. "We are always looking to improve safety," Cyrille said. Phase three of the safety initiative will begin as soon as additional funds are available, but Cyrille said that the time frame of the final phase’s completion is to be announced. The final phase is the installation of large indoor speakers that can be used to alert people of possible danger.

In December, three large outdoor emergency speakers were installed outside GC, DM and PC. But Cyrille said that those speakers were funded by a previous grant and safety initiative not directly involved with the current plan. The University currently uses the InformaCast system which allows the university to send audio streams or text messages to Internet phones, speakers and other paging systems. It alerts students, faculty and staff during emergencies through e-mail, electronic signs at the entrances of the University Park and Biscayne Bay campuses, and local news outlets.

Cyrille said. “The biggest difference is that the old Web site was just a place to dump the articles that were written. The new Web site will contain a lot more news. It will contain photo galleries, archives, exclusive stories and have audio and video,” Martinez said. “It will be your one-stop shop to find out what’s going on at FIU.”

In time, students will be able to listen to live streams of the station and sign up for the online edition of The Beacon to be sent to their e-mail inbox. “The biggest difference is that the old Web site was just a place to dump the articles that were written. The new Web site will contain a lot more news. It will contain photo galleries, archives, exclusive stories and have audio and video,” Martinez said. “It will be your one-stop shop to find out what’s going on at FIU.”

The new site will also allow readers to view back issues of the paper. “More people get their news online than from the print edition, and especially at a commuter school where students are going in and out of class and leaving for work,” said Joel Marino, an online reporter for The South Florida Sun Sentinel’s online edition and former editor-in-chief of The Beacon from 2006-2007. “They might not have time to sit around and read the campus newspaper.” While The Beacon and Radiate FM already had their own Web sites, FIUSM.com represents a fusion of both outlets. In time, students will be able to listen to live streams of the station and sign up for the online edition of The Beacon to be sent to their e-mail inbox. “The biggest difference is that the old Web site was just a place to dump the articles that were written. The new Web site will contain a lot more news. It will contain photo galleries, archives, exclusive stories and have audio and video,” Martinez said. “It will be your one-stop shop to find out what’s going on at FIU.”

In the future, both parts of student media will be looking to grow. As this semester progresses, The Beacon looks forward to publishing three times a week, and in the next few years the radio station is going to try to install a station for the Biscayne Bay Campus.

Along with publishing three days a week, Beacon readers can expect online only stories that go in greater depth in ways that the print edition does not allow. “This will help make The Beacon more professional,” said Marino. “This is a frontier, and it is the cutting edge. Other college newspapers are doing this, it is about time FIU did it as well.”

Flying art will hang from roof of Deuxieme Maison

The vessel arrived disassembled to FIU on Dec. 22. The plane will be stored at the Campus Support Complex.

Madaline Baro, an assistant director from Media Relations, commented that the plane will eventually be hung for everyone’s viewing pleasure from the roof of the Deuxieme Maison building.

Cortada is known for his philanthropic endeavors involving the Cuban community. He received the prestigious Millennium International Volunteer Award from the U.S. Department of State and USA Today in 2000. In February of 2000 Cortada was invited to meet Pope John Paul II in Rome.

For more information visit Cortada’s Web site at www.cubamonument.org freedom.com.

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Public Relations department hires chair from within

Ahles’ family firm comes first, Figueredo steps in as chair

SUSAN RODRIGUEZ
Asst. News Director

Catherine Ahles, the Advertising and Public Relations department chair, is flying high.

“Four years ago my husband and I started a family business, an aircraft dealership with four people and its grown to 45 employees,” said Ahles in a telephone interview. “Now we need full time advertising and public relations so I’m going back to what I’ve been trained to do.”

Ahles joins Premier Aircraft Sales’ Fort Lauderdale branch, helping the dealership represent Boeing and Diamond airplane manufacturers.

Ahles led the School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s branding, becoming involved with its Web site’s design. She also affected enrollment in the Integrated Communications: Advertising and Public Relations program.

“If you really helped diversify the Advertising and Public Relations department by bringing in people from different experiences, from health care to marketing,” said Dave Berry, SJMC’s marketing coordinator.

Ahles handpicked some professors join FIU, including Fer- nando Figueredo and Lynn Farber. Ahles worked with the SJMC dean in placing an employee recognition program that honors faculty and worked to increase graduate assistant enrollment to help faculty with their research.

“The one of the accomplishments I’m most of is the full time faculty we have now,” said Ahles. “I say that because a successful ad program depends on the quality of faculty and students makes it work. I have no doubt we have the highest qualified faculty in the U.S.”

Ahles also helped implement new certificate programs in tourism and marketing communications for undergraduates and public relations management for graduate. This fall, Ahles worked with Kimberly Harrison in the English Department in developing an undergraduate certificate in writing.

Despite her dedication as department chair, it’s the classroom that Ahles will miss most.

“It’s just sad to not be in the classroom everyday. I worked at a community college in Michigan, and have also consulted with numerous colleges in the field so I’ve had a chance to look at various student bodies out there. Our students are very unique, they’re more motivated than typical college students. Many have full time and part time jobs to pay for school,” said Ahles.

In ahles’ stead, Figueredo, associate professor for the SIMC, will ascend as interim department chair as of Jan. 2.

“I’m going to hopefully serve the needs of our faculty, at the same time serve the needs of our students,” Figueredo said. “If I do that, our department and school will benefit.”

Figueredo has held positions such as vice president of corporate communications for both AOL Latin America and Lucent Technologies as well as consulting work for AOL Latin America, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft and the City of Miami International Council.

Figueredo recently served as a managing partner for the Latin American division at Porter Novelli, an international public relations firm whose clients include the center for disease control and Procter & Gamble.

“I believe it’s important to pro vide students with international to the department of Advertising and Public Relations,” Figueredo said. “Part of my interest is to find ways to increase the international focus of our curriculum and course offerings.”

Figueredo hopes to increase student internship opportunities, expand the Berlin study abroad program and create new programs in Spain and Argentina. An SIMC Hispanic institute is also on Figueredo’s agenda.

“We live in a global community. Our students need to be able to function in a multinational, multicultural environment,” Figueredo said. Ahles is confident Figueredo’s tenure will enhance the APR department.

“I have no doubt he’ll bring great things to the department. I’ve very excited for the future under his leadership,” Ahles said.

Class brings new life to a 1950s New York

“New York in the Fifties: Beats of a New Culture” is a three-credit course taught by FIU creative writing professor and Writer-in-Residence Dan Wakefield.

“Students will benefit by learning how the seeds of change that were planted in New York in the 1950s ushered in the creativity and turmoil of the 1960s and shaped the course of our culture in literature, music, and film,” Wakefield said.

Science of natural disasters taught during new class

MONIQUE MATTICE
Contributing Writer

FIU is offering a new course to help students understand the science behind natural disasters throughout the world, such as hurricanes that ripped through parts of Central America in 2007.

Journalists need to understand the science behind these disasters and why they occur, according to Hugh Gladwin, associate professor in the department of sociology and anthropology.

Gladwin is teaching a special topics course during the spring of 2008 to help FIU journalism students understand the causes behind natural disasters.

A contributor to and co-editor of the 1997 book Hurricane Andrew: Ethnicity, Gender and the Sociol-
Health Center highlights dangers of cervical cancer

CATHERINE KAIMAN
BBC Life! Editor

With the recent introduction of a vaccine to protect against the human papillomavirus, this year’s Cervical Cancer Awareness Month holds special meaning for the Biscayne Bay Campus’ Health Center and Wellness Center.

The event will take place on Jan. 10 in Panther Square at the Wolfe University Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“There will be mostly a table event with free giveaways and information pertaining to cervical cancer,” said Dona Walcott, senior health educator of University Health Services, in a telephone interview with The Beacon.

The Health Center will also sponsor a limited number of free pap smears, a procedure which examines cells collected from the cervix and the lower and narrow end of the uterus.

Students must make an appointment to receive one of the 20 free vouchers.

“It is very important for [women] to know that human papillomavirus and genital warts can be screened for, and that it is critical to follow up because severe changes in the cervix can spread to other parts and can lead to cancers,” said Elvira Velez, director of Health Administration for University Health Services, in a telephone interview with The Beacon.

Besides services such as pap smears and screenings for genital warts and viruses, the Health Center also offers the HPV vaccine, Gardasil.

Gardasil is the only vaccine that may guard against diseases caused by HPV Types 6, 11, 16 and 18.

There are about 15 types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer; the HPV vaccine protects against 70 percent of them, according to Web site www.gardasil.com.

Velez says that one out of five Florida student pap smears are abnormal, which can be indicative of genital viruses, cervical cancer and severe changes, such as HPV, in the cervix that can spread to the uterus.

“If we look at the national number of 3,700 women who die a year from cervical cancer, women should have an awareness about the vaccine and pap smears,” said Yolanda Santisteban, a nurse practitioner at the BBC Health Center for the last 10 years.

The event will also feature free makeup consultations and hand massages.

“[Students] can expect information, hands-on tools and displays of the tests that are used for HPV screenings,” said Walcott. “We also want to nurture women, talk to them and have complimentary hand massages and possibly a Henna artist.”

Walcott emphasized the importance of awareness.

“Cervical cancer can affect anyone, mom, sister, cousin, anyone. That is why we are promoting the HPV vaccine heavily at this year’s event,” she said.
Big numbers mean big changes for Dems

CHRIS CABRAL
Asst. Life! Editor

As Barack Obama claims victory in the nation’s first presidential primary and the candidates soldier on to New Hampshire for the next contest, it may be easy to forget what happened in Iowa.

Before we move on to the next state, let’s take a moment to reflect on the events of Jan. 3. Something historic happened in Iowa that cannot be overlooked: over 230,000 voters turned out to vote for Democratic candidates. That is more than 100,000 more participants on the Democratic side than in 2004 and double the Republican turn out of this year. Nearly six in 10 Democratic caucus-goers were first timers.

Why did the Democrats draw twice as many voters to the polls than the Republicans? Clearly, there is greater excitement surrounding the Democratic field, with many voters to the polls than the Republican side. But the excitement draws in large part from memories of a prosperous time when a Democrat was in the White House. Her campaign’s relative success draws in part from memories of a prosperous time when a Democrat was in the White House.

The winner with 38 percent of the vote, Sen. Barack Obama, was able to draw first time caucus-goers in record numbers. Forty-one percent of first timers voted for him, as did 57 percent of people under 30, who came out in bigger numbers than in 2004. Obama called upon voters to believe that they could change the country and help end the petty politics of fear and division.

Democrats know the consequences of letting the politics of division triumph. When people focus on divisive issues like gay marriage rather than looking at the big picture, Democrats lose.

As with any election, there were strong candidates who didn’t make the cut. Mike Huckabee rode a wave of new-found support to secure a victory in Iowa. Nine percent points higher than his nearest rival. His victory in the state not only propelled his campaign to legitimate contender status but also delivered an upset to Mitt Romney’s campaign, a blow believed to be fatal. Governor Romney’s campaign was hinged on a dangerous assumption. Victories in Iowa and New Hampshire, the first states to hold primary elections, meant important momentum needed before arriving in South Carolina. Romney’s campaign was hinged on a dangerous assumption.

Democrats are to win in 2008, they must unite the country around the more important issues like healthcare and the economy. Regardless of who goes on to win the nomination, be it Obama, Clinton or Edwards, the people of Iowa sent a powerful message to the rest of America. With a record turnout of over 230,000, people are excited about the choices presented by the Democratic Party.

It is the Democratic Party, with the strength of all its powerful voices, that will deliver that change.

Chris Cabral currently serves as the president of the FIU College Democrats.

GOP nominee still unclear after caucus

JUAN CARLOS ROBAINA
Special to the Beacon

The people of the Hawkeye state left their homes Thursday night for their latest turn to shine in front of the nation.Braving the cold weather for the 7 p.m. central starting time, about 116,000 Iowa caucus-goers arrived at schools, living rooms and meeting halls all across the state to cast their ballot for their Republican candidate of choice.

Mike Huckabee rode a wave of new-found support to secure a victory in Iowa. Nine percent points higher than his nearest rival. His victory in the state not only propelled his campaign to legitimate contender status but also delivered an upset to Mitt Romney’s campaign, a blow believed to be fatal. Governor Romney’s campaign was hinged on a dangerous assumption. Victories in Iowa and New Hampshire, the first two states to hold primary elections, meant important momentum needed before arriving in South Carolina. Romney’s campaign was hinged on a dangerous assumption.

Democrats know the consequences of letting the politics of division triumph. When people focus on divisive issues like gay marriage rather than looking at the big picture, Democrats lose.

It was such petty divisions and fear-mongering that sank John Kerry in 2004, and if Democrats are to win in 2008, they must unite the country around the more important issues like healthcare and the economy. Regardless of who goes on to win the nomination, be it Obama, Clinton or Edwards, the people of Iowa sent a powerful message to the rest of America. With a record turnout of over 230,000, people are excited about the choices presented by the Democratic Party.

It is the Democratic Party, with the strength of all its powerful voices, that will deliver that change.

Chris Cabral currently serves as the president of the FIU College Democrats.

CAMPUS TALK

What is your reaction to the results of the Iowa caucus?

Alex Ruiz
“it was very surprising since those two [Obama and Huckabee] weren’t really the leaders in the caucus, or at any point in time.”

David Bush
“It was extraordinarily unexpected and excitingly scintillating. It made me want to go buy a T-shirt.”

Regine Azemard
“I hope the people will chose the right person, and I think [Obama’s] the right person for the job.”

New Hampshire now sits on deck waiting for the calendar to hit Jan. 8. Polls as of Jan. 4 show McCain leading, New Hampshire, though they also show Giuliani making a late charge up the ranks. If the polls still hold for McCain, his comeback into national player status would be complete as he would likely take New Hampshire and the momentum going into key state races toward the end of January.

What is also troubling for Huckabee is the number of evangelicals that supported him in Iowa. Eight in ten Huckabee voters identified themselves as born again or evangelical Christians, while two thirds of those same supporters stated that a candidate sharing their religious beliefs was very important. While six in ten Iowa voters identified themselves as evangelicals, that percentage simply will not hold in the rest of the nation. Huckabee must connect to voters outside of his base in order to keep his momentum.

Overall, the night held no big surprises. Giuliani’s dangerous bet of Florida or bust led to his lackluster showing in Iowa, but his campaign was prepared for this result. Huckabee and McCain seem to be the only candidates willing to try and ride momentum through January. South Carolina will be an extremely important state for Republican hopefuls (again), as voters in Michigan and Florida will be paying attention to how viable the candidacies of Huckabee and McCain appear there. Two big wins in the early three states should prove a lead for either of the two if they can manage it.

Time will tell who the winner is. All that can be said with certainty now is that it is a tough race and everything can change on any given Tuesday.

Juan C. Robaina currently serves as the president of the FIU College Republicans.
Do you have an acquaintance who annoys the hell out of you, and you’d tell them so if only you could do this anonymously? Have you wondered if you were a “Sex bomb... or da bomb”? Are you a devout Christian fluent in Cantonesese? If so, odds are, Facebook has an application for you.

Ranging from fun computer games to absurd personality tests, Facebook offers its users more than 12,000 different types of amusements to help people waste their valuable time.

Of course, these applications should not be mistaken as anything more than forgettable distractions. Some of the applications perform invaluable services that bring people together and help them know themselves.

Take, for example, applications with personality tests. Among the great questions facing every man, woman and child on the face of the planet, is not one of faith or politics, but rather, something far more mysterious and important. “Are you a Gangsta or a Wanksta?” Only the brilliant creator of the Facebook personality test, who goes by the name M.O.E., is sagacious enough to answer this question once and for all.

Yet, the social utility of the site’s applications does not end there. Thanks to Facebook, you can answer all those questions you secretly have about yourself. Like, “Are you stupid?”, “How fat are you?”, “Are YOU sexy?”; and even “Are you a dancing star or a Karaoke idol?” Facebook will let you know the answer to these questions, and more. And if you are a stupid, sexy, fat, dancing machine wouldn’t you want to know?

In addition to tests, Facebook features multiple applications that allow Facebook users to award their friends and enemies on Facebook with “superlatives”. If you failed to be named most likely to succeed in high school, there are numerous other superlatives your friends can bestow upon you in recognition of all your accomplishments.

Your friends can bestow the title “most likely to” become a ninja or burn in hell. And are there any better accolades to add to your resume?

The more shy or duplicious users on Facebook may wish to send a message to a friend or enemy without revealing their identity. For this purpose, a Facebook user can add the “honesty box” application to their Facebook profile.

Through this gimmick, people can finally shed their pleasant facades and tell the truth to other people, for once in their life. The messages are color coded by gender, so if you get a crush message you would at least know if the person is the right sex for you.

There is an application for almost everybody on Facebook. Religious people from Asia can add an application that posts scriptural verses in Mandarin on their profile, while lonely people can add the “hold me” application, which will allow their friends to “virtually” hold them, so they can “virtually” feel better.

Finally, if achieving a heightened level of self-awareness, or being voted “most likely to” burn in hell aren’t enough entertainment for you, then the more demanding Facebook enthusiast can add one of more than 1,300 game applications to their profile. A Facebook user can play classic games such as Tetris, Snake, and Pac-Man, or user generated games such as “Zombies,” where a Facebook user can become a “zombie” and “infect” their friends. Sounds like fun!

In the end, the purpose of Facebook is to help people interact with others online, and that’s what these applications are about. Whether you’re a “stupid karaoke idol” or a “fat and sexy gangsta,” Facebook has the power to bring all of us together at the table of brotherhood.

As flesh eating zombies, and in this crazy world, brotherhood is truly a beautiful thing.
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Studios hope to start the new year off in a big way

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. News Director

If you look through the upcoming movie listings, you might find yourself disappointed at the lack of quality movies this month. Historically, January has been a slow month for movies as studios try to push their blockbusters and award hopefuls into the end of the year.

However, that doesn’t mean there won’t be some diamonds in the rough this month. These are a few of the most anticipated films of the month.

IN THE NAME OF THE KING (JAN. 11)

Already well known in the action movie genre for his work in films such as “The Transporter” and “Crank,” Jason Statham is hoping to continue his string of action-heavy hits with the video game adaptation “In The Name Of The King: A Dungeon Siege Tale” based on the computer game Dungeon Siege. Statham plays the role of a farmer whose life is turned upside down when his son is killed and his wife is kidnapped. Also starring Ray Liotta, Burt Reynolds, and Ron Perlman, this fantasy film looks to offer much of the same features of Statham’s previous films: cheap thrills and lots of action and fight scenes.

27 DRESSES (JAN. 18)

In direct contrast to the action of “In The Name Of The King,” “27 Dresses” is a romantic comedy from the writer of “The Devil Wears Prada.” The film stars Katherine Heigl as a woman who has been a bridesmaid 27 times, but who has never considered the prospect of marriage herself. Things change when her younger sister becomes engaged to the man of her dreams and asks her to be a bridesmaid once again.

CLOVERFIELD (JAN. 18)

Continuing in the grand tradition of films like “Godzilla,” “King Kong” and “Jurassic Park,” writer/director J.J. Abrams – the creator of the television show “Lost” – gives us “Cloverfield,” a movie about a large creature of mysterious origin wreaking havoc on New York City.

While not much is known about the exact details of the film, it is known that the film takes place in New York City as five friends are throwing another friend a going away party.

During the party, which they are filming with a handheld camcorder, the monster suddenly attacks the city, throwing it into chaos.

Fans of Abrams’ “Lost” will find many of the surprise twists and unexpected endings that his show has become popular for. This, plus the secrecy surrounding its production, has led to “Cloverfield” being one of the most anticipated films of 2008.

FANBOYS (JAN. 18)

One part “Road Trip” and one part Kevin Smith movie, “Fanboys” is the story of a group of Star Wars obsessed friends who plot to break into director George Lucas’ Skywalker Ranch in order to allow their sick friend the opportunity to watch “Star Wars: The Phantom Menace” prior to its release.

Featuring a cast that looks as though they could be straight out of a “Star Wars” convention and a story that is every bit as ridiculous as its premise entails, “Fanboys” looks to be one of the funniest movies of the month.

RAMBO (JAN. 25)

After improbably resurrecting his career and franchise character in “Rocky Balboa,” Sylvester Stallone is looking to do the same for his Rambo character. Famous for the top action and explosions, the Rambo series has become a cultural milestone, much like Rocky.

Twenty years after helping Muslim rebels fend off Soviet invaders in Afghanistan, Rambo finds himself living a simple life in Thailand, until a group of aid workers bringing relief to a tribe in Burma is kidnapped by rebels.

Rambo decides to pick up his gun again and come to the rescue.

If he can revive the Rambo series like he did with Rocky, Stallone will have pulled off two improbable feats.

With promises of big action and the return of a classic character, it wouldn’t be a surprise to see “Rambo” make a big impact at the box office.
Brother’s death inspires new outlook

The day after Christmas has always had some kind of significance for me. It’s the birthday of one of my closest friends. It’s a gift return and shopping nightmare for retail workers, a day that is just as crazy as Black Friday. It’s also Boxing Day, celebrated by the United Kingdom and Canada as well as St. Stephen’s Day, commemorating Christian-ity’s first martyr.

This year, however, December 26 became something even more to me: The morning I learned my older brother was dead. It was 9 a.m. when I woke up to a call from one of my brother’s closest friends. He told me that my brother was in a terrible accident. I rushed over to my father’s house to see friends and family standing out in the lawn. My dad broke the news. In the back of my head I already knew.

My brother was driving back up to Naples with his Belgian Shepherd, Queen, on Alligator Alley after having dinner with us on Christmas Day. He was trying to make a stop when an oncoming car following close behind rammed him from behind, flipping his vehicle over to the side of the road. Denny Luis Garcia and Queen were both dead.

He was 32-years-old. I can never count how many times my father always told me and my brother to always wear a seatbelt in the car. All the late nights I spent picking him up after playing poker, I found myself stressing to him the same thing. I thought he had finally taken it to heart. I was wrong.

It was hard to think about my life in the same way now that my brother is gone. No more requests for money. No more discussions about topics such as poker or the decline of video games in the car. No more scolding his hyperactive dog as it nearly bites me. It’s a shame that few of my friends ever actually met him and wondered how we turned out so different despite growing up as brothers and seeing the similarities. Denny wasn’t always the greatest brother in the world. He and my parents were never on the best of terms, but we still managed. He never finished high school but lived for the moment, going through many different jobs and staying with friends. Months would go by without him, but he would always appear, somehow, without fail. He was doing well with life and was having ideas of playing professional poker. That can’t happen anymore.

Christmas Day was the last day anyone would ever see him again. Death is always hard. Whether it’s sudden or not, we feel the effects on an almost daily basis. A news headline, a phone call, a disaster taking many lives or an isolated incident taking only one.

Death is a very real part of life that many of us still take for granted, even in this day and age of heightened alert in the face of terror. For most of us, we never truly realize it until we brush near it, or a loved one faces it. I’ve had to relearn that lesson twice this year. With 2008 just starting, we should look back on what has passed and who has left us and, at the same time, we should look forward to who we will meet and what will happen in our lives. Good or bad, memorable or not, each day is a gift that reminds us how precious life is.

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GAME

Alien Hominid

Little alien has big sights

Many people may have already heard of Alien Hominid, the two-dimensional side-scrolling action/adventure game by developer The Behemoth. Since its 2004 release on the Nintendo GameCube and Sony’s PlayStation 2, it has received many awards including the Innovation in Visual Arts and Audience Award at the Independent Games Festival.

But what many may not know is that Alien Hominid started as a free flash game on the Adobe flash Web site Newgrounds.com. The original flash version can still be found online for free at many popular flash game Web sites.

The game focuses on a nameless little yellow alien whose spaceship is shot down to Earth by FBI agents. In order to escape, he must fight his way back to his ship. Playing as the alien character, you can run, jump, duck and shoot your way through the mobs of agents. If you get hit just once, however, it will cost you a life.

Occasionally you will run into helicopters and vans full of agents or a robot mini-boss set out to destroy you.

Though the controls are very simple and revolve mostly around the arrow pad, most of the controls are intuitive; you’ll find the challenge in the game comes mostly from the level of dexterity needed to keep up with the scores of angry agents.

Although you can find Alien Hominid online at most flash game Web sites, Newgrounds, its original home, also has a few spin-off games and short films inspired by the game such as Alien Hominid Christmas and Alien Hominid At My House. There’s also an Alien Hominid tribute by the original creators behind Newgrounds and The Behemoth.

The free flash version of the game has only one level but getting through it will provide enough of a challenge to even the seasoned gamer.

Although versions of Alien Hominid have since been released on Microsoft’s Xbox, mobile phones, Nintendo’s Game Boy Advance and the Xbox Live Arcade, most are just lengthened segments of the original flash game with better graphics and additional bosses.

Alien Hominid received a lot of attention in the gaming world upon its full-length release for its unique art style and sense of humor, both of which support the game’s very simplistic gameplay in a way that is both innovative and refreshing.

The Behemoth is currently working on a second title which is set to release later this year. Until then, we can keep ourselves occupied with Alien Hominid for free, online.

GAME

Geometry Wars: Galaxies

DS game packs a punch

It started out as a small mini game hidden within Project Gotham Racing 2 on the now defunct Xbox.

Years later, Geometry Wars would become an online phenomenon offered through Xbox Live on Microsoft’s second console, the Xbox 360. The latest re-creation of this game, Geometry Wars: Galaxies, extends its addicting reach to the portable realm on the Nintendo DS.

The premise of the game is a simple throwback to arcade classics like Asteroids and Robotron. You pilot a small ship in a confined space and shoot down seemingly never-ending waves of enemies.

As your score and point multiplier increase so do your firepower and enemy attacks. A crowded screen illustrates the chaos created by numerous assaults, and because of this, your vessel is left confined with little maneuverability and only limited use of screen-clearing bombs is allowed.

Although the premise is reminiscent of older classics, Galaxies adds a few new elements to the mix.

Now divided up into different solar systems with each planet serving as a stage, the game’s playing fields host a variety of hazards along with new enemy types and medal rankings.

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Luis H. Garcia

Nov 7 Staff Writer

Also, currency can be collected as you destroy enemies for purchasing new AI drone types to assist your ship and unlock more stages.

The DS manages to handle the dual-stick controls of the original well, keeping the game’s pick-up-and-play feel intact. In terms of visuals, Geometry Wars’ graphics are similar to the vector line-drawn games of old such as Atari’s Tempest.

While not as vivid and smooth as the 360’s Geometry Wars – slight slowdown may occur amidst the chaos on-screen – the DS handles the style and performance of the original with good results. The music is fitting to the old school look, with tracks sounding out of a club mix CD.

With its ancient yet familiar visual flair of yesteryear coupled with addictive gameplay and maddening challenge, Geometry Wars: Galaxies is a perfect fit for Nintendo’s portable avenue to appeal to gamers of any kind.
### SUN BELT MEN’S BASKETBALL STANDING

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*All records up to date as of Jan. 4*

### ROAD TO NATIONAL TITLE ONE LESS TRAVELED

The 2007 college football season has reached its final destination and all those unlikely contenders that made it so much fun are nowhere to be found.

When the regular season was over, eight teams had been ranked second in the Associated Press Top 25. Seven of those teams lost as No. 2. The one team that escaped the curse of No. 2? LSU, which started the season with national championship expectations and ranked behind only No. 1 USC. Problems for the Tigers came when they got to No. 1. LSU hadn’t been No. 1 in the AP poll since 1959 when it moved from No. 2 to the top spot in the final week of September.

Those good times lasted two weeks in Baton Rouge, La.

On Oct. 13, Kentucky and star quarterback Andre Woodson beat the Tigers 43-37 in triple overtime. It was the first time since the 2003 season the No. 1 team lost before the bowls. A few hours after the Tigers were taken out by the Wildcats in Lexington, Ky., No. 2 California lost 31-28 at home to Oregon State and for the first time in 11 seasons the top two teams had lost in the same weekend.

That uncommon occurrence would become a trend. It happened two more times. The new No. 1 almost by default was Ohio State.

Having said goodbye to November rolled around, though, and the Buckeyes had a second consecutive BCS national championship game appearance in their sights. All they needed to do was beat Illinois at home. This time it was Illinois spoiling the best laid plans.

So, with three weeks left in the regular season and only one more chance to impress poll voters, the Buckeyes chances of earning a spot in the national championship game were bleak. At least they could still go to the Rose Bowl.

With Ohio State seemingly out of the picture, LSU got a second chance at being No. 1. The Tigers had started the season playing scary good, blowing out opponents, most notably a 48-7 thumping of Virginia Tech.

Other contenders would fall first. Oregon and Oklahoma couldn’t overcome injuries to their quarterbacks and lost games to unranked foes. That set up a huge game in a longtime rivalry between two schools.

On the day before the third-ranked Tigers faced the second-ranked Jayhawks in the 116th and most important game in the heated rivalry, LSU lost again as No. 1, again in triple-over-time.

This time Darren McFadden and Arkansas topped the Tigers, 50-48. LSU became the first team to lose twice in the same season as No. 1 since Notre Dame in 1990.

The final BCS computations favored Ohio State and... welcome back from the dead. LSU. Perhaps we’ll never know for sure which is the best college football team in the country this season.

The wacky road trip that was the 2007 college football season has reached its final destination and all those unlikely contenders that made it so much fun are nowhere to be found.

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Golden Panthers face Troy with injured players

Rebounding duo absent against undersized conference opponent

DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

The only good news concerning their injuries is that they happened early in the season, and they should both be allowed minimal playing time.

So far Jenkins has done an admirable job stepping into the starting line-up for the first time in her career and already recorded a double-double and new career highs in both scoring and rebounding.

FIU has turned to outside shooting as a source of offense. The good news for the Golden Panthers is that they have quite a few effective shooters like freshman guard Fanni Hutlassa, senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson, sophomore guard Monika Bosilj, senior guard Asha Neal and junior guard Iva Ciglar.

Troy is led by senior guard Amy Lewis. Should the team in scoring with almost 20 points per game. Lewis ranks number one in 3-pointers made in the Sun Belt conference (Ferguson ranks number two) and is second to Ciglar for the lead in minutes played. Junior Kylie Morrissey is the team’s second leading scorer with 14 points per game and leads Troy in rebounding with 5 rebounds a game.

Troy will be coming in following a 73-62 win over Sun Belt rival North Texas.

The match-up should be manageable for the Golden Panthers thanks to the fact that they will not have a height disadvantage and should be able to win the rebounding battle. FIU will need to focus on stopping Lewis from putting up big numbers because in earlier games this season the defense has given up high points totals to the opponents leading scorer.

Los Angeles County

Center and perimeter play crucial against Troy at home

SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

As the Golden Panthers set to face University of Troy Trojans (6-6) Jan. 9 at the Pharmed Arena, the presence of center Russell Hicks coupled with the team’s perimeter defense and offense will dictate whether the team snaps its losing spell.

After beginning the season 2-0, the Golden Panthers have gone 1-9 including six losses by more than double digits.

The most notable of those losses was the 92-49 stomping at the hands of Kentucky on Dec. 31.

The Golden Panthers began to struggle when Hicks’ offensive production dropped off, and he was barely attempting any shots.

Hicks got back on track scoring 20 points twice; however, now the team’s defense is not stopping anyone.

Opponents have lit up the Golden Panthers defense from three-point range. Kentucky shot 31-59 from three-point range, and Robert Morris shot 12-17 from behind the arc.

Troy sports a small speedy lineup with none of the starting five standing more than 6-foot-8. They do not have a true center and three play forwards and two guards every game.

The Trojans main scoring threats are three guards including sophomore Brandon Hazard. He is shooting 44 percent from three-point range including a 7-of-10 performance against Jacksonville.

Hazard will most likely pose the most problems for the Golden Panthers from the outside, but O’Darrin Basset and Justin Jonas are the best overall scorers.

Basset is the team’s second leading scorer with 18.7 points per game. He causes havoc on the offensive side, but is a defensive liability. Jonas is second on the team with 13.6 points per game.

The Golden Panthers’ guards will need to bully the smaller lighter Troy guards in order to slow them down and keep them from shooting well from the outside.

Hicks is a seven-footer but his defense is not his strongest suit.

His height does not make up for his lack of lateral speed. He will need his teammates to keep their opponents in front of them and not force him to try to block them.

Conversely, the Golden Panthers’ guards will need to produce offensively in order to complement Hicks.

He is facing one of the smaller lineups this season. It is imperative that he establishes his offensive game early in order to set up the FIU guards.

Troy roster while playing opponents controlling the paint against the small Golden Panthers. Therefore, it would no be wise for the Golden Panthers to get involved in a shooting war with two guards.

Having two players controlling the paint against the small Golden Panthers is a huge problem for Troy’s defense. This is the same defense that allowed 131 points to Paul Quinn College, but the Trojans still won that game.

Therefore, it would not be wise for the Golden Panthers to get involved in a shooting war with two guards.

The team’s best chance to win is to dominate the paint against the smaller Troy roster while playing opponents controlling the paint against the small Golden Panthers. Therefore, it would no be wise for the Golden Panthers to get involved in a shooting war with two guards.

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Throughout the swirling coaching climate in the FIU athletic department, basketball has been able to maintain consistent leadership despite drastic changes elsewhere.

Men's basketball coach Sergio Rouco has been at the forefront of what FIU Athletics has been able to offer. With new coaches in football, baseball and both soccer teams, great expectations were leveled upon the two basketball squads to stand at the forefront of what FIU Athletics have to offer.

It should suffice to say that those expectations haven’t quite been met. The men’s team, despite terrific output from newcomer junior center Russell Hicks, has gone dormant for a month, undergoing a six-game losing streak and dropping the first two Sun Belt conference games in a conference in which it was supposed to be contenders.

Nonetheless, he is still shooting 48 percent from the field and will need to continue to attack the basket to reverse the team’s recent misfortunes. On the women’s side of the court, senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson is putting up a strong 18.1 points per game, but just like the men’s team, efficiency is the problem as it is being done on 37 percent shooting.

With over ten shots on the season, averaging nearly 14 points and seven rebounds a game and cashing in a double-double against powerhouse Kentucky. Teams have begun to respect Hicks by sometimes sending double teams and other defensive schemes to interrupt his touch around the basket.

When this happens and he is forced to pass it out is where the problems begin. Junior forward Alex Galindo, last years leading scorer, is second with 11.8 points per game this season, but is doing this shooting barely over 40 percent from the field and 29 percent from three point range. Compare this to Hick's efficient 63 percent from the field and the scoring struggles begin to make sense.

Kenneth White is the other new arrival from Texas, and while his talent is clearly evident, much work still needs to be done. White is averaging 10 points per game but on 35 percent shooting, drawing his accuracy into question. Erick Nsangou started off the season firing away, getting promoted to the starting line-up, but has since cooled down.

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