Food Network chefs garnish South Beach

**WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL**

**CASTRO OUT:** People gather outside Café Versailles, a typical restaurant where Cuban-Americans typically assemble to discuss the happenings of their country. Supporters of a free Cuba joined together on Feb. 19 to celebrate the resignation of former dictator Fidel Castro.

**CASTRO OUT:**

Hospitality and Tourism Management

associate dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

35,000 people are expected this weekend, according to Lee Dixon, director of special events and media relations at Southern Wine & Spirits of America, and Joseph Carolina Cemborain, a graduate student of the HM program working on the event for her second year. "I have plenty of friends that attended the festival last year. "I have plenty of friends that attended the festival last year."

**CASTRO OUT:**

The University awoke to shocking news on Feb. 19 when Fidel Castro announced that he would not accept another term as Cuba’s president. In declining health, the 81-year old who has ruled island for almost half a century said in a letter published in the online edition of the Communist Party daily Granma, "it would be a betrayal to my conscience to accept responsibility requiring more mobility and dedication than I am physically able to offer." He also wrote that his "wishes have always been to discharge my duties to my last breath," in a letter published in Tuesday’s editions of Cuban newspapers.

Castro has been in power since 1959 staging a coup and overthrowing former Cuba president Fulgencio Batista in 1959. For many older generation Cubans, the announcement reminded them of darker times when Castro took control of the government.

"There was a time in Havana where you could go any place and you could hear him on the radio or television. You just couldn’t turn his voice out. He has been telling Cubans what to do for many years," said associate director of the Cuban Research Institute, Uva de Aragon. "You have no idea how it used to be, you used to feel him breath on you. He was everywhere."

Arañón said that many, including...
Raul Martinez reaches out to young Democrats

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO Staff Writer

A candidate preaching Obama’s change and packing Clinton’s experience would be a gift for the Democratic Party. Democratic South Floridians can find that rare combination in the local congressional election.

At least, Raul Martinez, former Hialeah mayor and current U.S. representative hopeful, believes so. Invited by the FIU College Democrats, Martinez spoke about his past experiences, present campaign and the change he will breathe into Washington if elected on Monday night.

Perez: Change in Cuba won’t happen over night

GASP! Sophia Christina Nielsen is surprised when Animal Planet’s Jeff Corwin places a marine toad in her hands. For more photos, audio and a Q&A visit www.fiumom.com

CASTRO, page 1

Monday night.

“A lot of the things [he said] resonated to me as a voter … he really touched me because he is willing to take on the issues I feel have been ignored for many years,” said Moses H., a member of FIU College Democrats. Moses preferred not to give his last name.

In the business of “delivering services,” as he proclaimed, Martinez leaned heavily on his two decades of experience as mayor to explain how he would help a country that is “going in the wrong direction.”

As mayor, Martinez is largely credited for revitalizing Hialeah by creating 18,000 new jobs, providing hundreds of units of affordable housing and helping increase high school graduation by 125 percent.

He said that this separates him from his opponents. “[My opponents] all talk about health insurance, community, all these things they are going to do but that’s all rhetoric,” he said. “I can replicate a lot of things like affordable housing. Can that be done? Yeah, we did it in Hialeah.”

Martinez believes that one of his best assets is his budgeting experience. However, for Christian Martinez, Vice President of FIU College Democrats, it is his ability to unite that is most impressive.

“He has the rare ability to reach across the aisle and get things done,” he said.

The Cuban-born Martinez is an oddity in the traditionally Republican Cuban community. He believes that being “called a communist” has only made him a stronger politician, one that can “tough it out.”

He might have to tough it out during this campaigning season.

The Miami Herald has called the congressional election “Battle of the Titans” in a Jan. article, referring to Martinez and his main opponent Republican Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

Republican attacks came quickly after Martinez issued his intention to run.

They predicted a controversial race by taking into account Martinez’s “history of corruption and indecency,” according to the article, referring to his conviction of extortion in 1991 that was later appealed by Martinez, and subsequently resulted in hung juries.

The hour and half appearance ended with Martinez recruiting volunteers for his campaign:

“I think this was the most exciting meeting we’ve had. He’s a bit of a legend in South Florida politics,” Christian Martinez said.

Tuesday, Raul Martinez reaches out to young Democrats

I think this was the most exciting meeting we’ve had. He’s a bit of a legend in South Florida politics.

Perez: Change in Cuba won’t happen over night

The Beacon office is located in the Graham Center, room 210, at the University Park campus. Questions regarding display advertising and billing needs should be directed to the Advertising Manager at 305-348-2709. Mailing address: Graham Center, room 210, Miami, FL 33199. Fax number is 305-348-2712. Beacon Bay Campus is 305-919-4722. Office hours are 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. E-mail: Beacon@fiu.edu. Visit us online at www.beaconnewspaper.com

The Beacon is published on Mondays and Thursdays during the fall and spring semesters and once a week during summer B. 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 editorially independent newspaper partially funded by student and services fees that are appropriated by Student Government.

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Are you unable to fall asleep before midnight?
Do you have difficulty waking up in the morning?

You may suffer from Delayed Phase Sleep Syndrome

If you have had this problem for more than 3 months, you may be eligible to participate in a research study.

You may qualify if you:
1. are 18 years or older
2. are in good general health

Study participants will receive study-related examinations & investigational medications at no cost. Study participants will also be compensated for time and travel.

For more information contact: 1-877-455-5757
**NEWSFLASH**

**FIU Chabad hosts weekly pizza, parsha**

FIU Chabad hosts pizza and parsha every Thursday on WUC’s second floor, above the information desk. Students are invited to join in reading portions of the Torah over pizza. The next meeting is Feb. 21 and open to all students.

**SGA Scholarships deadline approaches**

SGA scholarship applications are being accepted through March 14, 5 p.m. Applicants must have a minimum cumulative 2.5 GPA. Applications are available at the Campus Life office, WUC 141. Call (305) 919-5800, for details on available scholarships.

**Kayaking club to host Kayak Day on the bay**

The Kayaking Club will host its second Kayak Day on Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. at the Biscayne Bay Boat Ramp, behind the Acquatic Center. No experience is necessary and application forms are available in the Recreation Center. Call (305) 919-5678 for more information.

**International Student Tax Workshop to take place**

BBC’s International Student & Scholar Services will host a tax workshop designed for international students on Feb. 27 from 3 to 4 p.m. in WUC 363. For reservations, call (305) 919-5813.

**Humanities Club to screen “Becket”**

The Humanities Club will host a screening of the 1964 film “Becket,” starring Peter O’Toole and Richard Burton, on Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m. in Lummus Park. For more information, call (305) 919-5948.

**Judaic Studies program to host “The Holocaust by Bullets”**

FIU’s Judaic Studies program and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies will host “The Holocaust by Bullets: An Interview with Father Patrick Debos.” Debos is a presidential advisor to the Yahad-in-Unum, an organization that promotes Judeo-Christian dialogue, and an advisor for the Vatican’s Commission for Religious Relations. Call (305) 348-6561 for more information.

**Monks to visit, complete Mandala sand painting**

Tibetan monks will visit BBC March 3-6. The monks will work on a mandala sand painting each of these days in Panther Square from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. A closing ceremony will be held March 6 at 6 p.m. in Panther Square. For details, call (305) 919-5800.

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**ANWS to reflect on historical struggle**

**RONICHA AZARD Contributing Writer**

In honor of Black History Month, the African-New World Studies Program is inviting Jeremy Levitt, professor of law and director of the Human Rights and Global Justice program, to lecture on the need for education on all facets of the African struggle.

Levitt will speak at the fourth annual Malcolm X and Ella Baker lecture held at the Wolfe University Center Ballroom at Biscayne Bay Campus on Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.

This year’s topic is “The African Diaspora, the State and Globalization: The Next Frontier of Pan-African Unity.”

Levitt has also edited 2008’s “Africa: Mapping New Boundaries in International Law.”

“It is intended for the students to learn about a people and a political struggle, and where we should be going from here as an African Diaspora,” Levitt said.

“[This] includes all people of African descent, wherever they might live, and others who support that ideology and struggle,” Levitt said.

The African Diaspora is the story of Africans’ isolation and dispersion around the world due to slavery, their ability to maintain their traditions and their identity modification in a new world.

This lecture will also educate the FIU student population on the visions of Ella Baker and Malcolm X visions of bringing peace and unity to humanity and reducing discrimination against the African American nation, according to Levitt.

Jeremy Levitt, Professor of Law

It is intended for the students to learn about a people and a political struggle, and where we should be going from here as an African Diaspora.

**Festival to draw tourist funds**

**TELEVISIOND ENTREES**

**FEST, page 1**

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– Compiled by Ana Perez and Susana Rodriguez, Beacon Staff

**Festival to draw tourist funds**

That’s only a sampling of the 54 events running throughout the weekend, most of which are HM student and alumni assisted. However, the event is not geared toward students but con

also be involved in the festiv-

ities. The Kellogg’s Kidz Kitchen, hosted by celebrity Food Network

chef’s Emeril Lagasse, Tyler Flor-

ence and Gia de Laurentiis, invites children to try cooking

for others.

Kellogg’s Kidz Kitchen will also include juice tasting and be held in Lummus Park Feb. 23 throughout the day for $35 (plus tax and service fee) per child.

Our students don’t like any of the connotations that come with getting old and that’s why we really won’t find any courses in here that deal with aging.

Summers, according to Dixon. Events range in price from $35 for Kidz Kitchen to $2,000 for a foursome at the celebrity golf tournament.

If you plan to attend this year’s festival, make your plans soon. Tickets for the more popular events traditionally sell out weeks in advance. You can purchase tickets online at www.sobe-wi-

and foodfestivals.com.
LOVE DAY LYRICISM

CLASSIC COVERS: The Distorted Poets - freshmen Bryan Embon, Jason Shaefer, Andy Chruszcz and sophomore Joshua Rosada - cover classic songs in concert on Valentine's Day in Panther Square.

CONCERNS EXPRESSED

Survey puts campus libraries to the test

PAMELA DUQUE
LUIS VALDEZ
Beacon Staff

Bookworms have a chance to make changes at FIU’s libraries with the third Library Quality Survey. The purpose of the survey is to measure user satisfaction with library resources and services, the quality of interactions with library staff and users and satisfaction with the libraries collection and space, according to Dean of Libraries Laura Probst.

“If you had an extremely positive experience at the library, you can comment on that, and if you had a negative experience, we are just as interested in that – if not more so – so we can focus on the problem and strategically plan to eliminate it,” said Steve Switzer, co-chair of the 2008 survey committee and an access services librarian at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

The survey is a national survey model used throughout the country. The FIU libraries already conducted the survey in 2003 and 2005 in accordance with accredi-

tation requirements. This year’s survey will compare and analyze trends in service and satisfaction with the FIU libraries. Even though the process costs $3,000 to conduct, it is a worth-while investment, according to University Librarian Douglas Hasty.

“This is the most important survey any academic library can do, in my opinion,” Hasty said. “The results are a strong factor in our three-year development.”

Both the Green Library at University Park and the library at BBC participate in the survey. “It is very comprehensive,” said Lauren Christos, member of the 2008 survey committee and reference librarian at BBC.

According to Christos, the survey will ask students to rate FIU libraries based on available materials and intercampus loans: books that come from the Green Library to the BBC library, and vice-versa. Other survey questions will include interlibrary loans, the service that brings books from another institutional library to FIU libraries and the overall ability of the libraries to support faculty’s research and student needs.

The survey will run from Feb. 22 through March 24 and it will be done completely online. Participants will remain anonymous so they feel comfortable and secure about expressing their feelings about the libraries at FIU.

All students and faculty are invited to participate in the study which will only take about 10 minutes. Hasty stresses the importance of user feedback.

“Comments are the most important part of the survey. Criticism is also essential... This feedback really shows that you care about our library.”

The preliminary results will be back in two to three weeks and the full packaged report in about two to three months.

The several-hundred page report will not be available to nonlibrary staff, however, a simplified version will be made available online.

According to Probst, after the results come in, the libraries will conduct follow-up interviews with student and faculty members to gain additional information to help in accessing the details of the results.

“This is the best way to help our library. Since we only conduct this survey every three to four years, most students will only have one chance to fill it out,” Hasty said. “I really encourage you to fill out the survey so that the library can improve.”

The link to the survey will be made available on Feb. 22 and can be found at www.library.fiu.edu.

For more information, visit www.fiu.edu/~caree or call 305-919-5770.

- Compiled by Ana Perez

CAREER SERVICES

MEGA WEEK

MONDAY • FEBRUARY 25
Resume Writing Skills Workshop: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., WUC 255
Interview Skills Workshop: 11:00 - 12:00 p.m., WUC 255
How to Prepare for Career Fair Workshop: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., WUC 255

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 26
The Chill Skill; How to Relax and Search for a Job Workshop: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., WUC 255
How to Prepare for Career Fair Workshop: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., WUC 255

WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 27
Bring Your Resume to School Day: 10:00 - 2:00 p.m., Panther Square

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 28
Walk-in Hours for Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 29
Walk-in Hours for Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

MONDAY • MARCH 3
Practice Interviews in Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

TUESDAY • MARCH 4
Practice Interviews in Career Services Office: 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., WUC 255

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 5
Career Fair 2008, semi-formal to formal attire required: 10:00 - 3:00 p.m., WUC 255

More information, visit www.fiu.edu/~career or call 305-919-5770.

Write for The Beacon’s At the Bay section! Apply in WUC 124

www.beaconnewspaper.com

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Castro-less Cuba's future not set in stone

With Fidel's brother, Raúl, as acting president, should anyone be so sure that he can't be an effective leader? Is everyone jumping to conclusions about Raúl and the future of Cuba? It certainly looks that way.

"He is simply a continuation of the Castro regime," State Department deputy spokesman Tony Casey told AP. "The US should not even be involved in this situation. We're already out trillions of dollars from our fight for democracy in Iraq and we're expected to be suspicious of Iran, why should the US have any say what happens in a country where they have successfully lived under a socialist regime? Most assuredly, this will become a government and corporate food train."

As far as Bush is concerned, this is a final push to be remembered as the bringer of democracy, rather than a war mongering idiot. He will most likely heroically swoop in and turn things around, due to our alleged incompetence in the whole country implodes, or so Bush would like you to believe.

But has led us to believe that socialism is evil and to ignore the positives of a socialized nation: For example, Castro was responsible for the outstanding Universal Health Care system in Cuba.

Accordingly, this is the perfect opportunity for Bush to surge publically that socialism has finally failed, but has it really? If any prominent American leader were to resign or die, would that mean democracy has failed? If so, America died along with Lincoln, which isn’t too far from the truth. You can expect a lot of multi-national corporations to open their “Post-Castro Cuban” plans, while many Cuban exiles may be planning on going home, provided Bush intervenes, "saves the day" and opens trade, which is probably among the first things that should (but probably won’t) happen.

It’s pure logic (or maybe chivalry) to assume that Bush will use the trade embargo as a bargaining chip to get U.S. interests heard when appointing a new leader rather than Raúl Castro and his ilk. "There are some very clear indications out there that what this… is a transfer of authority and power from…Fidel to Raúl," Casey explained to AP.

In order to restore the lost dignity of Iraq, Bush’s eventual intervention in “liberating” Cuba from socialism may be the savior of Florida's political escapades, missteps stranger than fiction

Eric M. Feldman
Asst. Opinion Editor

Sure, Florida may be the punch line of many Saturday Night Live jokes every time an election rolls around, due to our alleged incompetence in the 2000 general election, but the Sunshine State still remains the most interesting – albeit hilarious – place in the Union to observe case studies of absurdity in politics. I wouldn’t have it any other way.

Take the provision of our state constitution, for example, which collected just over 600,000 signatures, allowing any citizen group to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

A case in point: the infamous pig amendment of 2002. This pork project (pun intended) by an animal rights interest group compelled voters to mandate via the Constitution that pigs not be kept in cages so small that they are not able to turn around.

It’s no wonder high school civics instructors don’t include things like this along with “freedom of speech” when they present the “founding fathers” in constitutional curriculum.

It’s not that I want pigs in cages; it’s just not appropriate for the document that defines the basis for all laws in the state.

Neither is a mandatory bullet train.

In the 2000 election, voters approved another amendment that forced the state to build a bullet train to connect all of Florida’s major cities. This train would be so expensive that the South Florida Sun-Sentinel once claimed that the name of the train was apt because it would be a “bullet to the head of the taxpayers.”

Unwilling to pay for the project, the state government with former Gov. Jeb Bush at the helm, held off on starting the train so that they could push for another amendment to negate the first one. It too, passed, and the bullet train that all five citizens who live in Jacksonville and work in Miami would have used was put to rest.

The State has no problem lobbying for an amendment they like, though. Most recent example: Amendment 1, which was just passed on Jun. 29 primary elections. The campaign was lead by Gov. Charlie Crist, as a tax break for Florida residents, and the ability of long-time residents, known as Homesteaders, to take their property tax breaks with them when they move to a new home. This concept was known as portability. Despite advance warning of the downfall of the tax amendment, it was approved by a large margin of votes who read the very next week in local newspapers that “Some Broward Counties May Raise Property Taxes” (Sun-Sentinel, Feb. 12) and that a “Lawsuit Challenges Portability Proposal” (Miami Herald, Feb. 13).

What all of that means is citizens will probably end up paying higher taxes.

With all this political drama at home, who needs to follow the circus that is the race for the White House?

It is outrageous to read about a man who makes $500,000+ a year and still needs a $50,000 bonus for his outstanding work. With all of the budget cuts in the state, you would think that his salary would decrease throughout the years. And by the way, I would like to put it out there that the College of Education has been cut so much for the summer that there will not be enough classes for even a quarter of the education major students. Why isn’t this “bonus” money being dispersed into areas that need it?

Joasmin Augustin
Elementary Education Major

Friday, April 11, 2008

FIU fails to honor past presidents

President’s Day has come and gone. Imagine my shock when I noted that while FIU was closed for Martin Luther King Day, it will remain open on Presidents Day. As a matter of fact, the holiday is not even listed on the daily listings of the Student Handbook (there is a small mention on the monthly page). How can FIU not honor a Founder of our country and the president that ended slavery? Years ago, they each had their own legal holiday. Now FIU has reduced their meaning to nothing.

Hubert Harriman
Senior

State John Negroponte told AP he could not envision the U.S lifting the embargo “any time soon.” It’s safe to say the embargo will play a big role in future Cuban leadership.

Raul Castro might not be the roadblock everyone is making him out to be now that he won’t have to adhere to Fidel’s format; a view shared by some.

“I don’t think it will be more of the same,” said a dissident economist Oscar Espinosa Chepe expressed to The Miami Herald. “It’s not what we, in Cuba, want. We want democracy and freedom, but this could be the time for some economic and … political changes.”

There’s always the possibility that Raúl will just be a puppet, which is a concern echoed by many Miami residents: “That’s nothing. That’s a farce,” said Miami resident Jorge Almeida, 79, in The Miami Herald report. “With Raúl, there is no solution.”

Radio Mambi’s News Director, Armando Pérez-Roura, said at Radio Mambi, believes Castro’s move was a “pantomime” typical of the regime. As a result, many Cubans are torn between moving forward or risking “more of the same” with Raúl Castro.

Florida’s political escapades, missteps stranger than fiction

Eric M. Feldman
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

$50,000 question answered

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Senior

STEP ONTO THE SOAPBOX

Office of a student organization? Student government member? University official? Have something to say? Contact us at joseph.marhee@fiu.edu and we’ll give you 500 words to share your opinion with the FIU community.
Relay for Life raises thousands to fund cancer research

JONATHAN DAVILA
Contributing Writer

When FIU Associate Professor Augusto Soledade finished his graduate studies at SUNY Brockport in Rochester, N.Y. in 1998, he was searching for a way to put his artistic interests to use.

“I really felt that I needed to have a way to direct my artistic ideas and I felt that a dance company was the best way to do that,” Soledade said.

With that notion in mind, Soledade founded the Brazz Dance Theater, a non-profit dance organization that aims to educate as well as entertain its audience with its dance performances.

On March 7 and 8, Soledade and his company will be performing one of their shows, “A Foot for Samba,” at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

The show concludes with the FIU faculty concert, “Dancing Our History,” a concert produced by FIU faculty members representing different ethnic backgrounds.

With “A Foot for Samba,” Soledade portrays the dance history of his own country, Brazil.

“I’m trying to bring my Brazilian culture into the [melting] pot,” Soledade said.

Anne Morris, director of development for the Brazz Dance Theater, as well as a dancer performing in “Samba,” said that there is more to the show than the history of Brazilian dance.

“The show looks at the historical basis of Samba and the social conflicts in Brazil,” she said. “There’s a view of life in the [Brazilian] cities with all their struggles and hardships. [We’re making] a social comment on contemporary Brazilian culture.

The production is a collaborative work between Soledade and fellow Brazilian dance artist Valeria Pinheiro, blending Afro-Brazilian dance with contemporary dance.

Although Pinheiro is not involved in this particular production, her name is still attached to the project because of the work and dedication she put into the show along with Soledade.

’Samba’ debuted in 2007 at the Byron Carlyle Theatre in Miami Beach. Since then, the show has been performed at several schools, theaters and festivals in the South Florida area, as well as in New York, Massachusetts and Brazil.

The show is supported by the Theatre department and the College of Architecture and the Arts.

The success of Brazz Dance and its shows has also brought support from various outlets such as the Ford Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs office.

To put a show like this together, you need support from many people,” Soledade said.

Aside from the two FIU shows, “A Foot for Samba” is currently scheduled for two more productions this year. It will return to the Byron Carlyle on April 9 and will also be performed at ArtSouth in Homestead on May 10.

Morris confided that Brazz Dance is now working on new projects set to debut next year, but “A Foot for Samba” will definitely remain a part of the company’s repertoire.

Tickets for “A Foot for Samba,” are priced at $8 for students. For more information, call the FIU Theatre’s box office at (305) 348-3789.

How to Samba!

FORWARD BASIC MOVEMENT:

Left, Place. Step slightly back, on the first beat of the music. Toe first, slide your right foot forward and change weight onto the left leg. Don’t move your right foot!

Right, tap, up-down. Moving your right foot slightly forward, tap on the inside ball of the foot. The up motion results from partially changing weight onto the right leg, by rolling onto the outside ball of the right foot (don’t put your heel completely to the floor). The left leg will rise from the floor a little. The down motion occurs from changing weight back onto the left leg.

BACK BASIC MOVEMENT:

Right, Place. Step slightly back, on the first beat of the music. Toe first, slide your right foot back and change weight onto the right leg. Don’t move your left foot!

Left, Place. Step slightly forward, on the first beat of the music. Toe first, slide your left foot forward and change weight onto the right leg. Don’t move your left foot!

Left, Tap, Up-Down. Moving your left foot slightly back, tap on the inside ball of the foot. The up motion results from partially changing weight onto the left leg, by rolling onto the outside ball of the left foot (don’t put your heel completely to the floor). The right leg will rise from the floor a little. The down motion occurs from changing weight back onto the right leg.

www.geocities.com
Tired of paying $40 to $50 a week because your SUV’s a gasguzzler? Want to do your part to slow down our planet’s mad downward spiral into the next Ice Age— or at least pretend to? Then you should start looking for a four-cylinder hatchback for your next car. Smaller and lighter than sedans, you’ll zip through traffic and squeeze into the tightest of parking spots like a glove.

In Miami-Dade, where the road is shared with more than 2.4 million people, every inch you can save in size is not just an environment impact. It’s also about not only being on time for work, but also helping yourself. If you look for more in a car than space and options available to satisfy the fussiest of drivers, go with a Mini Cooper. Although it’s priced at a steep, student deterring $18,700, the Cooper has enough accessories and options available to satisfy the fussiest of drivers.

The Mini is mini, so kiss carpooling and going to work in your 150-pound Great Dane goodbye. For $13,950, Dane can sit soundly for $13,950. You and your 150-pound Great Dane can sit soundly for $13,950.

Despite looking like an egg, the Yaris loves keeping money in your pocket where it belongs. At 29 miles per gallon in the city, and 35 on the highway, it will stretch its $30 fill-up for 310 miles according to www.fueleconomy.gov. If you want to save at the pump and have room to stretch out, the Honda Fit is your ride. You and your 150-pound Great Dane can sit soundly for $13,950.

If you’re expecting bells and whistles, consider the spartan Accent as your beginner’s guide to masochism. You won’t find power locks, windows or air conditioning here, and with a 110-horsepower engine, cutting into oncoming traffic may become an everyday faith test. Thankfully, airbags come standard and plenty. The Accent sports one up front for the driver and passenger as well as seat mounted and roof curtain sets in case of side impacts. For $1850 more you can get all the automatic options, a/c, heated mirrors and radio for a reasonable comfort.

For another $1000, even stick shift phobia can be conquered. If the Accent sounds right for you, you might also like the Chevy Aveo5. Dealer accessories are priced to impov- erish you so you’ll be looking for an after market vendor before you even pick the color of your car.

If you want actual carbon fiber fl ourishes, however, go with a Mini Cooper. Although it’s priced at a steep, student deterring $18,700, the Cooper has enough accessories and options available to satisfy the fussiest of car customizers.

The Mini is mini, so kiss carpooling and grocery shopping goodbye. Whichever hatchback you choose, you’ll not only be buying or leasing a car but saving yourself time, money and helping the environment.

So the next time you find yourself in a car dealer, skip past those super-sized wheels and go small, lean and green.

**Hatchbacks are a cheap, fuel efficient mode of transportation**
JOIN OUR STAFF!

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

Relay for Life organizers seek bigger yearly budget

Relay, page 7

in virtually every RFL event, which is what lead to them winning the Spirit Award.

The Golden Key Honor Society raised $6815, an amazing amount according to Dalrymple, earning them the Most Funds Raised award.

Jeffrey Knapp, director of the Center for the Art of Teaching, was the top individual fundraiser. He managed to raise $5047.

With most of the fund raising over and awards handed out, the only thing left for RFL organizers to do is secure a permanent budget from the Student Government Association.

“We have had a lot of support from SGA this year,” Murphy said.

RFL staff will be meeting with SGA on Feb. 28 to present a proposal for a permanent budget of at least $5,000.

Murphy commented that she could only imagine what RFL could do with $5,000 in operating expenses compared to what they were able to with the $3,000 stipend from SGA this year.

“We would have gone over the $70,000 if we had the budget we needed this year,” Murphy said.

If you would like to make a donation to FIU’s Relay for Life you can visit its Web site at www.fiu.edu/~rfl.

And the award goes to:

Best Overall Greek Team: Beta Theta Pi and Alpha XiDelta
Best Family Team: SSWA/Phi Alpha
Best Friends Team: Team Hope
Best Decorated Site: Golden Key
Best Banner: Honors Council
Best Cancer Fact: Alpha Omicron Pi
Best Team Captain: Pre Dental
Best Housing Team: Lakeview South
Best Honor Society Team: Psi Chi

LUMINARIA LIGHTER: A Relay for Life organizer lighites candles in preparation for the Luminaria ceremony.
The Golden Panthers (1-5) were unable to obtain their second win of the season as they fell 6-0 to No. 18 Georgia on Feb. 15 at the Schutt Sports Invitational. It was a closely contested game through the first five innings, as the Golden Panthers headed into the sixth down just 1-0. However, the Georgia offense woke up against starter Desiree Fink to open up the game 6-0.

**IOWA STATE 8, FIU 1**

Their offensive momentum lifted the Golden Panthers (3-5) to their second consecutive win against Providence on Feb. 16. Kim Rodriguez added another two RBI and two RBI. The Golden Panthers combined their bats and miscues by the Illinois State defense to score 11 runs.

**FUJ 7, PROVIDENCE 3**

After soundly defeating their last two opponents, the Golden Panthers (3-6) were swept by Providence 8-1, as the Golden Panthers defeated Illinois State (3-7) scored just one run against Illinois State on Feb. 17. The Golden Panthers defeated Illinois State 11-1 in the previous match, but the same offense did not show up in the second game.

**FUJ 7, OHIO STATE 1**

The women's tennis team reached the seven game winning streak, which would clinch a winning conference record. A pair of wins would pretty much assure the Golden Panthers host their first conference wins of the season. The numbers favor FIU in both games. The Golden Panthers have beaten both FAU and Troy this season, and the Panthers have a 21-1 all-time record against FAU and a 5-2 all-time record against Troy.

**TENNIS**

The women's tennis team reached the .500 mark by defeating UCF 6-1 on Feb. 17 at University Park. After the win, the Golden Panthers are ranked No. 33 in the country. Of the six singles matches, FIU won five. The Golden Panthers won two of three matches in the doubles competition.

**OHIO STATE 16, FIU 4**

The second win of the season for the Golden Panthers (2-5) was nothing short of an exclamation mark, as they defeated Ohio State 16-4 on Feb. 16. The Golden Panthers doomed themselves in the first innings, as they allowed a total of six runs, including five unearned. The Golden Panthers would not be able to dig themselves from this hole. A short rain delay in the seventh preceded the end of the game and the one-sided match.

**GEORGIA 6, FIU 0**

That was nothing short of a wake-up call from the Ohio State offense, as they defeated the Golden Panthers 11-1 in six innings. Amanda Cox and Lisa Brooks hit home runs and Kim Rodriguez recorded three hits and two RBI. The Golden Panthers combined their bats and miscues by the Illinois State defense to score 11 runs.

The Golden Panthers (3-6) to their second consecutive win against Providence on Feb 16. Kim Rodriguez added another two RBI and two RBI. The Golden Panthers combined their bats and miscues by the Illinois State defense to score 11 runs.

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The numbers favor FIU in both games. The Golden Panthers have beaten both FAU and Troy this season, and the Panthers have a 21-1 all-time record against FAU and a 5-2 all-time record against Troy.

The streak started on a two game road trip with wins in Denver and North Texas.

FIU kept their momentum going during a three game home stand with impressive wins over ULL, MTsu and UALR. Now, FIU will finish off their road schedule against FAU and Troy, for their first conference wins of the season.

A lot is at stake for FIU during this road trip.

If the Panthers win both games, they will clinch a win conference record. A pair of wins would pretty much assure that the Golden Panthers host their first round Sun Belt conference game.

Also, with two wins, FIU would have a seven game winning streak, which would be the teams biggest since an 8 game burst in 2004.

Against FAU, FIU will need to contain the Owl’s Carla Stubb’s, who leads the team in scoring with 12 points a game and had a team high with 11 points when the teams met earlier this season.

Senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson led all scorers with 16 point and also pulled down 10 rebounds.

That game marked one of FIU’s best defensive performances of the season, as FAU was held to 44 points-- the fewest points the Panthers have allowed this season.

Only four days after FIU’s home win against FAU, Troy came into town led by one of the conferences best players, senior guard Amy Lewis.

The game was close, but FIU prevailed 55-49, thanks to a season high 18 points from junior guard Iva Ciglar.

This time, Troy comes into the game having lost 9 out of their last 10 games. Beating a team twice is never an easy task. Despite the 4-25 combined records FAU and Troy bring to the court the Golden Panthers will need to avoid coming into those games overconfident.

FIU will need to continue their solid fundamental play and effort that has brought the team its five consecutive wins.
Allen and Polizano to anchor rotation; bench deep with talent

"Ryan has tremendously improved over the last year under assistant coach and infield instructor Sean Allen," Thomas said. Solid defender Junior Arroyo will start at shortstop as the sophomore has also played at second base. He batted .211 with six doubles and a triple in 53 games last season.

Sophomore Kevin Mirabal is likely to get the nod behind the plate after winning a toughly fought four-man battle. He batted .326 with two home runs and 16 RBI. Junior transfer Steven Stropp and freshman Ray Rodriguez could also see extensive time there as well.

Designated Hitter-Harry hitting sophomore Tyler Townsend has won this spot and will look to improve upon his surprising freshman campaign in which he batted .338, while hitting five home runs and driving in 32 RBI. He had offseason surgery after dealing with a nagging shoulder that bothered him all last season.

Bench- A satisfying bench can be expected this year as the depth is quite deep. The team has about 14 players that Thomas will count upon to "swing the bat" as he described and provide defensive replacements.

"There is not a bench in sports that is not important," he said.

Starting Pitching- First-year pitching coach Felipe Suarez mentioned that the strengths of the rotation are the returning No. 1 and 2 guys, senior Chad Allen and sophomore Corey Polizano, respectively. He also explained how No. 3 starter senior Steven Stewart has the ability to be an ace as well. Allen is expected to take the mound on opening night.

The only cloudy area is mid-week starters. Four hopefuls will eventually fill the area: seniors Eric Horstmann, James Lajiness, Kyle Preshong and junior Jorge Ramos.

Bullpen- "The back-end of the bullpen controls the running game well by keeping the ball down in the zone," Suarez said. Either right-handed sophomore Brian Santiago or left-handed sophomore Evan Ellison will assume the closer's duties.

Keep an eye out for a potential underdog story in senior walk-on brothers Carlos and Dan Martinez.
Thomas will prove us wrong

Oh, Zach Thomas, how I will miss thee greatly. For over a decade you roamed the middle of the Miami Dolphins’ once tenacious defense and never let up even when the defense was not so tenacious.

You, along with Jason Taylor, were the unquestioned leaders of the defense, setting the example for everyone else by not stopping until the whistle blew.

Dolphin fans loved you to the point where it was like a long-term relationship, because every emotion was felt equally. When the fans got excited with the team, you got excited. When the fans got frustrated with the team’s play, so did you. And when the fans were frustrated to the point of leaving, you gave them a reason to stay.

However, like most relationships, they sometimes come to an end.

The new Dolphins’ front office regime doesn’t see you as a long-term option. Bill Parcells and his cronies say you are no longer good for the team. Too old and too injured.

Parcells and his cronies say you are no longer as they once said you were. Younger and faster.

But Dolphin fans know the truth. You may have had constant migraines stemming from a concussion you suffered, but like you have done most of your career, you’d fight back from it and be the same old Zach.

Sadly, they will not see you be the same old Zach in a Dolphin’s uniform.

Maybe it’s for the best, though. You’ve suffered through enough hardships with this franchise and stuck by it even when you didn’t have to. That loyalty should be rewarded with a ring – a Super Bowl one.

The Dolphins are far from a Super Bowl team and you deserve better, especially if it means winning the big one. Knowing our luck, it won’t be finished until it’s too late for you.

Maybe it was fate to have your career end before the team is bad enough, but you deserve better than this franchise in shambles. You deserve a luxurious mansion and the Dolphins are tornado-ravished franchise in shambles. You deserve a luxurious mobile home in the process of being rebuilt and a ring – a Super Bowl one.

Regardless of which team you end up with and what success you have, you will be a legend in Miami. You were the example for everyone else by not stopping until the whistle blew.

And even though you may feel hurt that things didn’t turn out as you hoped they would, remember that you made an impact on everyone who has watched you play. Thank you for all you’ve done, Zach. Good luck in whatever you do.”

Sports

A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

Panthers look to slug their way to top

Luca Messina

After several months of hype and anticipation, the Turtle Thomas Era will finally begin on Feb. 22 as the FIU baseball team opens up its season with a non-conference, three-game set against perennial powerhouse Southern California at University Park Stadium.

Widely known for his recruiting and scouting prowess, Thomas brings a fresh new mentality to FIU baseball after taking over for former coach Darrey Price, who was fired after 27 seasons with FIU.

His extensive background in the afore mentioned areas give him a very high probability of carrying his past successes over to FIU.

While this is Thomas’s first head coaching job, he has worked as an assistant head coach with several successful programs, such as Clemson, Georgia Tech, the University of Miami, and most recently Arizona State University.

A disappointing 26-29 finish last year will certainly be on the minds of the returning players as Thomas will strive to improve upon that below average mark.

Playing in the Sun Belt Conference, the No. 6 ranked conference in the nation, will include challenging opponents for the Golden Panthers in what figures to be an intriguing schedule.

Outfielders - The three positions are pretty much determined. Senior Jordan Karcher starts in left field, senior Rainey Fuentes will be in center field and right field will be occupied by senior John Petika. Fuentes and Petika are returning while newcomer Karcher comes as a transfer from Gulf Coast Community College.

Petika is the Golden Panthers’ top returning hitter as he batted .342 and led the team in home runs and RBI. He switches to the outfield after playing first base last year. Fuentes returns after starting 40 out of the 52 games last year. He hit .307 with three home runs and 130 RBI before deciding to finish out his career in his hometown.

Senior Anthony Boza and freshman Jared Schlehuber.

First base will be occupied by Louisville transfer Jorge Castillo. He played at Louisville for three seasons and compiled a .301 average with 13 home runs and 130 RBI before deciding to finish out his career in his hometown. He was a clutch performer for the Cardinals in their 2007 run to the College World Series. He could also see time at third base.

Junior Ryan Mollica will start at second base after redshirting unexpectedly seven games into last season due to an elbow injury.

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Baseball