FIT TO PRINT

Chili’s chosen to replace Gracie’s Grill
CHRISTOPHER LAZAGA
Staff Writer

The vacant dining area left behind by Gracie’s Grill in the Graham Center will soon be refurbished and reopened as a Chili’s Too. According to Mike Oestreich, marketing manager of Dining Services Department, the Dallas, Texas-based Chili’s restaurant chain was the best choice to replace the failed Gracie’s Grill.

“We did a large market research project last year and [Chili’s] was one of the recommended candidates we made,” Oestreich said.

Bill Debus, director of retail operations for dining services, said the Chili’s franchise is the strongest candidate for a successful on-campus restaurant, as it has already enjoyed success on other campuses such as University of Florida, Baylor University and University of Houston.

Oestreich said the new Chili’s Too would be like Chili’s Express, featuring a limited food and drink menu at prices determined by the corporation. Although a menu has not yet been finalized, Chili’s Too will be serving beer, wine and margaritas with a limited selection of spirits.

Students will be looking forward to the prospect of on-campus two-for-one drink specials, but according to Debus, “As far as specials go, nothing’s been decided.”

When asked why replace Gracie’s Grill with a Chili’s Too, Debus said his research found that students wanted more of a dining experience.

To provide that, Chili’s Too will feature a waited service area as well as a counter service area.

“(Gracie’s) was a very slow operation,” Debus said. “It really wasn’t performing, it was more of a place to just sit.”

Debus said he tried changing Gracie’s menu twice in the past, adding things like salads and specialty burgers to attract more students, but nothing ever caught on.

SPICING IT UP

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Future Chili’s brings mixed feelings

Chapman focused his attention on the University using his influence and power to assist in its foundation in 1969.

Chapman was considered to be “the most powerful man in Miami,” according to Reuters. Born in Georgia in 1921, to a family with deep roots in the newspaper business spanning two generations, Chapman began his career as a paperboy in West Central Florida after his father was named publisher of The Bradenton Evening Herald.

Chapman spent time at Citadel Military College where he learned martial discipline. He also spent time as a bomber pilot and squadron commander in World War II.

After serving in the war, Chapman dedicated his time to philanthropic causes and the flourishing of the newspapers he associated with and cities he lived in.

He moved to Miami in 1960 where he led the Orange Bowl Committee, Miami Citizens Against Crime, the city’s Coalition for a Drug-Free Partnership and the committee to build the Miami Performing Arts Center.

Chapman is survived by his wife and two daughters, along with a legacy that demonstrated his veracity and love for not only the newspaper industry, but to the Miami and University community as well.

Chapman family asks that any donation made go to the Community Partnership for the Homeless in his honor.

Former BOT Chair remembered

Michele Muller

Contributing Writer

Alvah H. Chapman, Jr., passed away on Dec. 25 after succumbing to a severe case of pneumonia. He was 87.

Chapman focused his attention on the University using his influence and power to assist in its foundation in 1969. In the 1980s, Chapman was appointed Chair of the University Board of Trustees.

FIU’s recognition of Chapman’s success as a publisher, businessman and his positive influence as a Floridian leader led to the renaming of the Graduate School of Business after him.

A dedicated Dade civic leader and former president and publisher of The Miami Herald, as well as the CEO of the now defunct Knight-Ridder Corporation, Chapman was once considered to be “the most powerful man in Miami,” according to Reuters.

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AC I restrooms renovated; more changes to come

ERIKA PEREZ
Asst. News Director

Students, faculty and staff in the Academic I building have been searching for alternative restrooms while renovations are underway. Since early December, the restrooms on the first and second floors of the AC I building have been undergoing renovations, which are being overseen by Honoriu Filimon, coordinator of construction projects and the senior project manager. The bathrooms are estimated to be completed in approximately 10 months, according to Filimon.

“AC I is a 24-year-old building. We needed to have the renovations. It’s not only a cosmetic improvement, it’s also functional,” Filimon said.

The renovations, which are being performed by Bi-Tech Construction and the contractor hired for the renovation project, the new restrooms in AC I will be fully improved. Changes include new flooring, electrical wiring, light fixtures, plumbing, an alarm system, porcelain tiles, new doors and a paint job.

The renovations are being funded by the Department of Facilities Development, according to Filimon, but Sylvia Beren- ger, director of construction of minor projects, was not available to respond to questions about renovation costs, despite several attempts.

Some though questioned whether the restroom renovations were necessary with the current budget crisis, many welcomed the improvements.

“I think it’s good because it shows that FIU is willing to put money into the north campus, and it helps to debunk any rumors of trying to centralize the school to the south campus,” said James Lechter, a psychology alumnus. “I mean, these are lovely restrooms.”

According to Lechter, the changes to the restrooms are proving to be inconvenient for some, though the end result will be worth it.

“They were shut down predominantly during winter break, which makes it a small inconvenience to anyone or students,” Lechter said. “I don’t know how long they will continue to be shut down or how many bathrooms are currently available at the campus, but I do think that in the end, people will feel better about attending this school if more parts of it are beautiful.”

Barreiros said, “As long as they put a sign for the people to take care of them – because it is not the University personnel, it is the users that are abusing the bathrooms. I heard the cleaning ladies complaining that they clean the bathrooms and immediately after one hour they are just awful.”

Barreiros said, “One of the renovation projects is to complete, additional improvements to the campus are anticipated by several faculty members.

“Since I’m Middle Eastern, I love that it has all of my flavors!”

PARADISE AFFAIR

There is nothing I love more than when my family comes to visit. I adore having a house packed with people living together for a while. In my house, that means 10 people fighting over three bathrooms and never having a moment of quiet.

Miami is so diverse that it’s hard to pinpoint just a few key things that make it unique, but almost everyone down here cares about at least one of these three things: the beach, sports and culture.

In the end, people will feel better about attending this school if more parts of it are beautiful.”

Column is the underwater theme. There are water materials that make eating there like a trip to the ocean. The food is good here, I would much rather go to take part in one of my favorite past times – smoking hookah.

This Middle Eastern smoking method consists of putting flavored tobacco in a pipe, with water on the bottom and coals on top, and smoking it out of a tube. Think of it as an exagerrated cigarette. First-time smokers should try fruity flavors, like apple or grape.

Like any good South Florida resident, I am a huge sports fan. So naturally, I want to share my love for sports with my relatives when they visit, I always find my self driving by Miami Prime Grill (16395 Biscayne Blvd., North Miami Beach) and I used Hastie visiting as an excuse to stop there.

This sports bar/restaurant is the best place to show off Miami’s strong sporting tradition.

The location offers a happy hour that starts at noon, more than 17 flat-screen TVs, good prices and excellent service; I wouldn’t bring my family anywhere else.

My favorite are the pictures of great athletes such as Larry Bird and Dwayne Wade lining the walls, along with a great painting of the Miami Heat that hangs upside down over the bar.

Miami Prime is open until 3 a.m. Thursday through Saturday and features Ladies Night on Thursday evenings.

Needless to say, going to all of these locations left me for my own personal enjoyment her trip to Miami even more.

Next time your friends or family call you from out of town, relax and get ready to show off your city. I mean, it’s Miami – there is always something to do!

Read Weekend with Paradise every Friday for more tips on places to go in the North Miami area. If you have any suggestions, e-mail paradise.affair@fiu.am.
SCARY STATISTICS

Ignorance, fear cause many rapes to go unreported

SHEMANA DIXON
Contributing Writer

The only thing as frightening as falling victim to rape is the thought that most instances of this heinous crime will never be reported. Since many college students are unclear or even ignorant about the definitions of sexual assault and rape – as well as the resources and authorities to counter these attacks – they may be unable to get the help they urgently need.

According to a 2005 report by the Department of Justice, one in five college women will experience rape over a five-year college career and less than 5 percent of encounters are reported to authorities or law enforcement.

The American Association of University Women in a 2006 article reported that nearly two-thirds of college students experience some type of sexual harassment, yet less than 10 percent of students tell a college or university employee about their experiences, while more than one-third of college students don’t tell anyone about their experiences.

The AAUW article further stated that many, if not one-third of college students encounter sexual harassment in their first year and harassment is most common at large universities, four-year institutions and private colleges. Despite these dismal statistics for the actual occurrence of rape and other assaults in college, Public Safety has no report of sexual assault (forcible or non-forcible) in 2006. In 2003, three rapes were documented, while in 2007 there were two forcible sex offenses and two non-forcible. These statistics cover both University Park and Biscayne Bay Campuses.

So why aren’t students reporting instances of assault? The Department of Justice Web site indicated that state and school definitions of what constitutes sexual assault widely vary. AUW also points out that when it comes to a common standard for defining sexual harassment, college students do not have that person is being forced to do against their will.

Despite the views expressed by these students, the AAUW forces us to acknowledge that students offer many reasons for not reporting sexual assault, from fear of embarrassment, guilt about their own behavior, skepticism about being helped, to not knowing who to contact at school. The top reason given by students was a feeling that what happened was not serious or not a “big deal.”

FIU has a no-tolerance policy on what the student handbook refers to as sexual battery (including date rape, acquaintance rape, gang rape, marital rape and stranger rape), which it defines as “oral, anal or vaginal penetration by, or with union, with the sexual organs of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another with other objects” without the “...intelligent, knowing consent of an individual.”

Sexual assault has serious consequences for both the perpetrator and the assaulted; it can cause emotional damage and affect academic performance. It can also be costly to universities and damage their reputations.

Those who are exposed to sexual assault should take responsibility for their actions, but should not blame themselves for unwelcome sexual advances and should report any sexual assault to the proper authorities so that the scope of the problem can be fully recognized; keeping quiet about it puts others at danger as well as makes prior victims susceptible to further assault.

FIU is among one in four in 10 schools that offers rape aggression defense training, according to DOJ. Training is available through FIU’s Office of Public Safety. The center also offers training to interested students on sexual assault, harassment and relationship abuse. The students are then available for giving presentations within classes, while requested by professors.

FIU Victim Advocacy Center
University Park
University Health Services Complex (UHSC 210)
Biscayne Bay Campus
By appointment
For appointments at either campus call:
(305) 348-1215 or 24-hour crisis line: (305) 348-3003

Barack Obama living up to his title of ‘changer’

ANDREW SOLOMON
Contributing Writer

It has been almost two months since Americans voted for change and elected Barack Obama as the United States’ first black president.

Running as the successor to a highly unpopular incumbent in George W. Bush, Obama sold the message of “change” to voters. Now, as President-elect, in a time when change is needed more than ever, he has lived up to his campaign slogan.

Obama has received some criticism from both political sides because he is seemingly recycling old Clinton picks – including Hillary Clinton herself – thus questioning his ability to bring about real change.

In a time where our country is involved in two wars and the worst economic crisis of our generation and following eight years of failed policies by the Bush administration, Obama is 100 percent on point when he said that it was time for new leadership.

We saw the first glimpse of his executive decision-making skills during his historic campaign when he selected Joe Biden to be his vice presidential running mate. Obama’s choice reflects extremely sound judgment, for Biden has accumulated a tremendous amount of experience to this extent. Obama plans to continue to use YouTube to update Americans on events in Washington, D.C. when he is in the White House. Now, young Americans can feel like they have a president who can identify with their generation. Being technology-savvy is definitely a key element to bring about change in today’s world.

Mirroring Abraham Lincoln’s strategy of placing political rivals in his cabinet, Obama appointed Hillary Clinton to be the next Secretary of State.

Another former opponent, Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico, was also chosen for Obama’s team as Commerce Secretary, before he withdrew himself from consideration due to an ongoing investigation about his donors – which would have potentially held up his hearings that would have finalized his nomination.

Obama’s economic team was formed quickly after the election, showing the nation that he was focused on bringing immediate relief to the American people. The Web site hosts pages for job listings and people can also submit their resumes. The site: www.finam.com.

Barack Obama living up to his title of ‘changer’
A month of movies satisfies every taste

And so it begins: A new year gives Hollywood another chance to get people into theaters with another batch of movies, ranging from the horrific to the heroic. Here are just a few of this month’s offerings.

JAN. 16

MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3-D

Nothing screams excitement like a horror remake in all of its 3-D gory glory. Jensen Ackles (TV’s “Supernatural”) plays Tom, who returns to his hometown 10 years after a killing spree claimed 22 lives.

The messed up part is that the killer was a man. Tom put in a coma when he caused an accident as an inexperienced coal miner. As soon as Tom returns, the body count begins to rise. Tom experiences visions of his dead brother and attracts others who have also experienced visions of Nari. The bodies of Nari’s victims begin to pile up, and Tom is being stalked by his brother.

Vengeance.

NOTORIOUS

Rapper Christopher Wallace, aka “The Notorious B.I.G.,” has been featured in a lot of hip-hop related documentaries and movies. This time, his life is told on the big screen in Notorious. The movie chronicles Wallace (played by newcomer Jaml Woolard) drug dealing on the Brooklyn streets, trying to make it big only to become one of the most influential hip-hop artists of all time.

Notorious is produced by Sean “P. Diddy” Combs and Voletta Wallace, Biggie’s mother.

The movie features an interesting cast that includes Angela Bassett as Voletta Wallace, Derek Luke as Sean Combs and Anthony Mackie as Tupac Shakur.

DEFIANCE

Daniel Craig (Quantum of Solace), Liev Schreiber (The Manchurian Candidate) and Jamie Bell (King Kong) play three Jewish brothers who escape Nazi-occupied Poland and find a band of fighters who are determined to keep Jews safe.

As soon as they escape, the brothers attract others who have also experienced the same turmoil, and they must fight to survive. The movie also features a musical number set to the tune of “The Sound of Silence.”

There will also be satirical and saucy burlesque shows, which is a combination of comedy acts and strip tease and the Dysfunctional Art Show.

Julie Fobert, marketing and event coordinator for the expo, said there will also be unique vendors selling bike gear, corsets and even teeth whitening products.

This will be the first big tattoo convention to be held in Miami but not the first in Florida, according to Fobert.

In 2007, it was held in Fort Lauderdale and in West Palm Beach in 2004, where it all started.

What makes this expo different from past events is its increased magnitude.

“Our size — more than 300 artists in over 200 booths and over 140,000 sq. feet of space — makes us one of the largest tattoo expos in the world. Very few are held at convention centers, and even fewer fill convention centers,” Fobert said.

The expo, which will feature members from the cast of “Miami Ink” and others from well-known tattoo industries, is open to all ages and is hoping to gain exposure.

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The Miami Tattoo Expo will showcase artists from France, Italy and Tokyo. But professionals from our own backyard will also be present.

Tattoo artists will be displaying their work, hosting seminars and performing live tattooing and piercing.

Artists from Tattoos by Lou, Hell Bound City Tattoo and Pirate’s Cove will be showing off their skills at the convention which will be held Jan. 9–11 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Esteban Galpar, one of the artists from Hell Bound City Tattoo will be tattooing on location with others and is hoping to gain exposure.

The event will also showcase contests in several categories that range from Tattoos of the Day, Small Color, Japanese, Realism, Arm and Leg Sleeve to Overall Best Tattoo.

Awards will be given to the first, second and third place winners in each category. Anyone can register for these contests for a $10 fee and must have a tattoo piece for each category beforehand. The only exception is the Tattoo of the Day contest which is completed on site the day of the exposition.

“I think this will be a very amazing event to see artists from all around the world and to be able to see their masterpieces and how their culture has influenced them,” said freshman Neyda Carasa, whose parents won’t allow her to get a tattoo.

Along with tattoo shows, there will be a car show called Street Desirez Finest, where muscle cars, sports bikes, low riders and classics will be displayed.

To contribute to this manifestation of art expression, bands such as Thick as Blood, Jay Vega, Piccalo, Madbull, Jim Jones, DJ LAZ and others will be performing.

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iTunes kills digital rights, lowers rates

JESSICA MINTZ
AP Wire

Apple, Inc., is cutting the price of some songs in its market-leading iTunes online store to as little as 69 cents and plans to make every track available without copy protection.

In Apple’s final appearance at the Macworld trade show, Apple’s Marketing Executive Philip Schiller, said Tuesday that iTunes song prices will come in three tiers: 69 cents, 99 cents and $1.29. Record companies will choose the song’s prices.

Apple gave the record labels that flexibility as it got them to agree to sell all songs free of “digital rights management.” Without DRM, downloaders will be able to copy songs or move them to and from multiple computers. Apple had been offering a limited selection of songs without DRM, but by the end of this quarter, the company said, all 10 million songs in its library will be available that way.

Schiller also announced that iPhone 3G users will be able to buy songs from the iTunes store using the cellular data network. Previously, iPhone users could shop for tunes when connected to a Wi-Fi hot spot.

Changes in iTunes marked the highlight of Schiller’s run as a stand-in for CEO Steve Jobs, who used to make Macworld the site for some of Apple’s biggest product unveilings, such as the iPhone. Apple said last month that Jobs would not address the throngs this time because the company plans to pull out of Macworld next year.

Apple’s shares slumped $1.56 (1.7 percent) to close at $93.02.

Schiller added a warm welcome from the attendees — who packed the convention hall despite the cast over the industry by the economic downturn — especially at the start of his talk, when he thanked them for showing up despite Jobs’ notable absence. He ran seamlessly through his 90-minute presentation, getting applause and “thumbs-up” from the audience, varying little from the format of slides and demos established by Jobs. And like Jobs, he gushed about Apple’s products being the best in the world.

“Phil did an exceptionally good job in representing Apple,” said Tim Bajarin, president of technology analyst group Creative Strategies, Inc.

“Lowering iTunes’ prices was Apple’s only nod to the recession — and an oblique one at that, as record labels have been asking for years to sort varying song prices. Rather than an inex- pensive new Mac to lure budget-conscious buyers, Schiller unveiled a new $2,800 Macbook Pro laptop with a 17-inch screen and the sleek aluminum casing the company debuted with the super-thin Macbook Air.

He also unwrapped new versions of two software packages for Macs, including the iLife multimedia programs. For instance, iPhoto ‘09 can recognize faces and sort photos based on who’s in them. GarageBand ‘09 includes videoed, interactive music lessons given by Sting and other musicians. Apple also added more professional video editing features to iMovie ‘09.

Apple’s response to Microsoft Corp.’s Office productivity suite, called iWork, also got a makeover, including zippy new ways to add animation between slides in the Keynote presentation software. Also, Apple unveiled a “beta” test version of a Web site for sharing documents, Work.com. Unlike Google Inc.’s online documents program, however, Apple’s version does not allow people to edit documents in a Web browser.

Apple said the thin new 17-inch aluminum-cased Macbook Pro, which joins an existing 15-inch model, will start shipping at the end of January. Perhaps the biggest twist is the laptop’s battery, which is designed to last longer on each charge — up to seven or eight hours — and work after more charges than older batteries. But like Apple’s iPad and the super-thin Macbook Air, the battery will be sealed within and owners won’t be able to remove and replace it them- selves. Instead, they’ll have to spend $179 to have an Apple store expert swap in a new one.

Jobs’ decision not to attend Macworld sparked a new round of fears that the CEO, a survivor of pancreatic cancer who has seemed gaunt in recent appearances, was in worsening health. To put the questions to rest, Jobs said Monday he is getting treatment for a hormone imbalance that caused him to lose weight, and urged Macworld attendees to relax and enjoy the show.

And after the Tuesday keynote, in which nothing purely new was disclosed, the compa- ny’s decision to substitute veteran salesman Schiller for master showman Jobs seemed even less questionable.
Golden Panthers’ point guard unfazed by new role

BY STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers’ record (3-11, 1-2 Sun Belt) doesn’t reflect a good start, but it’s the new point guard’s numbers that are improving fast. Gonzalez reached double figures just once in her first six games, but over her last eight games she averaged 12.3 points and 4.9 assists.

The sophomore is currently tied for second in the conference with 4.5 assists per game. She also leads the SBC in minutes played at 37.6 per game.

“This is something new, but all of my life I have been liking new things,” Gonzalez said. “Such as when I came from Puerto Rico to the United States. It’s a new language, but I like it. When they said, ‘You’re going to start and play 40 minutes,’ I said, ‘Alright, I can do it.’”

Looking across the stat sheet for Gonzalez, there is a down-fall that stands out: 87 turnovers in 14 games, an average of 6.2 per game. However, she refuses to see that as an obstacle as the women’s team finishes all their remaining games vs. conference squads.

“I think I have to work on my defense, I also get frustrated during the game – I need to stop that and just play,” said Gonzalez. “In turnovers, I just talk to my teammates. I need not just in practice, but outside. I tell them that I need them there and if they’re going to pressure me I need [them] to take care of the ball.”

On a team with three seniors and four juniors, there’s a lot of experience to go around for the young players. The move from her coaches, Michelle Gonzalez expressed how much help the other women have been in her adjustment to the new league.

“Being a point guard, I already have a lot of pressure and now I have to lead 12 players and be positive all of the time. The coaches are helping me a lot, as well my teammates. The juniors and seniors tell me what I have to change or do better,” she said. “I don’t see it as an obstacle in my life.”

Golden Panthers’ point guard unfazed by new role

TEAM MATCHES UP AGAINST ANY SUN BELT CONFERENCE TEAM

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A new look for the Golden Panthers’ point guard unfazed by new role.

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SPORTS

Thomas adds Damas to staff

BY SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

Baseball head coach Turtle Thomas added Frank Damas to his coaching staff on Jan. 5.

Prior to joining the Golden Panthers baseball coaching staff, Damas was an assistant coach at Miami Dade College from 2003 to 2008.

“We feel like we have a great young coach who is very knowledgeable in the game of baseball, especially in the recruiting of South Florida players,” said head coach Turtle Thomas to fiusports.com.

“Hey know Dude, Broward, Palm Beach and even Puerto Rico as good as anybody out there. He’s outstanding.”

During his tenure as an assistant coach with MDC, the team posted a 202-70 record. Damas recruited several current and former Golden Panthers including Eric Berkowitz, Greg Waddell and James Lajimnere. With his hiring, coach Thomas adds the third assistant coach to his staff as the baseball team’s season opener is set for Feb. 20 at home against Jacksonville.

SOCcer game

The FIU stadium, home to the Golden Panthers football team, will host the national teams of Chile and Honduras on Jan. 18. This is the first time FIU hosts an international soccer game.

Both teams are in the middle of the World Cup Qualifying Cycle for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

HONOR STUDENTS: Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society is seeking motivated students to establish a campus chapter. Contact: Director@PhiSigmaTheta.org.

SPORTS REPLAY

**Golden Panthers**

Marlon Bright received a season-high 11 points in the Golden Panthers’ loss to Troy on Jan. 3, which is the most since he scored 20 vs. Palm Beach Atlantic on Dec. 22, 2006.

Bright, a walk-on who first joined the team in 2005, and played for two seasons before taking last season off to focus on his h��tic academic schedule, has been a valuable veteran to head coach Sergio Rouco’s injury-riddled rotation this season.

GAME RESULTS

Game results for the Jan. 8 home meeting against Western Kentucky can be found on FIUSports.com.

The Golden Panthers resume play on Jan. 10 at Middle Tennessee State at 8:30 p.m.
SPORTS

SWIMMING

Team starts new year with win

CHARLIE GRAU
Senior Staff Writer

The swimming team started the new year on the right track, finishing second at the FIU Invitational on Jan. 3. In the relay-only meet, the Golden Panthers finished second behind Oakland University and ahead of American University and Carnegie Mellon. The Golden Panthers finished second in the 500-yard freestyle, 400-yard freestyle, 200-yard backstroke and 400-yard medley relays.

Elly James, Colleen Neubert, Caroline Foster and Kariann Stevens finished less than a second behind Oakland in the 400-freestyle with a time of 3:45.44.

Led by senior Sara Giovannoni, who was the first swimmer in FIU history to qualify for the NCAA Championships and place 18th in the 200-yard breastroke, the Golden Panthers are looking to make a splash this year.

The native of Italy, who began swimming at the age of 3, holds the school record in the 100 breastsroke (1:04.07) and three other records (200 breastroke, 200 individual medley and the 400 free relay), is aiming to cut down her best times.

Giovannoni said the team has been swimming more this year, which should give them more endurance during meets.

Head coach Noemi Lung-Zaharia, who has been the swim team coach for its five years of NCAA competition, believes this year’s team has a lot of strong swimmers.

“We have lot of strong motivated personalities on the team that are goal-oriented and know what they have to do and go for it,” she said.

The Golden Panthers will take on Kansas and Cabrini on Jan. 9 at 5 p.m. in a 13-event order and will face Florida Atlantic, Iowa, and Purdue on Jan. 10 at 11 a.m. Both meets will be held at the Miami Shores Aquatic Center at 10200 Biscayne Blvd.

“All the teams we are swimming against: Kansas, Iowa, Purdue, are some of the top ranked teams in the country. So we’re competing against the best of the best and competing against them is not going to be easy,” Lung-Zaharia said.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Talented squad lacks valuable experience under pressure

SERGIO BONILLA

It'll work itself out fine
All we need is just a little patience
- Guns N' Roses “Patience”

If only Axl Rose could suit up for the women’s basketball team this season, then he might be able to calm down the young team that could win the Sun Belt Conference crown. If it would just be patient and protect the ball.

With their leading scorer LaQuetta Ferguson and point guard Iva Ciglar not returning to the team this season, the Golden Panthers started the 2008-09 campaign 1-8.

Now the team has had enough time to learn to play together just in time for its most vital set of games against Sun Belt Conference opponents.

Despite an impressive road win vs. Arkansas State, the Golden Panthers have not yet maximized their potential due to lack of experience.

With inexperience comes impatience, which leads to mistakes under pressure.

Their talent is not the problem. Yet talent becomes obsolete when the team leads the conference in turnovers. If the Golden Panthers could create a game plan to counter full court presses and double teams, they would be an above .500 team.

Early struggles are expected from a team with a new starting point guard with no prior Division I experience and just two seniors on the depth chart.

But sophomore Michelle Gonzalez is no longer the timid player she was during the first nine games.

She fast-forwarded her evolution as the offense’s brain by gaining trust in her shooting abilities and her coach.

She may be leading the team in turnovers, but she’s also leading the team in assists, steals and minutes.

It’s logical for the player with the ball most of the time to turn over the ball more than any other player.

Gonzalez runs the offense, but she is not its main source of points. Junior guard Monika Bosilj has taken charge of most of the scoring duties this season, averaging nearly 18 points per game.

Her development as the leading scorer dates back to last season. She used to show spurts of offensive sparks, but now...