almost one year after being awarded a $500,000 monetary award from the Funding Arts Network, the Wolfsonian-FIU has given a three-year $500,000 grant to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

“The Mellon grant will enable us to significantly strengthen the museum’s integration with the academic programs of the University,” said Cathy Leff, director of the Wolfsonian-FIU, in a press release.

As a result from this grant, the museum will establish a teaching gallery at University Park campus in participation with the Pei Act Museum. Additionally, the grant will enable the museum to provide money to faculty members so that they are better able to fuse objects from the Wolfsonian collections into their teaching.

The Mellon grant will also help the museum enhance its staff capacity to undertake its goals.

“The museum will hire a full-time Mellon coordinator of academic programs,” states the press release.

“We need to work with the academic community,” Leff said. “And this can’t be done without the great work of the faculty.”

The Mellon Foundation, which makes grants in six core program areas – including museum and art conservation – has played a crucial role in building up the continuing foundation of art museums on university campuses throughout the nation.

Grants from the foundation have been given to six universities including Princeton, Harvard, Dartmouth and the University of Chicago.

“This is one of the most prestigious grants one can receive.” Leff said. “Something that is we’ve been working on for a number of years. It is a very big deal for us.”

Each awarded grant has encouraged colleges and universities by supporting their collections for advanced research and teaching. In order to receive this grant, a university museum must be invited to get it based on its work with faculty and students.

“This is the work of the museum and the faculty that is being recognized. It is a collected success,” Leff said.
Tri-Rail use increasing in S. Fla

OLGA VELEZ Staff Writer

For the first time in Tri-Rail’s 20-year history, it has carried more than four million passengers in a single calendar year. Not only has the system broken a record for a single calendar year, it has also doubled the amount of people using the commuter rail system since 2005.

The South Florida Regional Transportation Authority announced Jan. 5 that Tri-Rail carried a total of 4,303,509 passengers in 2008. This is a 22.9 percent increase from 2007, when Tri-Rail only had a total of 3,501,704 passengers.

According to the American Public Transportation Association, Tri-Rail also showed the largest percentage growth of any system in the country in 2006 and is still keeping up with the nation’s leaders for ridership growth in the commuter rail sector.

“These statistics show that the trend of double digit growth that we have experienced over the past three years is continuing,” said SFTA Executive Director Joe Giulietti. “Even with the dramatic reduction in the price of fuel, rider- ship continues to grow at a record pace.”

Tri-Rail has been known for taking the lead in the commuter rail system to protect the environment since its switch to a blend of 99 percent bio-diesel in 2008. According to SFTA, it is one of the few commuter rail systems in the country that can make such a change.

“If I think that the amount of people using the Tri- Rail system has increased because it is cheaper and it is faster than driving with public transportation there in Miami,” said sophomore Karin Valloge. “I also think that since the start of the recession, it has become increasingly important to save money. I prefer using Tri-Rail to taking a bus because it takes longer to wait for a bus than it does to wait for a train.”

Giulietti also noted that the amount of people using Tri-Rail is increasing despite the fact that gas prices have gone down significantly in the past 12 months.

“I don’t think people would change transportation because of gas prices as they have decreased recently,” said Antonio Jorge, professor emeritus of political economics.

“Traffic has become very congested in the South Florida area. It takes a lot of time to drive from one area to another. Public transportation decreases the amount of time spent driving from one place to another.”

Q. Why are the lights off in the garages at night?

A. The garages close at 2 a.m. because they are secure and safe.

Q. When can students park in faculty and staff other designated parking spaces?

A. Students can park in faculty/staff spaces after 7 p.m. every night.

Q. The University is becoming much more eco-friendly. What are you doing to be part of this?

A. We have purchased a campus car (Green- ride.com) and we are increasingly using it. We also have a vanpool option and a valet service. We are looking into other ways to help students.

Q. How are you working with SGA to better inform students about changes in your department?

A. We have participated in the forums that they have hosted to provide additional information about what is happening with parking and transportation around campus. Also, SGC, at BBC and UP, are members of the Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee. This committee is the body that recommends changes in policy and procedures. We feel that, since students represent about 80 percent of our customers, it is extremely important that their representatives are closely involved.
Volunteer fair aims to capture students’ help

Erika Perez
Asst. News Director

Students will get the opportunity to be involved in their communities while gaining experience at this semester’s Volunteer Fair.

The Center for Leadership and Service at the Biscayne Bay Campus will be hosting a Volunteer Fair Jan. 15 in Panther Square from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event is open and free to all students, faculty and staff, according to Robert Borgmann, graduate assistant in the CLS at BBC, and it has been held for more than five years. The purpose of the fair is to provide non-profit organizations, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, with volunteers.

Last year’s Career, Internship and Volunteer Fair attracted 200 students, according to Borgmann.

“They’re going to gain valuable experience and they can always put it in a resume,” Borgmann said. “It’s always good to get experience while you’re in college so you’re prepared for graduation.”

Other organizations participating in the Volunteer Fair are the National MS Society, City Year, North Miami Foundation, Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, King David Foundation, Planned Parenthood, Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park and the City of North Miami Beach.

The Humane Society of Greater Miami’s “Adopt-A-Pet” will also be present at the fair. According to Allison Janino, communications coordinator and volunteer coordinator with the Humane Society, taking advantage of volunteer opportunities gives students exposure to how non-profit organizations work.

“Students will get to see how non-profit organizations work from the inside,” Janino said. “They will get a chance to interact with animals through outreach events, such as dog walking. We usually have more than 150 dogs, which all have to be walked.”

The Humane Society of Greater Miami is also recruiting volunteers for the annual “Purina Walk for the Animals 2009” on Feb. 21. The event, which will take place at Bayfront Park, is the largest fund raiser for the Humane Society of Greater Miami, according to Janino.

The type of students drawn to volunteering with the Humane Society are very compassionate, Janino said. “Volunteering teaches students how to be responsible and gives them exposure. They can learn a lot and have lots of fun.”

For more information about the Volunteer Fair, contact the Center for Leadership and Service at (305) 919-5360. For information about the Humane Society of Greater Miami, visit www.humane societymiami.org.

This week I celebrate my 24th birthday. It’s bittersweet, isn’t it?

On the one hand, I get to party with my best friends, eat good food, drink and have a great time. On the other, I’m now 24.

To college students, that’s basically one foot in the grave.

What can I do? The waters of St. Augustine’s Fountain of Youth taste like death and I’m too young for Botox. So here’s to 24.

Now, I’m just concerned about dinner.

I’m going to eat at one of my favorite restaurants, Jalisco’s Mexican Restaurant (18146 Collins Ave., Sunny Isles Beach). And just like turning 24, eating at Jalisco’s is a bittersweet experience.

Recently under new management, this south of the border joint doesn’t just offer Tex-Mex, but rather shines by making authentic Mexican dishes.

The best part is that the food is cheap and the menu is a la carte – you order piece by piece, instead of having some pre-fabricated numbered meal, like at McDonald’s. A la carte ordering is simple – order the avocado on the side.

At Jalisco’s, you are in charge of your gastro-nomic destiny. My favorite: include the $3 al carbon tacos, staples of homemade flour or corn tortillas, filled with marinated flanken steak and sautéed onions, topped with cilantro and served with some cromos – the Mexican version of sour cream only thinner and with a tangy aftertaste – and some of the house salsas, like the mind-blowing green nasturtium.

They also serve up the Californios, a gigantic 55 burrito served wet — meaning it is served on a plate with spoonfuls of different salsas smothered with a heavy dollop of crema and stuffed with your choice of grilled meat, as well as all the trimmings.

But none of these dishes compare to what I feel is Jalisco’s strongest menu item, la sopita azteca, an authentic Mexican soup made with a smoky, thick and spicy tomato broth. Inside the soup you will find tortilla strips, stringy cheese, spiced pork meatballs, cromos and chunks of avocado.

The trick to making this soup a foodgasm is simple — order the avocado on the side. The combination of the smoldering spip in your mouth with a hearty chunk of cold avocado is euphoric; on the palate the different temperatures of the food cause them to explode. The rich fatty pork flavors come out, the chipotle pepper unzips and excess heat cause your nose to run, the smoky tomato broth makes your taste buds dance and the strings of cheese hanging from your mouth after each bite make you feel young and messy, so you purposely drag your spoon away from your face to cause even longer strings of cheese.

However, I did say “bittersweet.” Despite the efforts by the new management, Jalisco’s is not without faults.

Little things like the loud Spanish music playing over the speakers or the fact that rarely do your whole party’s dishes come out together or appetizers make it to the table before entrées.

Here they practice the serve-it-hot, rather than the serve-it-organized, method. I guess it’s a good thing, but when your whole party is starving and someone gets their Mexican tamale before anyone else is served, there is a chance that some hunger-induced violence will occur.

The service is also astonishingly Euro style. Your table can be cleared of all dishes and your party can be sitting in awkward silence, but your bill will not arrive unless you physically flag your waiter down and ask for it.

Jalisco’s is affordable and student friendly, serving authentic dishes alongside American staples like fajitas and nachos, in a casual atmosphere complete with paper menu placemats and sombreros wall banners streaming from the ceilings. I overlook all the bitter parts of Jalisco’s because the food is just so foodgasmic. It’s under new management so we will give them time to work out the kinks.

And did I mention the everyday special of five Mexican beers for $15, including Negro Modelo’s, Dos Equis and other imports? If that is not the way to your college-student hearts, I don’t know what is.

Found: authentic, affordable, a la carte, Mexican dishes

Mucho Gusto: (left) Jalisco’s a la carte menu is hand painted on the restaurant’s wall. (Right) Talavera Bianca Rosas holds an a la carte taco above her sopita azteca.

Wednesday, January 14, 2009
www.fi usm.com
In recent years, I’ve had to make many decisions about friendships. Choosing who to associate with is probably one of the things that has some of the most bearing on your life. Sometimes friends do things that you do not approve of and others simply just drift away, but you are always left asking the same question: Is this friendship worth saving?

Normally, I err on the side of friendship. Losing a friend is a very painful thing, especially when you and said friend have had some very good times together. But recently I found a very good reason to knock some friends off my list, and it is a reason almost all college students can agree is a worthy one: free food.

Burger King recently created a Facebook application entitled “Whopper Sacrifice.” Once you install this application on your profile, you pick 10 of your friends to remove from your Facebook friends list. Once you complete the removal of 10 friends, the application displays a free Whopper coupon redeemable at participating locations.

Burger King, perpetual creator of the advertising schemes including The Subservient Chicken and Whopper Virgins, is perhaps trying to send us a message here by giving us a reason to do something that we’ve been meaning to do all along: clearing out the people that we never talk to (or in some cases never heard of) from our friends list.

Or maybe they are just poking fun at our reliance on social networking (I’ve been distracted by my own Facebook three times since I started writing this column). Either way, it is a poignant message delivered electronically to a plugged-in generation.

I am not one to talk; I am as much a Facebook whore as any of you, but I decided to try out the “Whopper Sacrifice” application for three primary reasons: First and foremost, it was out of curiosity. Secondly, it would give me something to write about and last and certainly not least, it would be pretty neat to have a free Whopper – they are pretty good.

The process was much more intense than I had imagined. You don’t simply delete your friends; they are literally sacrificed. Once you choose who to delete, one by one their profile pictures appear on your Facebook page, then when the application sets them on fire and you watch as the photo of your dearly departed ends up in a pile of virtual ashes.

Yes, your ex-friend is notified of the fact that you sacrificed them. A note is also automatically posted to your own wall, notifying others of the fact that your friendships are feeble and that they had better watch their backs. You cannot hide your action, like you do when you sneakily add someone that you really do not like and then remove them two days later while hoping that they do not notice.

The first couple of choices were pretty easy: a couple of my “friends” were really people that I had only actually met once or twice at some sort of event as though a casual acquaintance. Or maybe we had a class together that I never showed up to, something like that. Regardless, three friends were immediately incinerated from my list without thought or regret.

But then it got more difficult. Sure, some of these people I haven’t talked to in a year, but I used to see them all the time. I’d hate for them to get offended when they found out what I’d done. Plus, what if I ever need to get in contact with them?

It was then that I realized that I am actually friends with two of my friends’ dogs. No need for pets: two more victims.

After that, though, I realized that maybe ending friendships for a tender, juicy, flame-broiled beef patty with your choice of toppings simply wasn’t worth it. Friendships have lasting benefits, but a Whopper gets digested. The Burger King in Graham Center operated by Aramark hates taking coupons anyway.

Economy in urgent need of rescue by federal government

In a speech delivered at George Mason University last Thursday, Jan. 8, President-elect Barack Obama painted a bleak picture of the future of the United States if his proposed $800 billion stimulus package was not quickly passed by Congress.

“For every day we wait, or point fingers or drag our feet, more Americans will lose their jobs; more families will lose their savings. More dreams will be deferred and denied ... and our nation will sink deeper into a crisis that, at some point, we may not be able to reverse,” Obama said.

There is no doubt in my mind that government intervention is necessary to get the United States out of the recession. The credit crunch and the collapse of the stock market means that households are trying to consume less and save more. In order for them to be able to do that, another sector of our economy must spend more and save less.

Corporations are not going to be able to carry this burden because they are cutting costs in hopes of preventing bankruptcy, while demand can’t come from the rest of the world because many other countries are also in a recession. The only sector that will be able to pull this country out of the economic recession is the federal government.

The unemployment rate is now around 7 percent nationally and is projected to approach 9 percent by the end of this year. The U.S. Department of Labor said Jan. 8 that the total number of people receiving benefits rose to 4.6 million: the most since 1982. If something is not done soon to increase employment, the unemployment rate will reach double digits.

According to The Economist, the package would also include business and individual tax cuts and for those who pay little to no taxes. That would include a $500 credit per worker or $1,000 credit per household.

It would also include substantial funds for public works spending, additional Medicaid funds, as well as other aid for states and money to broaden the availability of unemployment insurance and provide health benefits to the unemployed.

“The majority of the stimulus package needs to go toward education, technology and infrastructure,” said Andre Smith, an assistant professor of law at FIU.

“The development of alternative energy needs to be a part of the investment. This would stop job losses and set up the country for a better future. Not everyone will be able to find work in these fields, which is why we also need to fund education. What do the people that can’t find work do? For them, a short-term solution should involve being reintroduced to greater education,” Smith said.

The biggest issue with such a huge stimulus is how to repay the deficit it creates.

The bottom line is that this is a crisis of confidence. People right now are too afraid to invest, buy or put any type of new money into the economy. Banks are reacting to it by cutting credit lines and insurance companies are pulling coverages to avoid more losses.

There is no easy alternative here. The price tag for future generations will be high and the exit strategy is still unknown.

However, this country has been there before. The Great Depression of the 1920s was also a crisis of confidence and thanks to an effective intervention by the government, we were able to get out of it.

We just have no other choice.

Contact us at opinion@fiu.com, and we’ll give you 500 words to share your opinion with the FIU community.
My fellow technorati,  

2009 Apple MacWorld San Francisco has come, gone and goes forward without its muse.

Apple hosted its final keynote speech Jan. 6 at the magazine’s annual Macintosh trade show, seat of major product announcements by Apple, Inc. since 1997. Considering that the major announcements this year were updates to Apple’s iLife and iWork suites for Mac and new prices for digital rights management free music were delivered by someone who is not my beloved Steve Jobs, I have a little bone to pick with the powers that be. A bone I’m picking directly.

Dear Steve,

Who is this Phil Schiller guy that makes every announcement feel like we’re guilty of insider trading, your je ne sais quoi.

Had it been you up on the stage at San Francisco, I would’ve gleefully sunk further into debt for the privilege of being the first to preorder iLife ‘09.

Hearing you talk about iPhoto’s new facial and place recognition technology would’ve sent me into rapturous spasms at the thought of never having to manually organize my photo albums again.

I would’ve been tearing my couch apart for change to download the first song I saw on iTunes if only to revel in the knowledge that it was DRM free and I could do what I want, when I want, where I want with my music - even if Lady GaGa and her Rihanna Murphy ripping makes my stomach throw back out anything I so much as thought of eating.

— Susana Rodriguez
Vice presidents not supporting characters in politics's sitcoms

By the end of this month, the inauguration of America's 44th president will take place. While much attention has been paid to the historic election of the United States' first black president, little has been said about the appearance of America's 47th vice president, Joe Biden.

Having broken no barriers whatsoever, Biden, like many of his predecessors, is often treated as an afterthought.

The third wheel of the American presidential triumvirate, this president is often given little responsibility and forgotten, left to live in the obscuring shadow of the president and vice president, a minor character in a popular sitcom.

Some vice presidents, however, are not content with merely blending in with the scenery and becoming background stars of their presidents' administration, often with much success.

In honor of the not-all-that-historic election of Joseph Robi- nette Biden, let's take a look back at some of the people whose names would surely live forever in infamy, if only someone bothered to remember them.

SPIRO AGNEW

Spiro Agnew has been called the worst vice president ever, but that may be what makes him so damn interesting.

Serving under Richard Nixon before being resigned to resign shortly before Nixon himself, Agnew was quite the colorful character.

He and his speechwriting staff had a knack for alliteration, once referring to political enemies as “nasties, wretches, scoundrels,” and political victories as “smokes, outs, detections.”

While this was considered a harsh comment at the time, in fairness, his opponents did matter a lot. And they were not total nobobs (OK). I don’t know what these words mean either.

Maybe not choice of angels-singing-down-from-the-heavens good, but definitely holy-apparition-on-tour good.

It’s you, dear Steve, that keeps Apple’s customers coming back for more. You and the vision only you can deliver with the right amounts of smartness and showmanship to keep us, your devoted Apple fanbase, loyal to the company and waiting with bated breath for that one more thing you know we really don’t need but will devour without questioning its nutritional value because you said so.

And with www.apple.com, explaining that a hormonal imbalance is to blame for your absence – without even signing off “yours” or “thanks,” where was the love? – I think the blame for your absence – without even signing off

Explaining that a hormonal imbalance is to blame for your absence – without even signing off

As vice president, Agnew was quite the colorful character.

Aside from his rhetorical quirks, he also had this annoying habit of making anti-Semitic remarks, of accepting bribes … and getting indicted … come to think of it, he had a lot of annoying habits.

On the bright side, his numerous flaws almost make Richard Nixon look decent by comparison. Almost.

DAN QUAYLE

Unlike Spiro Agnew, Dan Quayle hasn’t been found guilty of anything resembling foolishness. As vice president for the elder Bush from 1989 to 1993, he often said embarrass- ing things, much to the chagrin of his supporters of the first Bush administration.

Apparently, in the old days, saying embarrassing and nonsen- sical things was some kind of major political handicap or something.

Perhaps his biggest gaffe was being quoted in the New York Times as saying “a thing is terrible to waste,” at a luncheon for the American Library Association.

“What a waste it is to lose one’s mind or not to have a mind is being very wasteful … How true that is,” Quayle said to The New York Times on June 25, 1989. One can’t help but think this was a man far ahead of his time.

There are a lot of fun things to say about Aaron Burr, but none of them are as fascinating as this: Aaron Burr once killed a guy. Not just any guy, but the guy on the $10 bill: Alexander Hamilton.

Maybe it was because Hamilton owed Burr 10 bucks (not actually owed, mind you). The two were arch-enemies and Hamilton’s comeuppance was much deserved.

Perhaps one day, like the presi- dors whose likenesses are carved onto Mount Rushmore, the faces of Burr and Hamilton will also be etched onto the side of a majestic mountain.

Not so much as a testament to their greatness, but rather as a reminder that there is nothing more dangerous than a politician with too much time on his hands.

I’m grateful. When the coun- selor said I didn’t have HIV, I was more than relieved: I was broken.

I walked out of the Biscayne Bay Campus Wellness Center last Tuesday feeling completely free. The sun was brighter and the sky was a nicer shade of blue than it had been before I walked into life. Life couldn’t be better.

And with a second note, it was better. Why? Because Charlie, my boyfriend, was walking out with me. He tested negative too.

But before that day, life was not as pretty. I had spent hours, days and even months wondering if I had ever contracted the human immu- nodeficiency virus that may lead to AIDS. Needless to say, when I thought about it, fear would consume me.

I’ve never shared a needle with anyone, but I’ve had unprotected sex – and that’s risky behavior.

Having sex with someone whose history of sex partners and/or drug use is unknown to you or if you or your partner have had many sex partners, then you have more of a chance of being infected with HIV, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Being aware of what “may” be prevent- ing me from getting tested. But the more time I spent at FIU, the more worried I became.

During the health fairs, a school assignment for which I interviewed a husband who was HIV positive and his wife who was negative, HIV and AIDS were everywhere.

It’s like the universe was telling you to get tested, said the HIV counselor who administered the test.

I supposed it was.

The night before I got tested, I was watching TV and suddenly, there was me, on screen, was the couple I had interviewed a few semesters ago at a Broward County HIV/AIDS Community Service Awards Ceremony.

And so the journey began.

That night, as I listened to the couple’s story all over again, I began to get worried. I spoke with my boyfriend and the next day I found myself nervously walking toward the BBC Wellness Center with Charlie.

The counselor called me in first. By this point, my palms were sweaty. I sat down and said a little prayer, a last cry for mercy.

While we talked she handed me an oral swab with a similar to that of a preg- nancy test and showed me what to do with it. I stuck it in my mouth and swiped as close to my gum line as possible. If the result is present, the swab draws antibodies from the gum line.

I inserted the swab into a fluid and we continued talking. Slowly but surely, a red line began to appear on the window.

“Oh my God! I have HIV.”

I thought as I looked away. My heart began beating fast. The counselor continued talking and all I remember her saying was “journalsm school.”

I suddenly felt dazed. I looked back at her and caught her staring at the line. She didn’t say a word.

I wanted to cry.

We continued our conversation and finally she said, “OK, you’re good. The result shows you’re negative.”

I breathed a sigh of relief. Later on, when my boyfriend walked out of the counselor’s office and gave me the thumbs up, I knew it was a new beginning for both of us.

Knowing, whether you test negative or positive, is better than not knowing.

And if you don’t know your status, perhaps this is the universe’s way of telling you to get tested.

Check your Pulse for health, wellness and fitness ever Wednesday. Email Eddith at eddith.seville@fi usm.com

Testing for HIV

offers peace of mind

Pulse

DISCLOSURES

m has 20 minutes or less.

by michelle diaz
Additions of Asprilla and Dominguez have impact

JULIAN, page 8

made this team.
Mostly because the Golden Panthers were already better than they were last season.

The names of the additions, Asprilla and Dominguez, and the names of those who have stepped up, Guseca and Taylor, have been the catalysts for a start that produced more than expected when the starting lineup crumbled to the injured list.

But it’s Galindo who changes this team from one that treaded water to one that may have the opportunity to swim with the big fish in the Sun Belt, deep into the spring.

Lost in the injury shuffle had been that FIU was playing with no seniors. Lost in the injury shuffle was that Michael Dominguez, who had a ridiculous start to the season, cooled off significantly as the season pressed into December.

Found for FIU, upon the return of Galindo has been the offense, which has produced three 20-point efforts in the four games, and has the shooting percentage at 44 percent, compared 39.8 percent for the season, including the better offensive scoring string.

Of course, stats never tell the whole story and there are leadership intangibles that experience brings that Alex totes back into the lineup. It will be the confluence of the things both palpable and impalpable that will determine the remainder of the season for the team.

It would be rather elementary to simplify the result of the season to the question “How far can Alex Galindo lead FIU?” so I’ll pose a more provocative query, “Now that Alex has returned to the FIU lineup, will the Golden Panthers be able to make a deep run in the Sun Belt tournament?”

The impact, as stated previously, hasn’t been Galindo taking over games – although he’s shown that he’s more than capable to do so – it’s been creating space for others.

Look forward to shooting percentages going up, thanks to more open shots, as defenses will have more people to key on, and look for better shot selection.

The final point that can’t be understated has to be depth.

Losing veteran players means younger and untested players have to do the heavy lifting, a double-edged sword.

On the early hand, it means players never having seen certain situations early in the season and perhaps being hesitant in reacting.

And on the later hand, it means having a seasoned group, with experience on the bench too.

Galindo has best game since injury with 19 points

MEN’S, page 8

a genius ain’t I?,” Rouco said. “He’s very

went to a zone but they got it to him open and I have confidence that he’ll make

Demetrius Green knocked down a game defining three-pointer to give the Blue Raiders a 65-62 lead. The Sun Belt Conference leader held on to win the game after allowing the Golden Panthers to come back and lead the game 56-55 with roughly five minutes remaining.

Nigel is the one who made that play. He had a move and got me the ball, I just had to make the shot,” Green said.

Green scored 14 points in the game and Nigel Johnson complemented him with 15 points of his own.

“I knew I had to penetrate and kick it out [for a three-pointer], I saw Demetrius wide open and I have confidence that he’ll make it,” Johnson said.

Team endures season’s worst loss; FAU is next

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers (3-13, 1-4 Sun Belt) couldn’t handle the pressure from the Middle Tennessee State University Blue Raiders (13-4, 5-0) defense as FIU committed 24 turnovers and produced its lowest scoring output of the season.

The Blue Raiders defeated the Golden Panthers 68-35 on Jan. 11 in the Murphy Center in Murfreesboro, Tenn. This marked the Golden Panthers’ fifth consecutive loss.

The Blue Raiders were able to force 19 turnovers in the first half and gain 25 points off the costly mistakes. Sophomore guard Michelle Gonzalez, the team’s main ball handler, was responsible for 13 of the turnovers and knocked down just four points in 40 minutes.

Middle Tennessee was also able to hold the Golden Panthers’ leading scorer, junior guard Monika Boulal, scoreless for the night.

“I knew coming into this game I was going to have to be alert defensively and coach challenged me to not even let her [Boulal] catch the ball because if that happened she would be hard to guard. The team did a really good job of helping me out, so it was really a team effort on her,” said Blue Raiders forward Emily Queen, according to goblueraiders.com.

Alysha Clark was one of four Blue Raiders with double-digit scoring and led all scorers with 18 points and 11 rebounds. Queen followed suit with 14 points and 11 boards.

Senior forward Jasmine Jenkins and junior guard Ashley Tranglot led the Golden Panthers in total points with eight each. Jenkins also led in the rebounding department with nine.

TOUGH NIGHT: Elisa Carey had eight rebounds but was limited due to foul trouble. FIU has lost five straight games

Middle Tennessee was able to control the rhythm early on, especially after the game’s first three-pointer was made by Brandi Brown at the 11:33 mark, as the Blue Raiders took a 13-4 lead in the first 9:45 minutes of the game.

Jenkins cut the Blue Raiders’ lead to 14 after a jumper with 38 seconds left in the first half, but Jackie Picket responded with a quick three-pointer to make the lead 35-18 as the teams headed to the locker room.

The Blue Raiders started out the second half with a 19-3 run to make the score 54-21 with 12:14 minutes left. FIU never became much of a threat for the remainder of the game.

The Golden Panthers were outscored 34-10 from inside the paint, 25-5 of turnovers and 21-6 on second chance points.

The Golden Panthers connected 13-of-38 from the field, just over 34 percent, not much less than the Blue Raiders’ 36.5 field goal percentage. However, the Blue Raiders defense proved to be the difference in this conference game.

“Our primary ball handler is Michelle Gonzalez and we wanted to keep the ball in her hands at all times but it’s very difficult,” said assistant coach Joanne Alaka-White in response to the MTSU defense and FIU turnovers, according to goblueraiders.com. “They trap and show a lot of help and our girls got rattled by that in the first half.”

The team will try to snap their losing streak against conference rival at Florida Atlantic University on Jan. 14.
Swimming team earns second-place finish

CHARLIE GRAU
Senior Staff Writer

Danielle Sneir was watching the clock anxiously as Kansas swimmer Carrah Haley touched the wall. Sneir had won by less than a stroke. The sophomore swimmer took first place in the 100-yard backstroke in 59.77 seconds. Haley came in second with a time of 1:00.28 minutes.

That was one of the highlights of this past weekend’s swim meet where the Golden Panthers came in second after swimming against Cabrini College and Kansas on Jan. 9.

“We did well considering those other teams were really fast, but I think we held our own,” Sneir said. “It was a good learning experience for us and it pushes us. There’s still a lot we need to work on and this meet allowed us to see what we needed to work on.”

Other highlights from the meet were Regina Mayer, Kate-lynn Stevens and Erin Pavlick who set new season-best records in the 500-yard freestyle with a time of 5:16.52 minutes.

“I was still relatively sore so for me to post a time like that gives me a lot of confidence for conference,” Mayer said.

The Golden Panthers will now shift their focus to conference championships which will take place Feb. 11-18 in Nashville, Tenn.

“When you get down to the last five weeks before conference, every little thing counts from what you do at practice and outside of practice. Every lap, every set, every finish makes a difference because it really prepares you for conference,” said coach Noemi Lung-Zaharia.

The swim team’s next match will be against Florida Gulf Coast College on Jan. 24 at 11 a.m.

The team is hoping it will be able to swim at its home pool at the Bay Vista Aquatic Center located on the Biscayne Bay Campus. The pool has been closed since 2007. If it is not ready in time, the team will swim its next meet at the Miami Shores Aquatic Center.

Charlie Grau can be reached at charlie.grau@fiusm.com.

Golden Panthers fail to complete road comeback

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

Freddy Asprilla and Alex Galindo combined for 47 points, but the rest of the Golden Panthers scored just 16 points and in turn FIU (6-12, 1-4 Sun Belt) lost 68-59 to the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (11-5, 5-0) at the Murphy Center.

The Golden Panthers scored a season-high 81 points in their last game on Jan. 8 against Western Kentucky University, but were anemic offensively outside of Galindo and Asprilla. The Blue Raiders raced to a 19-5 lead early in the game and held a double-digit lead at the half.

“I am disappointed that we came out in a lull. This is two years in a row that we came in here and gave them a big lead,” said head coach Sergio Rouco, according to fauphoto.com. “You can’t shoot 49 percent from the field and lose the basketball game.”

Asprilla continued his stretch of good games with a career-high 28 points. The freshman big man earned praise from his coach in the loss.

“He’s pretty darn good. I’m not going to say he’s Alex, but ‘DARN GOOD’” Rouco said of Asprilla.

The Golden Panthers were hardly a quality opponent in the loss. The Panthers’ fortune rest on a particular that makes this team different and nearly a contender: Alex Galindo.

It’s always easy to look at a team and say they won’t be as good without their leading scorer and rebounder from a year ago, but “simply as good as last year” is not what Alex’s return has meant for the Golden Panthers.

FIU 81, WESTERN KENTUCKY 79

MEN’S, page 7

It’s not all about Alex, but it really is all about Alex

Often times it’s said that the real season doesn’t start until the playoffs, or in the case of college basketball, the real meat of the schedule lies in the conference portion; after all, it is the conference champion that plays in the big dance, but only after another tournament.

This is perhaps not truer any place in the United States than at FIU, which has just entered its conference schedule. Like nearly everyone else.

But the Golden Panthers’ fortunes rest on a single caveat more so than any college basketball team I’ve seen.

Any reader of this paper or listener to our radio broadcasts will be well acquainted with the smorgasbord of afflictions that have affected the team this season, but there’s one in particular that makes this team different and nearly a contender: Alex Galindo.

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JULIAN, page 7

FALLING SHORT: The Golden Panthers’ rally fell short at MTSU on Jan. 10. Freshman Freddy Asprilla had a career-high 28 points.

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