SPOTLIGHT

EDITORIAL PAGE 4
Tech fee implementation necessary, but the process should be more transparent and inclusive. Campus committees should be created to increase transparency and decrease campus-wide disputes.

LIFE PAGE 6

COLUMN: Jonathan Ramos looks back on a bus to Tallahassee to participate in a rally for ballot measures.

UPCOMING EVENTS

International Women's Day, March 9, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the Blue and White, Bakery, Theatre, Recreation Center and Wellness Center are underway.

SPORTS PAGE 8

Road trip to California seniors at open tryouts is expected to add to the team's depth with new recruits.

OPINION PAGE 4
Voters and others are deliberating on reopening the debate on the budget in order to reduce costs.

WEATHER

LOW: 63  HIGH: 80
MONDAY

SUNNY

TUESDAY

Partly cloudy

LOW: 62  HIGH: 81
WEDNESDAY

Partly cloudy

LOW: 62  HIGH: 80

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STATEWIDE FINANCIAL CONCERNS NECESSITATE RALLY

BRIAN ALONSO

Staff Writer

Tuition increases, technology fees and early on-campus voting were concerns raised by university students across the state at the annual “Rally in Tally.”

Students from FIU and several other state universities, such as the University of Florida, Florida State University and Florida Atlantic University, representing the Florida Student Association, gather in Tallahassee to lobby lawmakers for their causes.

University Park's Student Government Council at BBC and UP voted upon recommendations for the distribution of funds during Friday's meeting at BBC.

These recommendations, however, are not final due to the possibility of an increase in enrollment and A&S fees that would result in more money to allocate.

SGC-UP President Arthur J. Meyer questioned the effectiveness of the meeting, given that SGA will need to meet again to accommodate any increase or decrease to their budget.

“I do it, but it just seems to be a waste of time to be sitting here all day today to try to figure this out if we’ll be meeting again within two or three weeks,” Meyer said.

A better forecast of enrollment and A&S revenue will be available within a month, according to Vice President of Student Affairs Rosa Jones, present at the beginning of the meeting. She added that the University will suffer some significant cuts and that it is important for SGA to meet ahead of time and determine what they plan to fund or not.

Since everyone is getting cut, the University is looking at everything strategically, that's the way SGA should be looking at it,” Jones said.

Meyer said he would rather look at the budget allocation in terms of what was done last year.

“My recommendation would be looking at [the budget] as we go through, finding everything at the same amount that they were funded last year,” Meyer said.

Matilde Gramling, director of budget and personnel for Student Affairs, and Jones argued that SGA should think strategically, applying what the University itself has implemented in terms of evaluating the importance of each organization.

“All-nighter

FULL COVERAGE COMING 3/11

Baseball: FIU dumps Troy

in back-to-back shut outs

For a cause: Participants in the annual Relay for Life event walk the road in front of the Ryder Business Building March 6, where dozens of organizations gathered to raise funds for cancer research.

If they’re going to increase tuition we definitely don’t want any more cuts as the quality of education will suffer.

University Park’s Senator, Alan Singh Phenelus, spoke about the importance of avoiding any major cuts to education.

“We spoke with legislators and they were open to the idea,” Phenelus said.

The day ended with a press conference at the steps of the capitol, where representatives of more than 50 percent plus one voted in favor of the state funding vote.

SGA representatives pushed for the reorganization of the group so that students would have 50 percent plus one vote, giving more say on how students allocate their funding.

“We need to have a vote of the people who are going to attend the college,” Phenelus said.

The rally continued with speeches and ceremonies and several speeches took place.

The rally was a call to action for all students to come together and fight for their education.

“If they’re going to increase tuition we definitely don’t want any more cuts as the quality of education will suffer,” said housing senator Alphanese Phenelus.

Another issue addressed was the current system of financial committees, which decide how student funding should be allocated in a given school.

RALLY, page 2

RALLY, page 2


**Recommendations set to change**

**BUDGET, page 1**

**Jeffer son's philosophy to be discussed**

**NATIONAL**

Unemployment level reaches 25-year high

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistic, the unemployment rate rose to 8.1 percent from last month’s 7.1. February unemployment numbers revealed a total loss of 651,000 jobs. In the past four months, employment has dropped by 2.6 million and has spanned through all major sectors of business.

**Students lobby for funding**

RALLY, page 1

The trip was paid for by the legislative affairs account.

Some SGC-UP students who attended the “Rally in Tally” are planning to return next week and address legislators on specific University issues as opposed to FSA.

**Next week is FEA day. There are a couple of us heading back to Tallahassee to lobby specifically for school funding.” Pheneius said.**
Dining etiquette crash course teaches essentials

SERGIO MONTEALEGRE
Staff Writer

Many employers invite prospective employees to dinner for follow-up interviews and sometimes learn more from the applicants’ dining habits than from what their resumes divulge. Table manners, including communication with the waiter, fork maneuvering and eating speed can make or break the final stages of a job interview.

To teach students proper dining etiquette, Career Services will be hosting a Business Etiquette Dinner on April 8 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms.

“Typically, employers take out their final recruits out to dinner and monitor them,” said Krya Spence, acting associate director of Career Services. “This dinner we’re hosting will make them more comfortable in these situations.”

Some of the topics that will be covered include basic table settings, what utensils go with what foods, what is appropriate to order and the proper way of ordering.

It’s a form of how you should present yourself. First impressions go a long way.

Natascha Stubbs, assistant director of Career Services. “First impressions go a long way.”

According to Spence, common mistakes students make in etiquette include:

• Signals to the waiter: The way the fork and knife rest on the plate gives the waiter an indicator of whether the person is finished eating or not.

• Resting the cup upside down also signals the waiter that the person does not want another drink.

• Students usually wave their hand along with a “No, thank you,” though that isn’t good etiquette.

• Holding utensils: One of the two proper styles at the table include the American Style, where the knife is held in the right hand when cutting, then switched with the fork.

The knife is then rested until it’s needed again. The other style is the Continental Style, where the fork is held with the left hand and the knife with the right hand. The utensils remain in their respective hands always and are never rested.

Attendees will be able to learn both style at the Business Etiquette Dinner.

• Removing food from the mouth: In the situation that a person is eating foods like fish and finds a bone in it, the rule of thumb is to take it out the same way it came in. This means carefully removing it from the mouth with the fork.

The rule for finger foods, like a sandwich, is to use a napkin. Using a napkin otherwise isn’t good etiquette.

Another topic that will be covered is the cultural differences in etiquette.

“Passing food is an important one,” Spence said. “For example, in some countries in Africa, you should pass things around the table with your right hand. Passing something with your left hand is considered a sign of disrespect.”

Although the dinner is focused on teaching students business etiquette for interviews with prospective employers, the in-
COSTLY CRIMES

The recession has hit many hard the massive layoffs, the lost homes – few have been spared. One of the rare exceptions are a surprising minority – convicted murderers – who are likely to be aided in a life-saving way from the economic downturn. In a cost-saving device, legislators from Maryland, Montana, and New Mexico are fielding bills with aims to repeal the death penalty. Kansas, Kentucky, and Nebraska are also considering similar measures in light of the deficits the states are experiencing. The death penalty, with its many levels of appeals, cost far more than a life sentence. An article from The Palm Beach Post estimated that the death penalty costs the state of Florida around $51 million a year. State Senator Carolyn McGinn of Kansas proposed the bill to overturn the death penalty. “We’re looking at any way we can to save money moving forward in the state of Kansas,” McGinn told FOXNews.com. “This will save significant money – money that could be used toward education programs and toward community corrections programs.” The practice of changing laws here on the state's economic woes has me somewhat frazzled. The morality and justice of the death penalty seem to have been sidelined, not even discussed as the recession has the states caught by the short hairs. The issue to these legislators isn’t the righteousness of the death penalty – the taking of a man’s life – only how much it costs. Whether you believe the death penalty is justified or think it’s an abomination is not the point. What matters here is why it is decided. This solution to such a complex question skirts all opinion and assigns a price to the murderer and victim’s lives, a design that seems to placate the lawmakers more than the families involved. Both sides of the death penalty argument have their merits, but the financial one has always seemed to be a non-issue for me, not even worthy of discussion. We don’t have a justice system because it is cheap but because it makes civilized life possible. Deciding the death penalty’s legality based on the pecuniary cost seems a lot like measuring your pet’s worth by how much dog chow you buy. It ignores everything that counts, like a human life, the concept of justice, or Lassie’s companion- ship. The full weight of the death penalty issue can’t be reduced to the superficial cost, and there are other considerations to keep in mind. A warning resounds in my head upon hearing of the monetization of intrinsic things like people and values – when everything is given a price, anything is for sale. If legislators and their constituencies from these states want to do away with the death penalty, they should – but for the right reasons. That being based on two criteria: Is the death penalty a just punishment for murder? And is the death penalty an effective deterrent to murder? These bills being pushed only because the recession exists cast a corrupting shadow on our seeming impartial justice system. These bills say that our laws are really only subject to the business cycles and not our morality. They say that we are not a just nation, only a coincidental one that happens to be experiencing a bull market.

The Faustian compromises on which these bills are based illu- minate how easily our principles can be forgotten and replaced with these blind grasps to lower expenses at the expense of all else. What is scary about what these states are doing is the broad predic- tions their actions imply for the rest of the country. When necessity demands, we’re willing to shed our laws. For this in what? Not pedantry, protection, or power. But money. Just money. It makes one wonder what else could be discarded.

States deliberate repealing the death penalty due to costs

JOSEPH MARHEE

Special to The Beacon

As you may know, SGC/UP Senate voted on the Elections Reform Act, and ultimately the legislation was shot down. For a system with an unusually organized Demo- cratic system, it is, unfortunately, less Democratic in others. This legislation would have opened FIU’s lead- ership to virtually every student and would have made FIU’s system something comparable to that of other school’s time-tested systems. Though I disagree with some allegations that SGA is run by people in specific groups (that would be an unfair generalization), I do have to say that the current system inhibits involvement by students. If a student doesn’t have money to run for a position in their school’s leadership structure, why shouldn’t they be able to raise money? And when it is in common practice for a candidate, or set of candidates, to share a value system or platform? Furthermore, included in the legislation would be the publication of Senate votes, something I’d imagine should be public knowledge if students are to determine if their interests are being represented by their elected officials. This closed nature is what prevents otherwise quali- fied individuals from ever participating in SGA. In such a restrictive system, only those with enough money, enough friends and assurance of anonymity with their votes are apparently qualified to lead the student body. SGC/UP Senate, for the most part, seems to be under the delusion that a “party system” would ultimately be disastrous. This is apparent by their vote against such a system, but how could it be? The University of Florida just held an election, and while it is a considerably larger school, their system is time-tested and sparks involvement from the majority of the students, and a majority of the university’s students actually vote (around 60 percent), whereas FIU’s election turnout is around 12 percent. The issue of turnout has nothing to do with FIU’s size. It’s the fact that students realize they don’t have a voice in SGA, but a muffled scream and blindfold; we vote and the elected act freely of their constituency. If FIU wants to continue this rate of growth that we, as a community, have been experiencing, shouldn’t its increasing student involvement in student government be a priority? Failure to pass this legislation bespeaks serious elitism from the senators who voted “no.” As a student, I’ve been proud of FIU for all of our accomplishments in the past couple of years, but this failure to open student government to changes that could give students a real voice in their school, speaks volumes of what is holding us back from reaching our full potential.

Joseph Marhee is a sophomore English major at Florida International University.
Fraternities lend helping hand at Special Olympics

AMANDA BATECHLOR
Staff Writer

The Interfraternity Council took the time to give back to the community on Feb. 22. Members from fraternities Pi Kappa Alpha, Phi Gamma Delta and Pi Kappa Phi participated in the Special Olympics Athletics Track and Field Competition at the Miami-Dade College-North Campus.

Each fraternity member was assigned to a contestant as their “hugger” for the day. Their job was to help them as their coach. They helped the contestants warm up and took them to each of the events. In between competitions, the “huggers” took the participants to an area where they had different activities for them, such as meeting the Miami Dolphin cheerleaders.

“It was a great experience to see the competitors tired but happy after a tiring race,” said Lukas Calafell, a member of Phi Gamma Delta. “Just being able to hang out with the participants was very rewarding.”

The contestants ranged from high school age up to people in their 30s. The IFC was assigned to contestants from Miami Norland High School.

There were two people assigned to each athlete. The athletes were mostly boys, but there were girls who participated as well. The athletes were “persons with intellectual disabilities,” according to the Special Olympics Website.

“It was a truly rewarding experience that I was privileged to be a part of,” said Chris Graihan, vice president of External Affairs for Pi Kappa Alpha.

There were 11 Pi Kappa Alpha members who participated, three Phi Gamma Delta members and one Pi Kappa Phi member.

“I am proud of the 11 members of PIKE who came out early today to give their time for a great cause, but I am even prouder of the athletes who have trained so hard and overcome so many obstacles to compete in these tough events,” said Alex Valdez, president of PIKE.

The participants from all three organizations contributed to making the Special Olympics a successful event, and most will also be participating in the March 14 Special Olympics event, the Area Summer Games Competition which will consist of sports such as bocce, cycling, tennis, soccer and volleyball.

“As vice president of IFC, it is my goal for all of the Greek fraternities to do more community service and philanthropy, and to also shed a better and more positive light on our Greek community as a whole,” said Adam Johnson, a member of Pi Kappa Alpha.
Breezy songs make spring albums weather appropriate

One of the sad facts of life here in South Florida is the utter lack of seasonal differences in weather. Oh, sure, we’ll go through four to six weeks of 60-degree weather, but for the most part, the mercury sits between 80 and 95 for the entire year, no matter what the season might be. So it is always a bit disheartening when we get our “winter” and “spring” breaks, since they tend to be the exact same temperature.

Still, the weather’s been nice enough the last few days that I’m willing to chalk it up to the tilt of the Earth and say we are currently enjoying a nice, spring-type environment. And since this is my last column before spring break, I figured I’d kick off my shoes, hit the beach and talk about some of my favorite spring albums.

There are some albums and artists that just work better depending on what time of the year it is. Radiohead is more of a winter band, while the Beastie Boy’s Paul’s Boutique is the sound of a hot, sweaty New York summer day.

Admittedly, there aren’t a lot of guidelines for this, but when I think of spring albums, I’m generally thinking about something a little breezier, a little lighter and poppier.

WILCO – SKY BLUE SKY

In their 2002 album Yankee Hotel Foxtrot, Wilco took folk songs and pulled them apart at the seams to explore the limits of what their sound could do. This was a fall album.

In 2004’s A Ghost Is Born, they covered their songs in a more upbeat, fuzzy, like a blanket of snow on a landscape. This was their winter album.

Then, their 2007 follow-up, Sky Blue Sky has to follow this pattern – and it does.

Stripping their songs down and going back to musical quality. The whole album has a depth that sets it apart from the rest. Perhaps my inclusion of it on this list is just me being tricked by the lead single “Furr,” a beautiful little pop ditty with Dylanesque vocals and animal noises. The whole album has a depth that sets it apart from the other selections.

Pop & Circumstance is a weekly column discussing all things pop music.

Lamont Coleman never got to sign with Rock-A-Fella records.

After releasing two albums with two different labels, the up-and-coming rap star was shot near his home in Harlem in 1999. The controversial spitter never saw great commercial success from the beginning, when single “Devil’s Rain” from his lone solo-album Lifestylez Ov Da Poor & Dangerous, displayed lyrics not well-suited for radio, to say the least. His second body of work, a group effort with four others, Children of the Corn, never succeeded as the group soon broke up.

To those of you that don’t know, I’m talking about Big L, who at 5’8’’ was bigger than most rappers on the microphone. Despite a career cut short, Big L spit enough bars in his relatively short career to be considered one of the best of all time.

This is the thing, he wasn’t marketed enough and he passed before he was allowed to. The creativity, unfathomable similes, metaphors and energy in the booth make his music more than qualified.

A lot of great albums are a lack of weight, the thing is he wasn’t marketed enough and he passed before he was allowed to. The creativity, unfathomable similes, metaphors and energy in the booth make his music more than qualified.

He doesn’t get the remembrance of other gunned down legends like Tupac and the Notorious B.I.G, so I thought I would take this space to pay homage to an artist who is wrongfully lost and missing in many conversations of some of the best in hip-hop’s short history.

Somebody like Notorious deserves the credit he gets. Two great albums while he was alive, and a few cuts after his death were very much. He was backed by Puff Daddy on Bad Boy records, which elevated his fame and therefore put his music on notice.

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The same goes for Tupac, who rose to immense popularity once Suge Knight and Death Row records backed him. Even Eminem, who is an example that is still alive, needed Dr. Dre to pluck him out of Detroit and make him rich.

All three of those artists will find their way into discussions of the hottest emcees ever, rightfully so. It is not absolutely necessary, but an artist with the financial backing from a major label has a huge advantage on his counterparts.

In Big L’s case, he was very close to signing that big deal and emerging from a hardcore rapper in the streets of Harlem to a widely known name. Jay-Z, Dame Dash and the rest of the Rock-A-Fella family were set to sign the witty rapper after a week he passed. Jay-Z went on to blow up into the best rapper of all time (my opinion, but we can discuss that) and the label blew up with other great artists like Kanye West and Beanie Sigel.

Big L was on the cusp of getting that support that not only Tupac and Notorious got, but every rapper needs to take his artistry to the next level and get the recognition he deserves.

Despite the way things turned out, Big L has still grown on the masses outside of New York as his material has slowly seeped into rap fans everywhere.

I can post some of his ferocious punch lines because they were too explicit, but if you don’t know about Big L, you don’t need to ask somebody, you need to go to a computer right now and do your research.

And most likely, the next time you argue about who the best emcees in history are, you will include Lamont Coleman in the conversation – right where he belongs.
Golden Panthers pitching scoreless streak at 21 innings

BASEBALL, page 8

FIU 1, TROY 0

For the first time in school history, FIU (6-2, 2-0 Sun Belt) ensured itself of a series in over Troy (7-4, 0-2), with a 1-0 victory on March 7.

Tom Ebert dominated from start to finish, putting together an efficient complete game shutout of the high powered Trojans, who had three double-digit scoring games coming into the weekend and had defeated No. 23 Alabama 6-2 on March 3.

This game marked the first time Troy had been shut out in their last 58 innings, found a way to slide Iowa, who had given up only two runs in the last 58 innings, found a way to slide by, 6-5.

Barrett threw five innings for the Golden Panthers and recorded six strikeout of the high powered Trojans, who had three double-digit scoring games coming into the weekend and had defeated No. 23 Alabama 6-2 on March 3.

It was the bottom of the seventh, with Iowa up 6-3 and FIU runners on first and third, when pinch hitter Lisa Brooks smacked an RBI up the middle, allowing Landau to score, putting the Golden Panthers within two runs of a tie. Rodriguez then singled up the middle to score Fink, the score now 6-5 in favor of Iowa.

Speras came up to the plate after Welch was intentionally walked which loaded the bases with two outs. On a full count, Speras struck out looking to end the game, giving FIU their second loss of the weekend in California.

CAL STATE FULLERTON 3, FIU 1

Junior Paige Cassady pitched a complete game and gave up just three runs, but the Golden Panther offense couldn’t get much going as they fell 3-1 to California State- Fullerton in California.

Two of CSFU’s three hits were solo home runs. Both of the homers would be charged consecutive games since 1987 when the Trojans lost 6-0 Ferris State on Feb. 17, and a Feb. 21 decision that year to Huntington, 1-0.

The only time Troy was blanked back-to-back by the same opponent was a doubleheader on April 11, 1972 to Jacksonville State.

The teams recorded just four hits each, and the Troy pitching staff was solid in opposition to Ebert.

Jason Walls (1-2) picked up the loss, despite not allowing an earned run in six innings while striking out five Golden Panthers, but the night belonged to Ebert.

The 6-foot-1 transfer from Iowa Western Community College struck out nine batters and allowed just four hits to continue his season.

“I thought I commanded the fastball well. I was able to get some quick outs, the first three or four innings felt like I kind of cruised,” Ebert said.

Ebert missed a start due to the rain outs when FIU was in South Carolina and had not started since Feb. 21.

Ebert has now amassed 17 strikeout in 15 innings and has yet to walk a batter.

The Golden Panthers scored their only run of the game in the sixth inning, on a Steven Stropp single that brought home Pablo Bermudez.
Second year coach continues turnaround in Miami

LEILANI LAUREANO  Contributing Writer

McClendon turned the 22-35 softball team into a 29-34 team. With a 10-10 record in 2009, McClendon wants to reach higher level by bringing the once winning program to the College World Series.

"We will be there in three years," she said.

With nearly half the 2009 roster recruited by McClendon, it is the development and progress of her new players that is the key to last season's 5-8 runs per contest. The loss of key hitters has affected the team’s offensive numbers, but the pitching staff has stepped it up. The Golden Panthers earned run average is 2.20.

"Our pitchers have kept us in every game," McClendon said. "Our offense has gotten off to a slow start, but it’s coming around."

One of McClendon’s first recruits, junior pitcher Kasey Barrett, returns as the staff’s No. 1 starter. She believes the team is ready to go "full circle."

"The team motto is 'full circle,'" she said. "Last year we did a complete 180 and this year we want to continue to 360."

The team will try accomplishing their goals with the help of Barrett, who has started the season with a 4-2 record and newcomer Paige Cassady. Cassady, a junior, transferred from Presbyterian College where she was an all-conference selection in 2007. Cassady also has a personal history with McClendon.

"I have known coach since I was 11," Cassady said. "She taught me everything I know."

Another one of McClendon’s goals for this year includes a top 64 finish and ending the season on top of the Sun Belt Conference. FIU wrapped up last season with an even record of 13-13 in the SBC.

By the end of this season, McClendon...