Microsoft Office now free for students

**LAEBONY LIVINGSTON**

Staff Writer

Thanks to the suggestions from FIU faculty and students, the Divi-
sion of Information Technology has decided to offer free Microsoft
Office 2007 and McAfee-Antivirus Software to students.

University Information Technology security officer Cheryl
Granto submitted this proposal.

“Students will enhance their learning with the ability to use
these software programs to work on common class projects,
sharing documents, and improve the performance of their personal
computers,” said Granto in the proposal.

Marketing coordinator John
Cabarga stated that this is “the first big
project” the IT department is implementing. Although the bene-
fits won’t be available until January 2010, the idea for the project was
first proposed in September 2009.

MS Office and McAfee will be
available to owners of both PCs and Macintosh, and once every-
thing is complete students will be
able to download the software right
off the IT Web site.

Current students are not the only
ones that will be offered MS Office
and McAfee, those that have grad-
uated in Fall 2009 as well as future
alumni will also be able to take
advantage of this deal.

“I think it is good that they are
offering it to students but it would
have been more useful if they had
offered it in the Fall,” said Judith
Perez, a freshman Asian studies
major.

“We always offered MS Office
and McAfee, as well as other soft-
ware, at a discounted price so those
who shopped through us always
got a deal,” Cabarga said.

Cabarga has also added that this
offer will extend to any upgrades
in the future; students will be able
to download the newest version of
MS Office for free even if they
could not take advantage of the

**FRANCISCO MARADIAGA**

Staff Writer

University leadership has approved a preliminary plan to bring back the
marching band with student govern-
ment as a major financial backer,
according to Anthony Rionda, president of
the Student Government Council at
Modesto Maidique Campus.

Rionda told Student Media that a
viable option emerged after he,
University President Mark Rosenberg
and University Chief Financial Offi-
cer Kenneth Jessell partook in numerous
meetings that discussed the logis-
tics and funding of a marching band,
and that an official announcement
was expected sometime in early January.

“Our goal as of now is a new band
with a new image,” Rionda said.

Rionda declined to go into details
on how the marching band will be
funded, saying that specifics would
come with the official announcement.

He did however state that some
of the funds were strong together from one-time pockets of money.

This money he explained, came
from roll-over funds, auxiliary
accounts, or from extra money
the university may have had after
purchases.

**SGA, page 3**

**WEEK OF WELCOME**

**SUPER START**

Week of events gets
students back in
the swing of things

ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ

Staff Writer

It’s the first week of school and you’re
feeling the winter break blues kick in
already. You are in desperate need of some
FIU school spirit being pumped back in to
your veins to kick off the new semester.

Week of Welcome has just what the doctor
ordered.

The Student Programming Council at
Modesto Maidique Campus commits itself
to planning an array of events to keep the
student body entertained and active in
campus life year round.

At the beginning of every semester, they
bring us WoW.

“Week of Welcome, or WoW, is a week of
events at the beginning of both the Fall and
Spring semesters. It is run by The Office of
Orientation at MMC in conjunction with
other organizations, such as the Student
Programming Council,” said Cristina
Rodriguez, senior public relations major
and president of SPC-MMC. “WoW is
a big kick-off for each semester. It raises hype about being an FIU
student and allows students to enjoy
WOW, page 8
Honors College recruits athletes

Campaign aims to emphasize academics

MELODY CACERES  
Staff Writer

The Honors College and the Athletics Department are launching a partnership that will bring together sports and academics for students who seek the best of both worlds.

With nine of their students currently playing for various teams at the University, the Honors College is seeking to recruit more athletes to their school through this long-term campaign which will offer benefits such as scholarships, smaller classes and flexible course scheduling.

“We really want to help [student athletes] develop into well-rounded students where they’re not just valued by their athletic ability but for how good they are in class,” said Cecile Houry, the Student Enrichment coordinator for the Honors College. “And it looks like right now we’re at the time and have the right people in place in terms of athletics to really make this happen.”

The college has since been contacting coaches from the volleyball, track & field and women’s basketball team individually in order to encourage those students who meet the 3.3 GPA requirement to apply to the Honors College during this Spring semester.

Hoping to eventually encompass every sport on campus, representatives from the school have been reaching out to players through their presence at games with events like pizza parties, football tailgates, and golf scrambles. “Athletes are generally not driven to that part of academics and if they know that they’re going to go somewhere important then it’s hard to motivate them,” said freshman volleyball player Chanel Araujo, who is currently a student at the Honors College.

“Coming in, I wasn’t at the top of the pack athletically so I knew that I needed academics as something to fall back on just in case it didn’t work out,” Araujo added.

By becoming members of the Honors College, the student athletes will have benefits that will include not only smaller classes but some that span an entire school year. This will give them the

GROWTH SPURT

ABOVE: The construction for Parking Garage 5, behind the Chemistry and Physics building and next to the Red Garage, began at the end of the Fall 2009 semester. It will add 2,000 parking spaces, 1,500 of which will be available to students. The structure will contain 30,000 ft of retail space and will be the new headquarters for the FIU Police. The garage is set to open in August of 2010.

LEFT: The Nursing and Health Sciences building is nearing completion. It is located directly behind the Honors College during this Spring semester. It will add 2,000 parking spaces, 1,500 of which will be available to students. The structure will contain 30,000 ft of retail space and will be the new headquarters for the FIU Police. The garage is set to open in August of 2010.

HONORS, page 3
A&$ fees
to help fund band

SGA, page 1

Student Media was unable to reach Jessell for comment during the break. Rionda also mentioned that SGA will contribute $130,000 from Activities and Service fees students pay in tuition to help fund the marching band.

That amount was brought up in the October meeting of the University-wide Council, which is made up of student government leaders from both campuses, where they passed a motion to bring back the band. There is a possibility that SGA will have to dip into its monetary reserves to back up any incidental that might creep up like a bowl game.

In that is where this new incarnation of the marching band differs from its predecessor, the majority of the funding will come from A&S fees controlled by SGA.

From what Rionda told Student Media, the Athletics Department will not have a funding role with the band, and the College of Architecture and the Arts, where the band will be stationed under, shall have a significantly lesser contribution than it had in the past.

The marching band was eliminated last fiscal year amid a wave of budget cuts. The College of Architecture and the Arts was unable to meet the reported $237,000 it set aside to fund the band. The figure amounted to more than half of its operating budget, the rest was supplied by SGA and the Athletics Department, and dealt a fatal blow to the previous marching band, the Band of the Sun.

Stressing that he did not have the numbers in front of him, Rionda's interpretation of CARTA's contribution would be to pay the staff members that would be beyond the scope of student government, and Student Affairs.

“We are not in the business of funding faculty,” he said.

Funding the faculty involved will fall on the doorsteps of CARTA's Director of Bands Catherine Rand.

It is also expected that CARTA will provide a class that band members would be required to take. The money would in turn go back into the program.

“It’s a lab fee,” Rionda said.

The $130,000 SGA has pledged represents the indispensable lifeline student government will now be for the marching band.

University uses tech fee funds to bring Office, antivirus software to students

MS OFFICE, page 1

immediate MS Office 2007 download.

It is currently preparing for the launch of its Web site and expects it to be ready in January 2010 for a mass download. Students will only be able to download the software one time.

McAfee Anti-Virus Software ranges from $30 to $40 according to the company's Web site. Microsoft Office also varies in price, ranging from $150 to $500, depending on the version, according to the Office Web site.

The version offered by the University will be the Enterprise version, a mass volume-license version of Microsoft Office 2007 Ultimate Edition. This version includes all Microsoft Office products including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and OneNote.

The Technology Fee Advisory Council, lead by Vice President and Chief Information Officer Min Yao, approved $545,966 on Nov. 10, 2009 to be used to make the proposal possible.

Currently, the technology fee for undergraduates and graduate students is $4.42 and $14.05 per credit hour respectively.

“If it is a great opportunity for students who may not have been able to get MS Office before,” said freshman journalism major Samantha Rivas.

Those who have questions about the offer can visit fiu.edu/techfee for more information about this proposal as well as other proposals that are in the process of being approved and implemented.
Strained economy turns Miami boatyard into yacht parking lot

Although 2010 marked the end of a decade, it still brings forth a wealth of change, advancement, and new possibilities for many of us — and I am no exception. The departure of Pamela Duque as BBC Managing Editor of The Beacon opened up the opportunity for someone to fill her shoes. To my delight — and surprise — I have been chosen to fulfill this position.

First and foremost, I am excited to be taking the reins. As a journalism student, this is a dream come true, as I will be able to do what I love while gaining the education I need to make it in a post-graduate world. Coming from MMC, I must admit that BBC is brand new to me and I have yet to fully adjust to the much smaller (and much quieter) atmosphere. Even so, I am looking forward to exploring the ins-and-outs of the campus.

I also hope to become better acquainted with my peers and I will do my part to make sure that it stays that way.

To contact me, send an e-mail to Jasmyn.Elliott@fiu.edu.
Students hike to DC to fight for immigrants

LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ
AP Wire

While their fellow college students recovered from the night’s revelry, four South Floridians celebrated the New Year with a more active — and activist — approach.

The group set out Friday to begin a 1,500 mile journey they are calling the “Trail of Dreams,” from Miami’s historic Freedom Tower to Washington, D.C.

The goal is to raise support for legislation that would include a path to citizenship for eligible illegal immigrants.

The four, all immigrants themselves, plan to walk the entire distance, no matter the weather.

“Tired of coming back to school each semester and hearing about another friend who was picked up and deported,” Juan Rodriguez told a group of supporters during a recent gathering.

An RV will follow them to ensure they have shelter at night and a bathroom in remote locations, Rodriguez said.

The nonprofit Florida Immigrant Coalition is helping with logistics.

Rodriguez said after years of keeping his struggles to himself, he recently got up the nerve to talk about them with his mother, who stayed behind in Colombia.

“Now I’m trying to convince her not to come. If you don’t have it, then maybe you shouldn’t leave. There’s value in staying in your country and helping to improve it,” he said.

“I think sometimes I should go back to Colombia and try to help there,” he said.

“But it’s not my country anymore. This is my home. This is where I can help.”

No romance without finance

SINGLE, page 4

more than me. After that we ordered drinks and continued to talk and laugh.

But when the check came, fun time was over. The waiter handed him the bill and he slid it across the table to me.

“Wait a minute. I know he doesn’t expect me to pay the bill,” I thought to myself. I would like to say that

Here’s a tip for the future: If you can’t afford to date... don’t.

I’m one of those women who don’t mind paying on the first date, I really would. However, that would be a lie. I do mind, so much so that I don’t bring any money with me – a fact that I let him in on.

“I’m confused. It looks like you want me to pay,” I said in a soft voice.

“You didn’t order anything – why should I pay?” he replied.

“You didn’t order anything but you ate most of my food. And besides, I don’t have any money on me,” I said, very annoyed.

“Well, why not?” he said, raising his voice.

“Um, let me think. You came up to me, asked me for my phone number, called me and asked me out on a date. Gee, I don’t know why I thought you were going to pay,” I said sarcastically.

“Did you know you weren’t going to pay, then why did you order all of this expensive stuff? I can’t afford to pay for this.”

“Expensive stuff?” What was he talking about? The bill was barely over $40, and that included both of our drinks.

I had enough.

“Here’s a tip for the future: If you can’t afford to date... don’t;” I said full of anger.

I got up, dropped my napkin and marched right out of the restaurant, leaving him there with the bill. I might not have had money with me but I did have money at home, so I walked to a nearby store and called a cab.

After I made it home, I took out my BlackBerry and deleted his number.

That’s the thing about dating: sometimes you win, and sometimes you lose. That, my friends, is what I call living the single life.

—approach.

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Studying the amount of RF energy produced by cellular telephones is too low to produce significant tissue heating or an increase in body temperature. Many products and chemicals in the past were thought to be safe until later studies proved that they were harmful to people. One of the most famous instances of this is asbestos, which was a main component of construction material until studies found that it caused cancer in people who were exposed to it.

We cannot rule out the possibility that this may happen with cell phones. Long-term effects have yet to be fully examined. If indeed cell phone devices are proven to be harmful to our health, we are in for a big reality check.

Scientists in Scandinavia conducted a 30-year longitudinal study of cell phone usage and any possible links to cancer. The subjects were the adult population of 16 million people from three countries, and they only detected a small percentage of people with brain cancer. (although not above the normal percentage of people with brain cancer). If there was a risk of cancer, that study most definitely would have proved something.

Their introduction to the market in the 1980s, these devices have gained massive popularity. Nowadays, almost everyone has one – even 10-year-olds have gained the privilege that was once exclusive to the corporate elite. If they were indeed harmful, there would have already been over- whelming evidence against them. Instead there are only myths and stories, some of which may be pure coincidence.

One example of alleged evidence on the harmful effects of cell phone use involves Oll Simpson’s former lawyer, Johnny Cochran. He died of a brain tumor, which was supposedly located on the side of his head that he put the cell phone to. This could just be a coincidence. There are two sides of the head, hence there is a 50 percent chance that it would be on the side he was accustomed to putting the cell phone on.

Haitians face discrimination by U.S.

In 2008, storms devastated much of northern Haiti. It caused the threat of death, and resulted in the end, in the form of the United States’ discriminatory immigration policy.

In 2008, storms devastated the nation, claiming the lives of hundreds and leaving thousands homeless. During the last election, President Obama promised change and hope, and specifically pledged to address the immigration issues facing Haitians. A year later, Haitians continue to starve because the storms of 2008 decimated the agriculture and livestock industry. Haiti is relying on to live.

In 1998, following the devastation of Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua and Honduras, the Temporary Protected Status was established. Honduran and Nicaraguan nationals who were living in the U.S. at the time the suspension of deportation were allowed to temporarily remain in the U.S.

This means that if TPS is granted to Haiti, the U.S. will revoke a massive number of TPS holders from Haiti. This argument is groundless. Similar to the restrictions placed on the deportation relief granted to Honduras and Nicaragua, only persons who are already living within the U.S. will qualify for TPS. The cutoff date is the day that TPS is granted. This means that if TPS is granted on Dec. 1, a Haitian arriving to the U.S. on Dec. 2 would not qualify and would be deported if apprehended. The TPS cutoff date provides protection against a mass exodus from Haiti to the U.S.

Opponents of TPS argue that granting TPS to Haiti, the U.S. will provoke a massive number of immigrants from Haiti. This argument is groundless. Similar to the restrictions placed on the deportation relief granted to Honduras and Nicaragua, only persons who are already living within the U.S. will qualify for TPS. The cutoff date is the day that TPS is granted. This means that if TPS is granted on Dec. 1, a Haitian arriving to the U.S. on Dec. 2 would not qualify and would be deported if apprehended. The TPS cutoff date provides protection against a mass exodus from Haiti to the U.S.

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A new year means hoping for change

ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

It’s that time of the year again where we pop out the champagne (sparkling cider for those under 21), count our 12 grapes, kiss the one we wish to be with forever and hope for the best with the turn of the year. With this hope lies the tradition of New Year’s resolutions.

New Year’s resolutions are commitments one makes to improve themselves with the new year and are advantageous to themselves and, usually, others too. Some of the more popular resolutions involve health or careers. For FIU students, they often involve staying on track in school and bettering grades.

“My New Year’s resolution is to continue doing well in school. It’s pretty simple but that gives me a sort of guarantee that I will be able to keep it,” said Maite Morales, a junior majoring in English.

Kathleen Paz, a sophomore double majoring in English and journalism, has a more reflective resolution for the new year.

“My resolution is to let go of who I was and fully embrace the person I’ve become. I want to put behind all the petty things that have happened with people and accept that things change. Only time will tell if it’s for the better,” she said.

We all want better versions of ourselves and resolutions are the easiest way to promise ourselves we can get there. This is the perfect year - a new year, a new you. You’ve said it to yourself a bunch of times in years past, but what is it exactly about New Year’s resolutions that are so intriguing to others?

“It’s a free motivation, in a sense. With a new year comes the possibility of change. I guess it’s a carpe diem sort of thing. People want to get things started off with a bang so that the rest of the year will proceed smoothly,” Paz said.

Eric Murias, a graduate student majoring in nutrition and health, says that many people want to improve themselves and, to do that, he suggests people “invest in themselves that they are going to make a New Year’s resolution. People should treat it like a big goal, to dream about reaching. It’s great to have a big goal and think that you have a whole year to get there.” Morales added.

Unfortunately, for the optimist resolution makers, by the end of February the majority of resolutions burn out quicker than they were thought up.

According to Marcell Gonzalez, a junior majoring in business, the reason is simple. “People don’t really want to make New Year’s resolutions, they just get thrown into a tradition they really don’t care about so they don’t keep it,” Gonzalez said.

New Year’s resolutions are no joke. If you want them to work, you need to put some effort into it. “It’s really easy to say you want something, but it takes effort to actually achieve it. All things worth-while require work. It’s hard. People just get discouraged too easily and give up at the first sign of an obstacle. Drive is essential,” Paz said.

If you’re thinking of making a resolution this year, setting your sights on a realistic goal and making a plan for reaching it is a good way to start. “People sometimes make resolutions that are not realistic or take longer than a year, so, they get anxious to accomplish them and end up giving up,” Morales said.

To prevent that, she suggests making the same resolution every year. “An aunt of mine used to make the same one every year so she wouldn’t quit it.”

AMANDA BATCHelor
Staff Writer

Every year, people wake up early on the day after Christmas to make it to the stores by 5 a.m. for those after Christmas sales. This year, perhaps due to the economy, the sales were not all worth waking up early for.

Most retail stores had sales from around 25 to 40 percent off for the entire Christmas season. Many of the sales that started the day after Thanksgiving continued for the remainder of the season, and very few stores this year sold as high as 75 percent off.

Some of the best sales were found at stores like Aeropostale, Bath and Body Works and Best Buy where I bought a GPS for about $70 off.

The day after Christmas, most stores just had sales on their Christmas goods. But, surprisingly, most stores were only taking 50 percent off when, in past years, it was common to see discounts on holiday merchandise as high as 75 percent off.

This could be a sign of retail stores hurting because of the economy, leaving retailers unable to offer steeper discounts. However, Tatiana Kulhanjian, a sophomore and business major, did find some stores that had decent sales.

“I went to Macy’s on Dec. 26 and they had some awesome sales,” Kulhanjian said. “A lot of items were 50 percent off and then the cashiers would give [an additional] $25 off if you bought stuff worth $100 or more so they would try to help you save even more.”

I was one of those people at the stores starting at 5 a.m. at JCPenney’s to see what sales I could find and they had barely any Christmas items left.

They did have sales on some of their other merchandise like luggage, clothing and shoes but the sales just didn’t compare to any of their Black Friday sales.

Pier One Imports had a large amount of Christmas decor left over, most of it was 50 percent off or more. They also had sales on some of their everyday items such as candles.

“Walmart, Target and kmart had the best deals on Christmas decor the day after Christmas,” said Ashleigh Nguyen, a senior and international business major. “You could find items from 75 percent off and up such as lights, wrapping paper and fake Christmas trees. It’s a great time to stock up on Christmas goods for next year.”

But not everyone was looking for just Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until Christmas decor sales right after Christmas. Some of those people who wait around late until

“Coach had really good deals with 20 percent off of their purses, but the worst deal I got stuck with was buying a friend a Juicy Couture bag for $200 and some change,” Rojas said.

Whatever the case may be, stores are definitely not offering some of the great sales they have offered in past years. So this year, in order to find a great deal, you may just have to dig around in the malls some more. Consumers, however, seem to be happy finding any sales they can get.

What some of us can look forward to is that most stores’ sales are continuing until right after New Year’s, such as Victorias Secret’s semi-annual sale.

Also, for those who still haven’t made it to the store to exchange that frumpy sweater or whatever gifts you may not have liked, most stores are prolonging their return policy so you have until right after New Year’s to finish your returns and exchanges.

No need to wake up early; end-of-the-year sales not as big as in the past

Everyone wants something ...

“I would like to graduate by the end of the semester and hopefully find a job.”
– Senior, Liberal Studies

Douglas Wartzok

“My New Year’s resolution is that we have a successful SACS reaccreditation site visit for FIU this year.”
– FIU Intern Provost

Will Ferrell

“My New Year’s resolution is to get at least 13 hours of sleep a night, regardless of what sort of job or family or life commitments I have...”
– Actor

LIFE!
Monsters, magic to make appearances at WoW

HOW MUCH: $10
WHERE: GC 314
General meeting

CAMPUS BIBLE
WHEN: 7 p.m.
(a natural-looking text)

Exploding Head
Indie artists ready to fill 2010 with new sounds

The committee promises to uphold its reputation with southern rap remixes by abstract indie artists ready to fill 2010 with new sounds.

Mike Super

This week on campus

Monday, January 4

Fast Food Nation

WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: Churchill's Pub

Chosen generation
General meeting

WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: GC Cafeteria Annex

Open mind Monday

Live art and music by your Monday blues.

WHEN: 9 p.m.
WHERE: GC Pit

Miami Heat vs Atlanta Hawks

WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: American Airlines Arena

PRESHA MEDITATION CLUB
Meeting and meditation

WHEN: 4 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Tuesday, January 5

Spc welcome back

WHEN: 12 a.m.
WHERE: GC Pit

National student exchange program
Orientation

WHEN: 10 a.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Dance marathon

Meeting

WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
WHERE: GC 305

Sharky Dervisht
Singer/guitarist

WHEN: 9 p.m.
WHERE: Churchill's Pub

Wednesday, January 6

College democrats
Lecture/Inception

WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Black student union
General meeting

WHEN: 2:30 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Local folk artists
Sam Friend, Abroles Libres, Daniz

WHEN: 9 p.m.
WHERE: Churchill's Pub

Thursday, January 7

Caribbean student association

WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Graduate student association
Social mixer

WHEN: 6 p.m.
WHERE: GC 314

CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

WHEN: 10 a.m.
WHERE: GC 314

Shake

Food, drink and R&B

WHEN: 10 a.m.
WHERE: The Raggedend
Big name sequels dominate 2010’s game releases

ASHLEY TOLEDOLife Editor

With dozens of new titles on the way, in 2010, including blockbuster sequels and promising new IPs, it’s going to be tough to find enough money and time to play them all. These are a look at some of the most anticipated titles on the way to help you plan ahead.

MASS EFFECT 2 - XBOX 360 (JAN. 26)

RPG fans pored countless hours into the first Mass Effect title. With an upgraded combat system, improved AI and new alien races, I don’t see how BioWare could disappoint.

MAG - PLAYSTATION 3 (JAN. 2)

Zipper Interactive’s Massive Action Game will live up to its name in the form of online matches where up to 256 players compete on a single map in objective-based matches. Aside from these massive battles, The game’s main campaign boasts an 8-player cooperative mode with customizable characters and an in-depth leveling system.

SPLENUM CEL: CONVOLUTION - XB36O, PC (FEB. 23)

Ubisoft is looking to reviown the Splinter Cell franchise with its fifth installment. A powerful story line and an exciting new co-op mode will hopefully make this one of, if not the best game in the series to date.

FINAL FANTASY XIII - PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 360 (MARCH 9)

The next numbered installment in the Square Enix’s famed Final Fantasy series takes place in the visually stunning cityworld of Cocoon and the outerworld of Pulse. The updated Active Time Battle System and in-game cinematics should keep Final Fantasy at the top of the role-playing pack for years to come.

GOD OF WAR III - PLAYSTATION 3 (MARCH)

The epic finale of Sony Computer Entertainments’ best-selling hack-and-slash action game has stirred up a lot of hype already. There’s almost no chance that this game will flop, especially after seeing the awe-inspiring trailer released at last year’s Electronic Entertainment Expo.

STARCAST II - PC (TBA, 2010)

In keeping with Blizzards reputation for delaying games until they are absolutely perfect, Starcraft II has already been delayed several times. The game was announced in may of 2007 and is currently set to release some time this year. There’s no doubt in my mind that, when it finally does release, it will be a perfectly balanced, real-time strategy experience.

TV favorites return with spring’s premieres lineup

LEONCIO ALVAREZStaff Writer

The Internet has actually made watching television easier than sitting on your couch and reaching over for the remote. Think about it. Anything from “Are You Afraid of the Dark?” to “Family Guy” can be found as long as you know where the Dark?” to “Family Guy” can be found as long as you know where.

BURN NOTICE

Not a lot of shows are so action-packed that they can have a mid-season finale and come back in a couple months. “Burn Notice” is one of those shows that really has no limits. The USA Network will finish off its third season starting Jan. 22 and some fans are still on the edge of their seats from how it ended. That’s right, five months on the edge of your seat equals one really good show.

LOST

This story has become way more than just the stranded and the island. ABC’s “Lost” is set to make a reappearance for its final season on Feb. 2 with a two-hour opener. All the confusing time warping and disappearing acts aside, “Lost” is an intense show that epitomizes suspense. The finale of this one should be one to remember.

NURSE JACKIE

Showtime’s dark yet extremely funny “Nurse Jackie” returns March 22. The show follows an extraordinarily hectic, work-obsessed Jackie (Edie Falco from “The Sopranos”) who is living a life full of love, lies and drugs — more emphasis on the latter. If you’ve been following the drama and shenanigans happening in this emergency room you probably think “Grey’s Anatomy” is simply just a difficult textbook.

PARTY DOWN

Starz is mostly known for playing classic movies, but lately it has been airing a slew of original programs meant to give competing networks a run for their money.

One of these shows, “Party Down” revolves around a cast of crazy caterers who make any party a blast. Without Jane Lynch, who left the show for her role on “Glee,” the show suffered a bit toward the end of season one. But Megan Mullally’s (“Will and Grace”) addition is sure to fix the harm done by her departure. Rob Thomas and Paul Rudd, creators of this comedy, will be bringing back this party favor in April.

There are plenty of shows set to glue you to a screen this new year. On Jan.14, “Project Runway’s” second time around on Lifetime will begin as well as “30 Rock” on NBC. Fox’s “24” brings daily action on Jan.17 with a two-night premiere and “Damages” on FX makes a triumphant return on Jan. 25.

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Virginia Tech comes up big to end the season

CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Almost four months after opening its season with a loss to a South- eastern Conference team at the Georgia Dome, Virginia Tech returned to show how much it had improved.

The Hokies also showed they’ll be a team to watch in 2010. In back-to-back games Virginia Tech won the Chick-fil-A Bowl on Thursday night.

“More than one Virginia Tech player mentioned the team’s 34-24 loss to Alabama on Sept. 5. “We started the season here, and we wanted to finish it strong here,” Williams said.

Added receiver Danny Coale: “I was happy to get another chance at the SEC. We wanted to come out and prove something. It was very important that we got another chance on a national stage.”

Quarterback Tyrone Taylor completed 10 of 17 passes for 209 yards and ran for a touchdown. Jarrett Boykin caught four passes and we wanted to finish it strong here,” Williams said.

“We've got some guys we're really happy about,” Beamer said. “When I see green, I take advantage of it.”

Tennessee quarterback Jonathan Crompton was taken to a hospital after the game because of an undisclosed injury late in the game, a school spokesman said. He wasn't the only loss for the Volunteers. Junior safety Eric Berry confirmed afterward that he will enter the NFL draft.

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than Crompton was taken to a hospital after the game because of an undisclosed injury late in the game, a school spokesman said. He wasn’t the only loss for the Volunteers.

“Most of the time when you work with the officials, when Thomas was ready for conference play,” said Thomas.

“Tim Williams led South Alabama with 18 points, followed by forward Martino Brock who had 15 points. Coming off the bench, center Gary Redus had 6 blocks.

Antoine Watson and Martavis Spiller matched the total touchdowns, and Tennessee added to its 19 touchdowns for the most outstanding player.

Virginia Tech's single-season rush- ing touchdowns and 22 total touchdowns for the first half, added a 46-yarder — the longest of his career — to push the lead to 27-14 early in the fourth quarter.

The Hokies had a chance to get back into it, but Denarius Worst missed a deep pass from Crompton on the Vol’s next drive. Williams said the play “really took the wind out of our sails.”

Virginia Tech players dumped their field goal gave Florida a 5-3 lead in the second quarter, then Hardesty ran through 301-pound defensive tackle Cordarrow Thompson for a 4-yard score that capped an 80-yard drive.

Buddy scores 15 in reserve; Smith leads USA with 16

WOMEN'S, page 12

us, particularly in the first half when we didn’t score for a stretch,” USA head coach Rick Pietri told usajaguars.com. “They really responded late in the half to send us in tied. I couldn’t be more proud of our kids, because FIU is a good basketball team.”

The Jaguars were able to maintain their momentum and FIU came no closer than five points the rest of the game.

“Most of the time when you work the ball around, the defending team will have a breakdown in that short period of time that you moved the ball.”

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Roberts drops 29 against the Jaguars

MEN’S, page 11

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LIVE!

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Undersized men's team struggles on home court

JOEY CRUZ
Staff Writer

When facing the obstacle of being undersized in almost every game, the FIU men's basketball team must conquer the turnover battle and shoot a high percentage from the three-point line to help balance their lack of presence in the post.

"It's not them playing a certain defense, we're doing this to ourselves," said FIU forward Marvin Roberts.

Three-point shooting has been a major struggle for the undersized Golden Panthers, who have a 26 percent three-point field goal percentage this season.

In FIU's 71-59 loss to conference rival South Alabama on Dec. 31, the Golden Panthers were unable to secure the ball as the Jaguars scored 25 points off 19 FIU turnovers.

"Our inability to take care of the basketball really killed us," said head coach Isiah Thomas. "This is definitely a tough loss for me to swallow."

The first half included 11 Golden Panthers turnovers, which transitioned South Alabama's 18-point swing midway through the first half making it difficult for FIU to rally back after giving up a 31-16 halftime lead.

"We didn't really have a chance to plan our home court," said Thomas. "We came off a long road game stretch and couldn't practice in the arena due to other tournaments."

The struggles from the three-point line did not stop against the Jaguars. FIU shot a mere 35 percent from beyond the arc.

The Golden Panthers were working the "I never looked at it as a down year to work on my game," said Rodgers. "It gave me a whole extra year to work on my game," said Rodgers.

Rodgers said. "I really and honestly just want to attainable this season and it won't be easy, Rodgers has set goals for herself and the FIU team that she is determined to accomplish.

When I got here the spirit of competition was kind of gone," Rodgers said. "I really and honestly just want to make this a double-digit win, if not, a 20 win team. I just want to help be a part of that. My goal is to help us win."

Agreement is reached to avoid blackouts

NIGEL DUARA
Associated Press Writer

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Football fans will be able to watch college bowl games on Sinclair stations after all, as the broadcast and the Mediaco cable TV operator agreed to extend by eight days their negotiations over fees.

Sinclair Broadcasting Group is seeking higher rates from Mediaco Communications Corp. to carry its stations. The deadline was extended from midnight Thursday to midnight Jan. 8. During the extension, Mediaco will pay Sinclair a higher rate than it was paying under the contract that expires Thursday.

That means the Orange Bowl game between Iowa and Georgia Tech won't be blacked out Tuesday. Other high-profile contests, such as the BCS national championship game next Thursday, had also been in danger of not being shown to Mediaco subscribers.

"We recognize that several of the impacted markets have college teams that will be playing in the BCS Bowl games," Sinclair spokesman Barry Faber said in a release. "We thought it was important to ensure that our viewers had the opportunity to see these games without inconveniences."

About 700,000 Mediaco subscribers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin were at risk of losing Sinclair programming.

The temporary Sinclair-Mediaco deal came as Time Warner Cable Inc. and Bright House Networks remained locked in a bitter dispute with News Corp. over similar fees for carrying the Fox television network and some of the cable channels that News Corp. also owns. That agreement was to expire at midnight Thursday, but the network struck a deal with Time Warner to extend the contract for a few hours, making it appear likely that a deal on fees would be reached.

Despite the Sinclair-Mediaco extension, feelings haven't warmed between the two sides. Faber said Sinclair hasn't been dealing fairly with Sinclair.

"It has been unfortunate that Mediaco has refused to pay fair compensation for our programming, which is much less than what they pay channel providers with far less viewers," Faber said in the release.

Tom Larsen, Mediaco's vice president of legal and public affairs, responded that the comparison was not applicable because cable channels generate far less revenue than broadcast stations.

This is the second time the two companies have been locked in a standoff. Sinclair stations were pulled from Mediaco
WORTH THE WAIT

Transfer Rakia Rodgers boosts the Panthers’ backcourt

Jaguars use late scoring run to top Golden Panthers

FIU shot 37 percent from the field and struggled at the foul line

The FIU women’s basketball team was unable to close out 2009 the way it would have liked.

The University of South Alabama, however, was able to celebrate the new year with their fifth consecutive win after defeating the Golden Panthers 61-51 on New Year’s Eve at the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

Forward Elisa Carey led FIU (6-8, 1-2 Sun-Belt) with 14 points and 14 rebounds, marking her fourth double-double of the season while Cherisse Budd had a solid game off the bench, contributing a season-high 13 points and 5 rebounds.

Meanwhile, Morriah Smith led the Jaguars and all scorers with a career-high 16 points.

The Golden Panthers uncharacteristically struggled from three-point range as they shot just 22.7 percent (5-of-22) while the Jaguars were efficient at 66.7 percent (8-of-12) on the night.

“The only setback for Rodgers this season was the fact she was unable to close out the 2008 season, was that due to NCAA transfer regulations, she was forced to sit out the remainder of the season along with the first nine games of this season.

Rodgers never really saw it as a down fall, only as another opportunity to make her game and her team better.

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