SPORTS PAGE 8

Memes basketball enters the Sun Belt Conference Tournament in Hammond, La. for its 11 seed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Organic Farmers Market, March 3, 12-4 p.m. Enjoy local organic food at the weekly farmers market held by the Belin-Young Ecological Center.

The Environmen's Security Partnership, March 4, 9-11 a.m. The International Environment Security Forum presents this lecture by Dr. Paul Kowert at MMC.

FIU's own School of Hospitality and Tourism Management is in a series of rousing monologues.

OPINION PAGE 5

Why Wal-Mart's practices don't violate laws and is simply pursuing ship opportunities.

The College of Law recently placed fourth in the American Bar Association's Negotiation Competition National Finals. The national finals took place in Orlando, Fla., this year and FIU competed along with 214 other law schools.

The team representing the law school this year included law students Marielys Llerena and Bryant Jones. Previous competitor Nicole Grimal coached the team. According to Jones, in order for his team to reach the national finals, between 40 and 50 people first competed in the intramural finals at FIU. Jones initially did not place in these competitions but his partner Llerena placed second.

"The judges did not pick the teams for the regional competition based on who won at the intramural competition, but based on who were the best competitors for the negotiation team," Jones said.

Following this, two teams competed in the regional finals in Tallahassee.

"During the regional finals, the teams were given cases dealing with employment law. We were given information about a fictitious client and were told to defend them against the prosecuting company. Myself, along with Marielys, represented an employee that had HIV who had his benefits cut due to his medical condition. Our goal was to try to get those back for the employee," Jones said.

Jones and Llerena's coach for the national finals was Nicole Grimal, who placed third at nationals last year.

According to Grimal, she took up the responsibility of coaching this year because the previous coach Ashley Vanderwerp had recently graduated.

Grimal commented on her experiences as both a competitor and a coach.

"This year was quite different for me. Prepping for these competitions requires the students and coaches put in 200 or more hours of work over the course of six months," Grimal said.

She added, "To coach, I not only had to use my negotiation skills, but---"
Restructure plan met with conflict

Jeff Krablín, assistant vice president of business services, assured that the department is currently conducting traffic studies of all the dining locations throughout campus to determine more changes. “These studies will be ongoing and changes to operating hours will be made based on these findings together with customer feedback, impact and cost analysis data,” Krablín stated. It is the hope of Krablín and the entire department that these hours will continue to attract the entire FIU student body—both residents and commuters.

Susaña Guerra, executive director of marketing and communications, reported that 600 transactions took place within the first week alone during the extended hours. FIU resident Paula Hurtado is one of the students who claims to be benefiting from the longer opening hours at Breezeway Cafe. “I have such a busy schedule between classes and work, I have such a hard time getting to the Cafe. These hours have been a long time coming and I’m finally able to come home with the Cafe still open,” Hurtado said.

Other students who live off-campus, such as freshman Ana Rivas, often use FIU’s dining locations throughout the weekend. “It would be awesome to know that I don’t have to worry as much as to whether Subway will be open or not on Saturday and instead focus on my chemistry test that’s on Monday,” Rivas said. Although the monetary cost to keep these venues open is not approximately known, business services hopes that these changes will continue to develop and benefit the student body. Panther Dining and Business Services are constantly trying to hear the opinion of the student body through several mediums.

“We are bringing money that supports the University, so it’s very important that we know what is going on within our organization,” Tyutina said. Furthermore, she argued against the restructuring saying that it is not a solution and the plan being put forth won’t make GSA more functional. She also said during the year she spent as GSA vice president she did not see any graduate senators at GSA meetings. “So apparently [GSA] is trying to solve [its] problems, by dissolving GSA because you can’t force senators to attend the meetings,” Tyutina said.

Though Rondón responded to Tyutina’s concerns, he saved most of the discussion on GSA’s future for an upcoming town hall meeting with GSA that will take place next Friday, March 12. David Trujillo, senior hospitality major, was appointed and unanimously confirmed as the fifth and final elections board member during the senate meeting four weeks away from the elections. When questioned about GSA’s past elections Trujillo said it isn’t an issue with how GSA operates them, but rather the candidates themselves. Trujillo said candidates not following rules set by the elections code is a recurring issue during elections, and a priority for the elections board is to ensure that candidates follow the code.

When questioned about SGA’s past elections Trujillo said it isn’t an issue with how SGA operates them, but rather the candidates themselves. Trujillo said candidates not following rules set by the elections code is a recurring issue during elections, and a priority for the elections board is to ensure that candidates follow the code. “I think everything’s time as far as how SGA runs things, we just have to make sure all the candidates are aware of the rules,” Trujillo said.

Trujillo added that the qualifications for the position are the work he’s done as president of the Student Alumni Association and sitting on the executive committees of Dance Marathon and Relay for Life.

Restructure plan met with conflict

As changes are being made throughout MMC, business services will continue to strive to improve the experience of students throughout FIU.
Burberry puts a swanky spin on backyard barbecue staples

South Beach burger bash is the perfect start to food-filled festival

Tents lined up on 10 St. to 13 St. on Ocean Drive for the Grand Tasting Village and inside, as Food Network star Paula Dean later put it, “was Spring Break for cooks.” Just like Friday night, unlimited food and drink were available and local flavors dominated. The FIU Hospitality tent offered some of the best food out there, including mouth-watering flank steak sandwiches on foccacia bread and impossible burgers cooked to order.

“The chef is paying,” said Miller, who plans on opening her own brewery. “This beer is the perfect combination with the steak sandwich.”

Three different stages were set up where some of the most well-known celebrity chefs presented their culinary skills for 45 minutes each.

Sandra Lee opened up her cocktail clinic stage with three different mixed drink recipes. One of them: a lemon drop martini that included lemon vodka, lemon juice, triple sec and grapefruit juice.

Other familiar faces that took the stage were Michael Symon who made homemade pasta and Anthony Bourdain and Eric Ripert who had a seafood challenge against each other judged by Guy Fieri and Robert Irvine. Yet again South Beach was the perfect place to celebrate all kinds of drinks and everything edible. All the hard work put in by so many paid off at the end of the weekend. Students and chefs alike are already planning for next year’s 10th anniversary.
LEFT: Bassist of Private Stock rocks out at Burger Bash presented by Rachael Ray, held on the white sands of the Ritz-Carlton Miami Beach.

RIGHT: Students at the FIU School of Hospitality and Tourism Management booth grill Chicago steak angus for their Flank Steak Sandwich.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Michael Psilakis prepares ceviche at Wine Presenter’s The Best at the Best held at the Fountainbleau Hotel.

Students, celebrity chefs join forces for weekend food bash

ABOVE: One of 30 different burgers prepared by top chefs and FIU students being served to enthusiasts at Burger Bash, the kick-off celebration to SoBe. The chefs competed in multiple categories including Best Dressed Burger, Best Side Dish with Idaho Potatoes and The People’s Choice.

LEFT: Eric Ripert (left) and Anthony Bourdain (right) compete in a 15-minute cook-off at the Grand Tasting Village on Feb 28.

Junior Gus Murillo grills short ribs for the Chefs on the Loose booth during BubbleQ on Feb 26.
College visits are a must-have on seniors’ to-do list

I guess you can call me a jetsetter now. In a column last semester, I advised readers who are potential graduate students to take a trip to visit colleges to get a better idea of their programs. At that time, I had visited one university before sending my first choice college application. Now, as spring break draws near, I am in the midst of planning more trips to other schools before I hit my commencement on April 27. So far, I have been accepted to two institutions, but I am still waiting to hear from three others, as well as financial aid packages for all five.

April 15th is the big day, by then I should have a good idea where I’ll be attending graduate school in the fall. As of right now, I have no clue of where I’ll be.

To help make this decision, however, I have opted to head to Boston this weekend and visit one of my top three schools, Emerson College, and speak to reps about their programs.

This semester, frankly, has been an anomaly for me. I never travel. But by April, I will have traveled to five cities, and the majority of these trips will deal with graduate school in some fact.

I realize that visiting these schools is ridiculous important – these places are where I could be for months, and possibly, at one point, the rest of my life. I also realize that the planning process and even traveling itself is extremely tiring.

Kavak.com has become my best friend. The Web site allows me to find price trends for airfares, so that I can compare travel dates and see fluctuations.

For example, this coming weekend, a trip to Boston from Miami International Airport would cost over $300 if flying out on Friday; the same date in Boston’s Logan International Airport would cost over $300. My plans come on the heels of mixed news from The Los Angeles Times; the newspaper reported that the nation’s airline industry would experience “modest increases in revenue” while demands increase this year as we come out of a recession. Because of this growing demand, airlines are likely to increase airfare prices.

Fantastic! But perhaps I’m overwhelmed because I am simply not used to flying. For two weeks two weekends straight, I was on a county trip for leisure, to visit my boyfriend I hadn’t seen in four months, and the second was an academic trip to Washington D.C. with my fourth-year honors seminar.

But after a break of a few weeks, I’ll be back on a cramped plane in economy class to visit another graduate school.

Let me mention that these opportunities come at a price: I’ve missed classes (and will miss more). I’ve gotten sick (but hopefully I won’t get sick again). I’ve spent a lot of money, checking in bags and buying from tourist stops. Now I know better.

If you’re planning on visiting schools, make sure you estimate as much as you can. As soon as you receive an acceptance notice, immediately pick a date for travel. Airfares almost always increase as time passes, so it’s best to lock in a low price while you can.

That’s the mistake I made. Instead of setting down with a calendar and marking times and checking prices, I’ve simply said, “Let’s go!” and I have been caught in a whirlwind.

Then again, that’s the result of playing the waiting game with these schools. And I’ll still wait.

Wal-Mart’s take on working practices is justified

DEAN WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

The Web site for the Voice for Working America provides visitors with a brief synopsis of the Wal-Mart corporation. It summarizes that Wal-Mart operates more than 3,000 stores, employs over 1 million U.S. workers and is the largest grocery retailer in the United States.

The 2008 Fortune Global 500 named Wal-Mart, relative to global revenue, the world’s largest corporation. Finance valued the corporation’s assets at $163.5 billion. Wal-Mart has given much to society. An article published by the Washington Post in September 2005 noted that in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Wal-Mart not only donated $20 million in cash, but provided 1,500 truck-loads of free merchandise, food for 100,000 meals and the promise of a job for its displaced workers.

In October 2005, MSNBC.com news service reported that Wal-Mart pledged to implement several environmental measures, including spending $500 million to increase the efficiency of its truck fleet by 25 percent over three years, and reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent in three years in order to increase energy efficiency.

As noted by a Wall Street Journal article published in April 2006, each week, about a third of the U.S. population, or 100 million individuals, visit the corporation’s U.S. stores. Wal-Mart has certainly lived up to its motto, “Save Money. Live Better.”

A joint study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that the lower class population in the U.S. benefits the most from the existence of retailers such as Wal-Mart.

Complimenting this fact, an article in Reuters via the New York Times, highlights the corporation’s price level reduction resulted in savings of $287 billion for consumers, roughly equaling $2,800 per household, a 7.3 percent increase from 2004, when savings were roughly $2,329 per household.

Wal-Mart has had a positive impact on the economy. A study “The Economic Impact of Wal-Mart” by consulting firm Global Insight, found that from 1984 to 2004, Wal-Mart’s growth resulted in a 9.1 percent reduction in “food-at-home” prices (as measured by the consumer price index).

Overall prices were 3.1 percent lower than they could have actu- ally been. The study continued my noting that Wal-Mart created more than 200,000 jobs in the U.S. during this time period.

In June 2006, Professors Russell Sobel and Andrea Dean from the West Virginia University published a study entitled “Has Wal-Mart buried Mom and Pop?”

After examining the view that Wal-Mart harms small businesses, Sobel and Dean suggest that while Wal-Mart’s low prices force some “mom and pop” businesses to close, it also sets in motion the process of creative destruction through which oppor- tunities for other types of small businesses emerge, concluding that the corporation has a positive impact on small businesses sector of the U.S. economy.

The corporation has made increased efforts to address the compensation of its employees. A March 2009 article in the Wall Street Journal indicated that the company paid $993.6 million in homes to its full and part-time employees, an additional $788.8 million in profit sharing and 401(k) contributions.

On Feb. 8, the New York Times published an article enti- tled “Immigrants Claim Wal-Mart Fired them to Provide Jobs for Local Residents.”

The contention rests not only in the title of the argument, as it would be unfair for Wal-Mart to hire immigrants when Americans in need of employment.

The article further notes that West Africans claim to have been fired due to race prejudices, when in fact, there are West Africans at the same store who have been promoted to supervisory posi- tions at that very store. Addition- ally, and more pointedly, the same article contends that the immi- grants were fired because of their inability to meet the work require- ments as mandated by the store’s new management.

Wal-Mart is definitely a profit- able successful business that other companies should aspire to become.

The Statue of Liberty’s tablet reads, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed to me...” They may come, but under no illusion of what the American dream is: a meritocratic, capitalistic society.

They may come, but under no illusion of what the American dream is: a meritocratic, capitalistic society.

WINNER LOSER

FAIR OR NOT?

Fan of Jay Leno. Whether they are. Lance moves to host the “Tonight Show” this fall after hosting “The Jay Leno Show” for the past six months. Lance replaces Conan O’Brian, who joins NBC in its new fall lineup.

Playstation Network, the free online network that connects Playstation 3 gamers to online network that connects}
THE BEACON REVIEWS: THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Powerful monologues celebrate strength, femininity

MARIA MURRIEL
Staff Writer

At around 8 p.m. on Feb. 26, the Women's Studies Student Association President Guadalupe Juarez stepped onstage to welcome a buzzing full house. She introduced Eve Ensler’s The Vagina Monologues opening night in the Green Library's auditorium to an expectant audience made up of all ages and genders.

In the atrium and the lobby, members and helpers of the WSSA served refreshments and sold white and brown Vagina Pops to patrons still arriving. The funds collected went to charity and there was a table set up with informational pamphlets.

Tightly packed into the next two hours, FIU students played out stories of first times and first good times, listed a variety of nicknames given to the vagina, and recounted tales of sexual slavery and menstruation.

Starting off the night on a humorous kick, Veronica Nydam performed The Flood, a Jewish woman, a college student, an African-American woman, a “militant bisexual” woman, and countless other women— all moaning to their respective tastes and interests.

As people scrambled back to their seats, Gabrie Swingler took the stage and put them all to attention when she yelled, “My vagina is angry!” Her forceful performance of My Angry Vagina was the first to pump the crowd into a screaming fit of laughter and whooping. When she returned later with Reclaiming C-4, the lovely rubble-rouser got the whole room shouting C-4 at her as she gained the stage on the roof of an old building.

In what seemed like a wave of hilarity, Martha Maria Lopez became The Woman Who Loved Make Vaginas Happy. She came onstage wearing a lawyer-meets-dominatrix getup and progressively stripped down to her corset as she told of a woman’s journey to moaning for money.

Her character, a paid woman pleaser, had gotten moans down to such a science that she could recite all the different types. Lopez twisted and shouted as she impersonated a Jewish woman, a college student, an African-American woman, a “blatant bisexual” and countless other women— all moaning to their specific tastes and interests.

The success of this year’s monologues may be a sign of growing awareness.

“The Vagina Monologues are an opportunity to provide a forum for women to talk about the idea of one of my sorority sisters,” said Rayda Rojas, vice president of LTA’s Gamma Pi chapter. “When she became a sister, she saw that we didn’t do as much as we could for more political activism and social awareness. Becoming a new sister in 2007, she saw that if she could change this, along with our then President Stephanie Pycky who is currently in Ecuador in the Peace Corps, and our chapter’s support.”

In 2008, Bernace thought of the idea of AAW. In Spring 2008, these ladies hosted their first AAW focusing on Darfur, Sudan.

Then, in the Spring of 2009, they chose immigration as their focus. This week, they have selected At Risk Youth to be their topic of discussion. “As minorities, it is especially important we are informed citizens and put our numbers to good use. We’ve raised over $600 for two charities and hope to raise even more this year,” Bernace said.

The first event, held on March 2, was a Gallery Night at the Frost Art Museum Café. Photographs, taken of youth in the community who live in shelters and want to express their feelings about being labeled and being made fun of, were on display. There was a live jazz band and refreshments were provided.

“We’ve partnered with StandUp For Kids, an organization that helps homeless and street kids improve their lives,” Rojas said.

The second event, to be held March 3, will be a showing of the movie Dangerous Lives in GL 100 at 9 p.m. which portrays teenagers dealing with real-life problems such as peer pressure and gang bullying. After the movie they will have an open discussion.

On March 4, there will be a Stroll Competition in GL 100 at 9 p.m. That is a staple event for AAW. They use the traditions of the Multi Cultural Greek Council and the National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations to step, stroll and sign to showcase their tradition while competing and raising donations at the same time.

“I am most excited about the Stroll ’At Your Own Risk’ event,” said Maria Lopez del Castillo, chapter president of LTA. “We have more than 10 teams coming from different universities and it looks to be even better than the previous years.”

All donations received throughout the week will be given to StandUp For Kids. Many other organizations are excited for this event as well.

Of course, the men of Lambda Theta Phi, Latin Fraternity Inc. will also be an attendance at the week.

“We are definitely helping out with their work,” said Jorge Viera, a junior and brother of LTP. “We are participating in the step/stroll/salute competition but we have Thursday.”

“We hope, if anything, that our AAW this year makes everyone stop and think about what youth in our community and everywhere else around the world go through and how we must be not only positive role models but give these youth a second chance,” Rojas said.

THE BEACON REVIEWS: THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Nathalie Levy performs at the Vagina Monologues on Feb. 26 in GL 100.
TOURNAMENT TIME

FIU set to face North Texas to open SBC tournament

JONATHAN RAMOS
Sports Director

The FIU women’s basketball team defeated North Texas in both of their meetings this season by an average of 13 points.

So when the Sun Belt Conference announced its championship seeds and schedules on Feb. 28, the draw gave fans plenty of reason to believe the Golden Panthers could advance past the first round of the SBC tournament.

FIU (14-15, 9-9 SBC) will face North Texas (9-21, 5-13 SBC) on March 6 at 2:30 p.m. when the tournament kicks off in Hot Springs, Ark. If FIU can beat North Texas, they would advance to play No. 2 seed Middle Tennessee on March 7 in the second round of the tournament.

The Golden Panthers nabbed the No. 7 seed after South Alabama won a tie breaker for the No. 6 seed based on regular season results. South Alabama and FIU had identical 9-9 conference records. After winning six consecutive games, the Golden Panthers lost their last two contests to MTSU and Western Kentucky.

The road for FIU in the tournament foresees bumps along the way. If the Golden Panthers are to beat Western Kentucky (32-3), or Louisiana-Monroe. The top four seeds in the tournament would include North Texas, Louisiana-Lafayette, or Louisiana-Monroe.

Notably, FIU is already a small team with Otero (6-foot-7) in the line-up. Without his presence in the low block, the Golden Panthers must adapt to their lack of size and presence in the low block.

Golden Panthers to face Denver without Otero

JOEY CRUZ
Staff Writer

FIU will play Denver in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference men’s basketball tournament in Hot Springs, Ark. on March 6. FIU is the No. 11 seed in the conference with a 7-24 record overall (4-14 SBC).

“All we have to do is win four games,” FIU point guard Phil Gary Jr. said. “And if we do, we’re making the NCAA tournament.”

The road for FIU in the tournament foresees bumps along the way. If the Golden Panthers were to beat Denver in the first round, they would take on Middle Tennessee in the quarterfinal round. The semi-final round would include North Texas, North Texas, North Texas, or Louisiana-Monroe.

The top four seeds in the SBC are Troy, North Texas, Middle Tennessee and Western Kentucky.

Notably, FIU has beaten two of the top four seeds (MTSU and NT) at least once this season.

“Coach just tells us that we have to play hard for 40 minutes,” Gary said.

MISSING LINK

Golden Panther forward J.C. Otero injured his knee with 8:30 left during the Western Kentucky game on Feb. 27. FIU spokesman Paul Dotson had no update on the status of his MRI taken on March 1.

“We can’t replace J.C.,” Gary said. “He does everything for us. He’s our best rebounder and best post scorer. I’m even going to have to get down there and get rebounds.”

FIU is already a small team with Otero (6-foot-7) in the line-up. Without his presence in the low block, the Golden Panthers must adapt to their lack of size entering the most important time of the season.

STORY CLEAN UP

FIU head coach Cindy Russo [right] discusses game-time strategies with assistant coach Joanne Aluka White [left].

SPORTS

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Golden Panthers rebound from a 2008-09 campaign in which they won five games. “I think they’re getting better, and I know they went on a six game win streak at one point,” Jenkins said.

Ferguson, a 2008 All-Sun Belt Conference first team performer, was impressed with sophomore Rakia Rodgers.

“She’s doing pretty good,” Ferguson said of Rodgers, whom she played against in 2007. “She’s always been athletic, and she’s a good defensive player.”

Jenkins spoke about the breakout season of Elisa Carey, who played behind Jenkins last season.

“She’s starting to play within herself and figuring out what works for her and everything,” Jenkins said. “It’s really good to see.”

Ferguson, who is third in FIU history in 3-pointers made, will play basketball in the spring for the Miami Rain, a semi-professional team in the Women’s Blue Chip Basketball League. Jenkins is working on her certification to be a personal trainer.

STRONG DEFENSE

FIU, ranked third in the SBC in scoring defense, allowing just 62.4 points per game to opponents this season, continued their stingy defense against WKU. Despite the close 64-61 loss, FIU held WKU five points under their average.

The effort came one game after a humbling 101-88 loss to MTSU on Feb. 25.

OLD FRIENDS

As seniors Monika Bosilj, Marquita Adeley, Ashley Trangott and Cherieise Buddy played in their last home game on Feb. 27 vs. WKU, a few former Golden Panthers were in attendance.

Laquatta Ferguson and Jasmine Jenkins were among those who were honored at halftime of the contest against the Hilltoppers.

They spoke on the state of the program and their current doing.

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