New law ties teacher pay to students’ test scores, progress

BILL KACZOR
Associated Press

Gov. Charlie Crist says no other issue has put as much political pressure on him during his more than three years in office as a bill that would make it easier to fire Florida teachers and tie their salaries to student test scores.

How much pressure?

“A ton. A ton,” Crist said Friday while visiting a state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission office in St. Petersburg, his hometown. Crist has backed off from his earlier support of the bill, and he now says he’s unsure whether he’ll sign or veto it.

Teachers are upset over the legislation (SB 6). They’ve been holding demonstrations across the state and flooding the Capitol with phone calls and e-mails urging Crist to veto the bill.

The Florida Education Association, the statewide teachers union, and local school officials also oppose the bill. It is supported by business interests and most Republican politicians including former Gov. Jeb Bush, still an influential force in Florida politics.

Crist also is getting lobbied from within his family.

“My dad used to be chairman of the school board,” said Crist, who was once the state’s education commissioner.

“One of my three sisters has been public school teachers here in Pinellas County. I am hearing a lot about it everywhere. They’re making very

EDUCATION, page 4

STRATEGIC PLAN

Plan looks to set goals for next ten years

MELISSA CACERES
Staff Writer

With the beginning of a new decade, it is time for the University to set goals for the future.

In a forum held April 8, the commit-tees in charge of carrying out the new plan of action allowed University members to contribute ideas to the plan.

“Communities are forums that we will be having this month and the one’s we will have in September will really identify and shape the validity of the plans and hopefully every-body’s enthusiastic support for the direction that the University is going to take,” said Dr. Douglas Wartezok, the interim provost, executive vice president and chief operating officer at FIU, who lead the forum.

Faculty and staff ranging from colleagues to college deans filled the majority of the room, located in College of Business.

Those at the Biscayne Bay Campus were able to attend the event and give their input to the discussions via webcast.

“The important point for us is that we’ll be focusing on the 5 year time-line and less on the 10 ten year time-line,” said Wartezok. “The one thing that we don’t want to have is that everyone put forth so much effort

STRATEGY, page 3

New garage to add classrooms, retail venues

ALEXANDRA CAMEJO
Staff Writer

With the development of new venues and improvements on campus, Panther Dining and Business Services are aiming to create a new look at Modesto Maidique Campus that will not only target students’ needs for more choices but generally improve their experience at FIU.

“Come Fall, there are going to be lots of new things going on,” states Jeff Krabin, assistant vice president of Business Services.

Not only will students return to renovated areas of the Graham Center, and a brand new Chili’s Too, but FIU can also expect the opening of a new parking facility, named PGS Market Station.

The PGS Market Station, the name chosen after much deliberation by both Business Services and University administration, is the first multi-use parking garage constructed on campus.

The $40 million facility is much more distinctive than the parking garages students are accustomed to.

The real objective is to make it a place to gather, a place to be able to spend time, and a place to be able to meet people.

Jeff Krabin, assistant vice president of Business Services

Aside from containing 2,000 additional parking spaces, PGS Market Station will contain 29,000 square feet of classroom, retail and dining space on its first floor. Although the retail locations have yet to be determined, this garage will be the new home to the University Police Department.

Equipped with the latest tech-

PG5, page 4
Dont have Panther Bucks?
Need more Panther Bucks?

Get a 10% Bonus
FREE* when you sign up for
Panther Bucks at www.pantherdining.com
or GC 114

*minimum deposit $100
Plan hopes to double enrollment

Wartzok also announced the chairpersons of the committees that would be presenting: Aime Martinez (Finance), who is the assistant vice president of the FIU Foundation, Professor Yong Tao (Infrastructure), from the College of Engineering, and Bill Beesting (Student Success), assistant dean of undergraduate studies.

Every ten years, FIU’s administration engages in “strategic planning,” a process that involves identifying the desired future for the institution as well as deciding what actions should be made to reach that goal. These initiatives, which are updated in order to fit the needs of the University for the coming decade, focus on key areas of University interests.

FIU’s last strategic plan was called the ‘2001-2010 Millennium Strategic Plan’ and centered on improving institutional infrastructure, State University System governing systems and graduate and undergraduate education.

“The appointment of President Mark Rosenberg in the Fall of 2009 coincided with the need to develop a new strategic plan,” Wartzok said in the presentation.

Many of the ideas brought up by the audience members revolved around progress in the area of student success. They felt that the University should invest time in the faculty connection to the students.

“I’m strongly in favor of doubling the size of FIU in terms of enrollment within the next ten years. I think that is going to give us the kind of resources we need to become a strong research University, which I think is essential,” said Brian Peterson, an associate professor in the history department.

Peterson went on to suggest that the committees invest in cohort programs, that would involve students consistently staying with the same group of classmates and professors throughout a period of their undergraduate education. In this experiment, he advised to involve a mixture of mainstream and at-risk students, such as University athletes.

“With that we could significantly increase our graduation rates for that group of students,” Peterson said.

Dr. Connie Boronat, the director of assessment and evaluation of student affairs and undergraduate education, expressed concern over the effect of failure among students when it came to College Algebra.

Research has shown, according to Boronat, that a student’s outcome in that particular class more than likely determines their empowerment to continue their university education.

She informed the committee that the Strategic Plan should involve looking ‘gateway’ courses, such as Algebra, in order to increase student success.

However, the issue of a united campus involvement within the Strategic Plan as a whole was brought up during the later half of the forum.

“I think it’s of utmost importance to us that we don’t leave Biscayne Bay out of ‘health,’ ‘arts,’ or ‘global’ or any other topic,” said Stephen Moll, the interim vice provost of the Biscayne Bay Campus via webcast.

“We need to be a part of what every- thing every committee thinks about and not just thinking about the Modesto Maidique Campus as being FIU. We are all FIU.

This would be the first of two forums that will draw ideas from the crowd; with the second taking place on April 14 which will target the remaining strategic themes; arts, environment, global, and health.

So far, the committees are still gathering information for their final draft of the plan and will continue during the second open forum on April 14 as well as those during September. The entire package will be presented to the FIU Board of Trustees by December 2010.

For more information on the Strategic Planning, visit stratplan.fiu.edu
NASA shifts focus away from space

SETH BORSTEIN
Associated Press

NASA may not be going to the moon anytime soon and its space shuttles are about to be retired, but it could conceivably increase the number of agency jobs under a new reorganization, NASA's chief said Thursday.

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden said that because NASA has more money overall, it should have more jobs compared to the previous administration’s plans for a moon mission. But more of those jobs will be on research into airplanes and automobile safety, which NASA also plans to spend billions of dollars more over the next five years on developing new rocket technology and helping private firms build their own ships to take people to the international space station.

“More money and that would you say you have more jobs,” Bolden said during a telephone press conference. But he said the agency has not come up with any real figures on employment, and that the more-jobs claim is just based on correlation with spending.

Thursday’s press conference outlined how NASA would change under a new space plan that President Barack Obama unveiled during his State of the Union address Wednesday night.

That space plan kills a return-to-the-moon mission, dubbed “Apollo on steroids” that his predecessor proposed in 2004.

To pay for that moon mission, then-President George W. Bush announced the retirement of the space shuttles by the end of 2010

Space shuttles will be mothballed within months.

Instead of spending tens of billions of dollars on the moon mission, the Obama administration plans to divert the money to researching new rocket technology for general exploration, fostering commercial space industry, climate change science, and aeronautics. The ultimate exploration goal is Mars, Bolden said.

“We’re expanding the amount of programs we have so we can try to get people to do the work that we want to be involved in the space program,” Bolden said.

That will be a big issue next week when President Obama goes to Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where people are concerned about losing their current jobs, to try to sell his space plan.

Bolden said in NASA’s reorganization some areas that concentrate on the space shuttle will lose contractor jobs because the shuttle fleet is being retired.

Under the reorganization, Kennedy Space Center will be in charge of the new $6 billion program to encourage private companies to fly astronauts. The launch complex will get a $2.3 billion overhaul.

“People can work and enjoy the space shuttle in Florida,” Bolden said.

Meanwhile, Florida was the first state to reach its congressional goal of funding for the space program, though lawmakers say it still needs another $250 million to keep its space industry thriving.

While students may be able to see higher grades, other professors aren’t so sure.

Elita Bonilla, chair of the FIU Teachers Union, said that when the new bill goes into effect in the fall, teachers will no longer have the right to strike.

“I think it’s a great thing that we can finally get together as a team and discuss our problems without the fear of job security,” Bonilla said.

Some teachers, she said, are concerned about losing their current jobs, to try to sell his space plan, “Good teachers from working in Florida.”

A veto would put him on a collision course with his own party’s leaders including the bill’s sponsor, Sen. JohnThune, who also serves as Florida Republican Party chairman, and Bush who has already lobbed the bill through his Foundation for Florida’s Future.

One who polls show is trailing former House Speaker Marco Rubio in their GOP primary race for the U.S. Senate nomination, has seven days to decide and plans to use every one of them.

“I think it’s too important to do anything hasty,” Crist said.

Advocates say the legislation will help attract and retain better teachers with pay raises while weeding out the bad ones. Merit pay is something that’s been tried before in Florida and other states.

Opponents say the tenure and recer-

ificaton provisions are unprecedented anywhere in the nation. They argue the lack of job security and testing that can be skewed by outside factors such as students’ homes life could discourage good teachers from working in Florida.

Teachers in Miami-Dade schools planned a walk out on April 9, which some teachers are referring to as “Black Friday,” according to WSVN. The report added that with the Boycott Teachers Union.

Elementary school teacher Fere Trujillo, who teaches math and science at Meadowlawn Elementary School in Hialeah, was “dumbfounded” by the decision.

Trujillo said.

Maria Fernandez, associate professor of math education at the College of Education, said that this bill might impact the profession in that it would increase the turnover rate for new teachers.

“There are schools where it’s harder to show that growth and perform-

ance, and new teachers may end up in those schools,” Fernandez said. “New teachers are on one year contracts, if they fail show an increase they will be let go.”

Student Government Council at Modinian Madique Campus tabled a resolution in favor of K-12 reform in mid-February. Then chief of staff and current Vice President-elect Nick Antii-

elo was one of the resolution’s biggest supporte

rs.

“It’s going to be absolutely great for our teachers,” Antiielo said. “We have no way of rewarding our best teachers who get up every day, to get these inner city schools and are really the miracle workers.

They’ve turned this in to ‘if this passes, you’ll lose your job’ … none of that is true,” Antiielo said.

Additional reporting by Jorge Valens.
Students speak out for gay rights by staying silent

JASMYN ELLIOTT
BBC Managing Editor

As the clock struck 1 p.m. on April 8, yells erupted in Panther Square. Although National Day of Silence is officially on April 16 this year, students at the Biscayne Bay Campus decided go silent in an event that protests violence and bullying against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community.

The event was a part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Questioning and Ally Pride Week. This marks the third time the event, sponsored by StonewallBBC, has been held.

Before the event officially began at 11 a.m., members of Stonewall2BBC handed out t-shirts, wristbands, and informational cards to those participating.

“Most people stay silent for the whole day,” Alvaro Rivas, a senior psychology major and Stonewall2BBC member, said, “but we are staying silent for a couple of hours.”

According to Daniel Anzueto, a senior psychology major and president of Stonewall2BBC, participants were encouraged to remain silent between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. while wearing a t-shirt and/or a wristband with the event’s logo. They were also instructed to hand out the cards to those that did not know why they were being silent.

SILENCE, page 5

Survey reveals campus staff needs improving, training

MELODY REGALADO
Staff Writer

One complaint often heard by students at the Biscayne Bay Campus is the lack of good customer service available to them.

“There is no accountability with the way students are treated,” said Christian “Cici” Battle, president-elect of the Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus.

Last year, the Office of the Provost began taking steps to improve upon these issues.

“This office continues to stress putting the student and other BBC community members first and offering the best service possible,” said Julissa Castellanos, director of operations at the Office of the Provost at BBC.

The office also created an online survey to evaluate how students, faculty, and staff perceive customer service at BBC.

The survey evaluates the quality of service experienced at various campus establishments, including the campus bookstore, the cafeteria, and the registration office.

The rating scale ranges from one to five, or poor to excellent. A third space available to write additional comments under each question

At the moment, ratings averaged between three and four, or good and very good.

Between January and March 2009, 294 people have taken the survey. Of those respondents, the majority were students but it was representative of just 3% of the BBC student population.

Next, respondents were asked, “In thinking about your last visit, what is your perception of the quality of service you received at each of the following locations?”

According to a results report issued by the Office of the Vice Provost, one comment claimed that disparities existed between the quality of service available at both campuses.

“Overall the BBC should have the same resources and abilities as [Modesto Muddique Campus].”

The students at BBC have the same financial obligation but the amenities are less than appropriate,” wrote the commenter.

“The competence is also lacking, not to be disrespectful. I’m not sure if it is empowerment or training but everything seems to have to go through [MMC].”

Jackie Schuck, a senior journalism major, feels it seems they don’t like their jobs.

“Sometimes they forget that they’re here to help students, not give us a hard time,” she said.

Most feedback regarding the question of staff perception expressed concerns over the lack of communication between both campuses and the lack of more timely responses for their issues.

Among the comments dealing with the professionalism and attention received from University staff were suggestions to train all staff in customer service and being more helpful when it comes to registration and financial aid.

“I think the attitude some students receive deters them from doing a lot,” said Battle, “There needs to be a way to monitor how students are being treated.”

During the Spring 2009 semester, over 100 faculty and staff went through a customer service training program sponsored by the Office of the Vice Provost through Claudia Castillo, assistant director of academic support services at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

On average, the lowest rated departments included Financial Aid, Registration, the Cashier, Parking and Transportation, Dining Services/cafeteria and Human Resources.

The highest rated depart- ments, on average, were the bookstore, the library, the Learning Center, the Office of the Vice Provost and several academic departments.

Other comments recom- mended that other departments be evaluated in the survey, including the Wellness Center, Housing and the Health Clinic.

Castellanos encourages students to take the survey online at http://www.careervision.com/SDL7GNN.

Students speak out for gay rights by staying silent

KATHERINE PORRAS
Contributing Writer

In a few months, students will have a chance to work for “the most magical place on Earth.” Walt Disney World, the entertainment, hospitality, and marketing empire, is offering a paid internship to all interested students for the Fall 2010 semester.

According to Danette Michael, the Disney College program recruiter and Disney College alumna, the internship is a wonderful experience to work for a Fortune 100 company such as Disney.

“It allows for students to network and gain work experience that they can put on their resume,” Michael said. “When employers see you worked for Disney, it stands out and today with this economy you want to stand out.”

According to Michael, the Disney College program was established since 1982 in Orlando’s Disney World and recently opened in California’s Disney Land minutes away from Los Angeles.

The internship provides apartment- ments for participating students, which are fully furnished, and include all basic utilities.

“We take the housing fee from your paycheck so you do not have to worry about making payments,” Michael said.

The program also offers free major-specific Disney courses in human resources, entertainment, engineering, and finance to name a few.

“Finish your internship and you have a chance to work for Disney,” Michael added.

“The classes are free, but may require textbooks or other materials you would have to buy on your own,” Michael said. “Some courses allow for the student to get one-on- one time with the big people from Disney, such as the vice president of marketing, and allows for the student to network.”

Brianna Bellantoni, a senior majoring in broadcast journalism and Disney College alumni, described the experience as “amazing and life-changing.”

“At first, I was hesitant because I did not know if it fit in with my major, but once I did it, I found it amazing,” Bellantoni said. “It is just an amazing company and I am sure I want to work for Disney.”

Harold Clayton, associate director of Career Services, was proud to see that the Disney College program once again made a stop at the University.

“What keeps bringing [Disney] to our school is the professionalism and quality of students found [at FIU],” Clayton said.

The internship program lasts four and a half months. In order to apply, students must attend a mandatory information presentation.

If you missed the presentation held on April 8 at the Biscayne Bay Campus, you can still attend an e- presentation available now on their website. The deadline for applica- tions is April 25.

For more information, contact BBC Career Services at 305-919-3607, Danette Michaels at Danette.L.Michaels@disney.com, or log on to disneycollegenet.com
A line of students forms as they sign in and receive their t-shirts, fliers, and wristbands before the Day of Silence event begins in Panther Square on April 8. The National Day of Silence event gave students the opportunity to protest bullying and harassment against the LGBTQA community.

According to Vicky Owles, the associate director of Campus Life and Orientation, the Day of Silence event at BBC has “only gotten bigger” since it began three years ago.

“In the first year, there were only two people participating -- Daniel [Anzueto] and someone else,” Owles said. “Now, thanks to a grant, we were able to purchase t-shirts and wristbands and attract more people.”

Owles believes that this event is an effective way to show support for the LGBT community.

“There are people around the world and in our community that won’t speak out and I feel that we are representative of that,” she said. “We speak on their behalf by not speaking.”

Day of silence shows support, educates others

SIGNING IN

A line of students forms as they sign in and receive their t-shirts, fliers, and wristbands before the Day of Silence event begins in Panther Square on April 8. The National Day of Silence event gave students the opportunity to protest bullying and harassment against the LGBTQA community.

“It’s an important day because it helps people that would normally not know about it get a better idea of what it is,” Anzueto said.

According to Anzueto, there were a “mass number” of people walking around the campus and spreading awareness by wearing the shirt, wearing the wristband, and distributing the informational card.

At 1 p.m., the participants gathered in Panther Square and screamed together, symbolizing the silent attitude toward harassment of the LGBT community being broken.

Those that were present had various reasons for participating.

“I just want to let people know about us,” Rivas said. “There is also an LGBT group on campus and I want to make this University a little more friendly.”

Stephanie Sarros, freshman nutrition major, had a similar motive.

“I appreciate the LGBT community,” Sarros said. “I want to support them.”

Athena Obregon, freshman hospitality major, participated to honor those closest to her.

“My mom is a lesbian,” Obregon said. “I’m here to support her and all of my gay friends.”

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AT THE BAY

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Organic garden nominated for USDA award

ADRIAN ESPINOZA
Staff Writer

Tucked in between the wildlife preserve and the Baseball Stadium, the University’s organic garden, still relatively unknown to the student body, is up for review by the United States Department of Agriculture. Dr. Mahadev Bhat and Dr. Krish Jayachandran from the Department of Earth and Environment founded the garden that is now a USDA employee gives FIU’s organic garden, still relatively unknown to the student body, is up for review by the United States Department of Agriculture. Dr. Mahadev Bhat and Dr. Krish Jayachandran from the Department of Earth and Environment founded the garden that is now a USDA-funded program that pushes the development of gardens the USDA wants to see propagate around the world.

The gardens can range in a variety of sizes and types but must meet certain requirements within three categories: They must benefit the community, be community-based, and must incorporate sustainable practices. Although the gardens aren’t expected to be the same, the terms that do uniform them define what a garden should include. Benefiting the community means that one or more of the following must be present: The garden should be located in a place of leisure or recreation, it must provide food for those in need and habitat for wildlife native to the area, or control storm water to improve water quality.

The next stipulation that will get a garden nominated is its incorporation of sustainable resources, which can include a number of arrangements: Introducing native plants, encouraging pest-repelling insects, collecting water in barrels, and composting and mulching, to name a few. Most importantly, it is a community endeavor and must utilize the efforts of neighbors, volunteers or students alike.

On April 9, the Garden Club, headed by Stephanie Alvarez, organized a carpentry workshop to build a picnic table and construct the market garden bed. They wrapped up the carpentry portion of the day by preparing the spot where the new bulletin board would be placed.

Students also discussed the work they performed with their own garden beds and what they have learned from their research. “That is what is interesting about the garden, you use what you learn there and apply it to tackling bigger social problems,” said Alvarez, who is pursuing a master’s in environmental studies.

After the workshop, a movie on botany was played, followed by a dinner using what they have learned from their research. “Everybody liked the idea of all the waitresses dressing the way they are,” said Erick Andrew, manager and owner of Panther Sports Bar and Grill.

PANTHER BAR, page 10

Expanding Head

Albums worth lending an ear to

I had a conversation the other day with a classmate about my column. Since we’re both journalism majors, I guess we’re both internally programmed to not really converse with people, but to interview them – as if we’re both trying to dig out information from one another and not necessarily be generally interested in what we have to say. Maybe he was interested. I’m not too certain. He, essentially, asked if I’ve ever gotten any feedback about my column and whether I’ve ever gotten complaints from people not knowing any of the bands I’ve written about. He actually sounded pretty condescending, but maybe that was just his “interview” voice. He made it sound as if I only write this column for my “little group of friends.”

If this is the general consciousness of “Expanding Head” readers, I would like to state that the music I write about in this column is not for some niche collective of “peers.” I wrote this column so that people would seek out new music, rather than hear someone’s opinion on music they’ve already heard. And if you’ve heard it already, well then come by the radio station and we’ll chat about it. Sure, I can just talk about the Trey Songz record or how O.G. Rick Ross is, but you’ve already formulated an opinion on the subject. You already know it’s good and you’ve already heard it. Why not listen to something you haven’t heard?

A good question to me is if I have any authority to even be writing about what’s good and what’s not. Well, I’ve been music director at the University radio station, Radiate FM (this is a plug), for about a year and a half. I get about 30 records coming in the mail each week. It’s one of the only times I can say that I get paid to listen to music, which I don’t think is a good thing. You don’t really get to enjoy or fully consume the record you listen to. You’re more concerned about finishing the record so you can stack it onto a pile and move on to the next record.

Point is, I listen to my fair share of music and I feel like if I can set up a more decent rotary for radio airplay, one that exhibits the picture of unknown gems that deserve to be heard, well then I feel I have just a bit of authority on what’s good and what’s not. So, that’s a stamp of reassurance to not only myself, but to you. This is actually my last column, so I feel like I’d want the few people that read it to know my intentions. Maybe that will embed my run into a hint of context. Now, I’ll leave you with some records to listen to while I’m gone.

TITUS ANDRONICUS - THE MONITOR

Great record from fellow Jersey kids who make some kind of weird allegory about life in the Garden State and the Civil War. I don’t know. It’s just awesome.

HARLEM - HIPPIES

This garage-rock band from Austin is just personified fun.

DEERHOOF - APPLE O

Great little art/noise rock band that has my heart. This is a great album and it’s being reissued (re-pressed on vinyl) for Record Store Day (April 17).

JAVELIN - NO MAS

Expanding Head, page 10
Mr. 305 and a few guests visited the University on April 7 as part of Student Programming Council’s signature event, the Up-Roar concert.

On that day the U.S. Century Bank Arena was reserved for the concert that lasted from 8 p.m. to almost the next day. The concert featured Cleveland, Ohio native Kid Cudi and Miami’s own Pitbull.

SPC-MMC started giving out tickets on March 24 and they were all gone by March 29, according to Joshua Brandfon, coordinator of Campus Life and SPC-MMC adviser. They gave out over 1,900 tickets the first day and a total of 3,200 tickets. The concert cost $110,000 and was paid for with money from the Activities and Service fee collected through student tuition and distributed by student government.

The money covered the artists themselves, sound, lights, the stage, security, marketing for the concert and the rental fee for the arena. SPC-MMC had to rent the arena from the Athletics Department. This was meant to cover the Athletics staff on hand during the concert and the custodians who would clean up the arena after the concert.

The money also covered the fee of the agency used to book the artists, Concert Ideas. SPC-MMC has been working with Concert Ideas for as long as Brandfon has been working for the University. Brandfon estimated the University has been working with Concert Ideas for at least 10 years.

SPC-MMC did research for the concert during the Fall semester to find out what students wanted and worked with their agency to find out which artists perform at colleges in Miami and their prices.

“We tried to find who was hot,” Brandfon said.

Their research showed that what students wanted were hip-hop and Latin music. Pitbull and Kid Cudi were booked in January.

The concert was just one part of SPC-MMC’s Up-Roar Week. Comedian Jo Koy performed on April 6 in the Graham Center Ballrooms, with more than 750 attendees, according to Brandfon. The week ended with a showing of Sherlock Holmes on April 9.

Plans for next year’s Up-Roar Week are still up in the air as they will be decided by the new SPC-MMC executive board.
Panthers Bar hopes to attract university crowd, especially FLU

WHERE: Graham Center
HOW MUCH: Free

As always, The Beacon is looking to recruit ambitious, self-driven and talented writers, photographers and graphic artists to join our staff.

Submit your application in GC 210 or WUC 124.

If interested, come into The Beacon office at MMC and sign up, or email Jorge Valens at jorge.valens@fiusm.com. Deadline is Monday, April 16.

Other positions are also available for the 2010-2011 year.

HELP WANTED!

The Beacon is looking to recruit editorial positions for the 2010-2011 school year. Positions include:

- Opinion Editor
- Life! Editor
- Photo Editor
- Production Manager
- Copy Chief

Garden Club hopes Rosenberg recognizes garden’s importance

GARDEN, page 7

produce straight from the garden. In light of the nomination for The People’s Garden Award, the club also shot a video showcasing its pride and joy. It focused on the students who were interviewed concerning their research projects on sustainable agricultural mechanisms.

The award in question would greatly help the long-term goals of FLU’s Agroecology Program and those passionate about FLU’s organic garden. If they win, their video will receive public attention and prestige, and it will be placed on the Agricultural Secretary’s Web site. The club also hopes to gain the notice of President Rosenberg, who they hope will see the importance of the garden and allow it to continue and grow.

Bun B, Black Dice worth a listen

I’ve been looking for this record everywhere and I finally found it at Sweat Records (your local record store, sota). It’s in Little Haiti, so not too local). If you like noise, then you might already know about it. But it’s just bassy and weird, and just one huge narcotic gaze. Love it.

Well, so I’ll see you around and I hope you take some initiative to seek all of this out. The internet is a friend and you should continue to take some initiative to seek all of this out.

Exploding Heads is a weekly column covering all things music.
**Editorial**

**Neglected for years, the timing is right for the increase of the Health fee**

On April 7th, the University Health Fee committee announced their plans to increase the Student Health Fee by five percent, or $15.99. With this increase, the Student Health Fee will raise from its current total of $67.20 to $83.19.

According to the University Health committee, the increase will give them the funding they need to improve and expand their services, which includes plans to transition their records onto an electronic database and creating the new position of a case manager, who would be responsible for helping students manage the health care system to get what they need.

A large number of FIU students will see this Student Health Fee raise as an inconvenience rather than a step forward for health care. So far, this is only yet another contribution to what they perceive to be an already-high tuition.

This is an understandable stance, especially when you consider the fact that the Student Health Fee has been raised for two consecutive years and has earned the title of being one of the highest Health fees in the nation, let alone the state, and has earned the title of being one of the highest Health fees in the nation, let alone the state.

Even so, The Beacon believes that this health fee increase is long overdue. Since the University can take a five percent increase in Athletics, Activities and Services or Health Services once a year, and given that the last time health fees were raised was 2006, the timing is right.

As of now, the University’s Student Health Fee ranks number tenth among the 11 state universities.

Even with the increase, provided that none of these other universities decide to raise their own Student Health Fees, FIU would only rank number eight. Furthermore, the Student Health Fee committee claims that only a few more universities decide to raise their own Student Health Fees, FIU would only rank number tenth among the 11 state universities.

The Men’s basketball team finished second last season in the Belt conference in attendance, while the Football team finished dead last in the SBC with a home-attendance average of 10,204, a number that is seemingly inflated. So as health fees have soared, the student body has not responded with the support.

With the health fee, the money that you don't use yourself ultimately helps those that don't use yourself. In fact, it not only to freshman, but to older students as well.

Jorge Valero

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**Automotive**

**Hybrid engines meet high-performance needs**

For a while I feared that the hybrid engine was going to be the death of the fast car.

When the average person thinks of green cars, they think of fuel efficiency, electric engines, simplicity and practicality. Cars like the Toyota Prius springs to mind, and the Chevy Volt comes to mind.

These cars are technological marvels all on their own, especially the Volt, which looks to be the first affordable plug-in electric car. However, they all have one thing in common: they are slow and dull.

I am for the environment, I promise. I recycle, I conserve energy, everything that Al Gore told me to do I have tried to do. Seriously. But to the auto enthusiast, like me, the green car represents the death of an era. Fast cars, sleek designs and throaty engines were our dream. And if the hybrid car is to come in four-door micro sedans and hatchbacks with inclined four cylinder engines and hybrid engines were moving in.

But, hybrid cars aren't beautiful. They aren't neat. They are a business decision to appease consumers' change in taste resulting from a sharp climb in oil prices. They're built to be minimalistic during a time where being minimalistic is the new black.

Even celebrated sports car and other popular rich people dumped their Porsches for a Prius, giving birth to the first car that blurred the line between social classes. You knew someone in a Porsche made money, but in a Prius, you weren't so sure. They were normal like me or are they environmentally aware venture capitalists?

Personally, I have always hated hybrid cars because there was no legacy behind them, no purpose other than to appease America's rapidly developing environmental awareness.

But much like the auto industry itself, which changed its mind about the future of the hybrid engine, I am starting to change my mind as well.

Automobile companies are starting to realize that environmental awareness and awe-inspiring power and design are not mutually exclusive. A car can be good for the environment and be fun to drive.

In a previous piece I wrote, which inspired me to write this very column, I criticized Porsche for distracting itself by focusing on SUVs and sedan rather than sports cars, which is what they're good at.

Well, I assume they read The Beacon because they recently dropped the complete vision and stunning technical feat that is the 918 Spyder.

First built in 1957, the 918 is by far the best-looking Porsche in a long time. The car draws its styling from the iconic 917 sports car that won its fair share of races back in the day.

Jorge Valero

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**Opinion**

Opinion pieces on The Beacon represent the views of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Beacon or its editors.

Send us your letters

Get a problem with parking? Want to give kudos to faculty? Or do you just have something to say? Send your thoughts in to opinion@fi usm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 240 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

The Beacon – 11

www.fi usm.com

Monday, April 12, 2010

**HYBRID, page 12**

**Jorge’s Picks for Up-And-Coming Green Cars:**

- **Ferrari 599 HY-KERS:** A symbol of Ferrari’s commitment to develop green cars by 2013. Keep an eye out for Ferrari’s hybrid technology, which will shift the paradigm in hybrid engine development.

- **Mini E:** BMW bought Mini in 2000, made it great. The Mini E is a test platform for BMW’s plug-in electric technology and is currently being leased to select consumers as part of the company’s field-testing program.

- **Toyota Prius:** Accelerator problems or not, you can’t deny the impact Toyota had in the hybrid car market. Future generations of the car will incorporate solar technology to power some of the cars lessers fund.

**Amendment breaches citizen rights**

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution reads: “A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

Statutory Interpretation is the process of interpreting and applying, for example, the second amendment, while strict constructionism affirms that the second amendment should be literally and stringently applied.

A strict constructionist would maintain that every American has the right to bear arms for his personal protection and safety, while a statutory interpreter would assert that gun control laws are for the collective good of society.

When is it permissible to deny one group of people their constitutional rights for the betterment of society? The Supreme Court now seemingly agrees with gun rights activists that the former of the two arguments accurately reflects the manner in which the second amendment should be viewed and applied.

An article published in the New York Times on March 2, 2010, “Supreme Court Still Divided Over Guns,” details that the Supreme Court may decide in favor of gun rights enthusiasts. This would signify a required adherence to the constitution and extend a recent 2008 decision that first acknowledged individual’s right to bear arms.

In addition, it would act as the linchpin to repealing state laws that conflict with the possible ruling. There are several sources that gun rights activists can rightly utilize in defense of their right to bear arms.

While legal precedents in support of the second amendment predates late 17th century England, the English Bill of Rights of 1689 granted rights to arms for self-defense: “That the subjects may have arms for their defense suitable to their conditions as allowed by law.”

At bestplaces.com, Sperling’s Best Places, Americans can compare, amongst other things, crime rates in different cities through the U.S. The data used by Sperling’s Best Places reflects current FBI data. In comparison to the state of Florida, The District of Columbia (D.C.) and state of Illinois have tough gun laws. A quick comparison of crime rates in Miami and D.C. reveals, however, that crime rates in both cities are above the national average.

Moreover, Miami and D.C. have comparable property crime rates and violent crime rates in D.C. are slightly higher than they are in Miami.

When comparing Miami and Chicago, we find that both the violent and property crime rates are equal, and both are above the national average. President Obama, a former University of Chicago Law School professor, should know that while enacting gun control laws that reduce the risk of crime is necessary, it should not be pursued at the risk of denying others their constitutional rights.

If people want to cling to their Bibles and their guns, then so be it. They are, after all, afforded such rights by the United States Constitution.
**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**Riders beware: driver does not care**

**JAYSON TAYLOR**

I would like to take a moment to express my discontent. I do this in response to the events that cascaded on FIU south campus. It is proper to comment of maltreatment. So, with this, I digest! On Friday, March 26, I encountered uncivilized behavior verging of unprofessionalism. At 9:20 a.m. that morning I parked my vehicle in the area referred to as the “dust bowl.” Then I proceeded up the path to catch the shuttle.

Upon entering the shuttle I expressed my intention to the driver that I would be exiting at the end of the block, or the second stop sign. With a confirming nod I settled in, for this was not the first time I rode with this driver. The exodus was smoothing those times. This one time, I am afraid to say, it was not.

The reality is that I am alive. So, when we got closer to my stop, I began to get up, holding onto the back rail to steady my departure. Unfortunately, the large sunglasses-wearing latino male did not come to a full stop, and run the stop sign California style.

So, for a brief moment my Kung Fu grip betrayed me. I was lucky that it was not for the strip on of my bag, I might be dead. Needless to say, my bag and I had been flipped into oncoming traffic roughly 20 feet — ripping my leather bag and damaging my computer. Not to mention the scraps and bruises that assaulted my own body.

Moreover, I was looked back upon and laughed at by a male driver of the bus, like I was in his fraternity (not), or a rival fraternity (not). After brushing myself off and examining my blood loss rate, I considered assaulting this shuttle driver. So, I took another breath and proceeded to my Botany test which was scheduled right then.

What would you do? What should I do? I need a Beacon of hope to remedy these issues!

My apologies for the disgruntled behavior. The run around I have encountered when talking to people about this has been extensive and humiliating; laughter hurts!

Jayson Taylor is a Junior and majoring in biomedical science.

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**Porsche improves hybrid experience**

**CHRIS DIAZ**

What makes this car most impressive is that it has both a plug-in electric engine and a 550 horse-power V8 engine, which, after seeing the specs on the Porsche site, has a moderate thirst for gasoline, a surprising feat for an engine with that type of output.

The car is faster around the Nurburgring, the famed German test track and proving ground for all things fast, than it’s now lamer sibling, the Carrera GT, and can run completely on its electric engine — switching to the gasoline engine only to recharge the battery and run the car.

With every amazing thing comes a catch; the 918 is still a concept and Porsche is reluctant to build it.

The technology used to make the car, however, is going to be used in a hybrid version of the Porsche Cayenne SUV and 911 GT3 R.

Why Porsche would even consider not building this car beyond is beyond me, but that’s neither here nor there. What is important is that hybrid cars with legacy and speed are well beyond the need for proof of concept; they are now a reality.

Automobile companies of all markets are responding by making hybrid performance a priority in design and development.

Is the death of the conventional engine imminent?

No. I think there is still a place in the world for fuel burning engines. But companies like Tesla Motors, who develop 100 percent plug-in electric sports cars and sedans show that the electric engine isn’t going to affect the way we, the enthusiasts, see cars.

Hybrid vehicles are well on their way to becoming a very accepted and affordable alternative when looking for a new car. However, it’s companies like Tesla and Porsche, that will develop the technology that make these practical and affordable cars fun to drive. Don’t be too shocked when Ford announces a hybrid Mustang, or when BMW debuts a hybrid M3. That day is rapidly approaching.

The electric engine and the hybrid are not seeking to replace the enthusiast’s idea of an automobile; it is only going to make it better for the environment we enjoy our cars in.

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**SAY WHAT?!**

**What are your thoughts on the increasing “Tea Party” movement among conservatives in America?**

- Chris Rodriguez
  - Junior, Criminal Justice

- Eliana Luque
  - Senior, Political Science

- Gilberto Fonte
  - Sophomore, Political Science

- Andrew Sanchez
  - Junior, Criminal Justice

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**DISCLAIMER**

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of the Student Government Board. These views are separate from students and faculty; editorial perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

**DAILYQUERYS**

Now that Supreme Court Justice Stevens has announced his retirement, who do you think President Obama should appoint to the bench? What type of position will he be filling in the Republican Party.

**WINNER/LOSER**

The White House named NASCAR a high school student for its first annual race to the Top High School Government Challenge. For other high schools from across the country will compete to be named President Obama during the graduation ceremonies.

**PAPER BONDS/EVT**

The Cardinals' management won’t make a break this week. A season lengthening.

**QUOTATIONATION**

“My dear Mr. President...I shall retire from regular active service...as an Associate Justice effective the next day after the court rises for the summer recess this year.”

Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens on his retirement.

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**Tea Party groups get no respect**

Sarah Palin and the Tea Party movement are good for this country. The U.S., which I consider the greatest democracy in the world, will find itself and the noble ideal of democracy fiercely tested in the years to come.

Polarized to the extreme and incredibly inspirational to many Americans. Palin and the Tea Party movement have grown from the cracks in our government. As many people feel, there are quite a few cracks.

We have had decades of poor education in our schools, health care needs improvement, the distribution of wealth is non-democratic, we are still incredibly dependent on foreign oil and we are still engaged in wars with two countries. These issues and others are not the only problems we face. The system itself needs work.

Politicians bicker among one another over issues most Americans don’t care about. They are fraught with scandals, which lowers the public’s trust in government.

They pay lip service to many of their constituents while devoting their attention to lobbyists and special interests. At the end of the day, it seems money rules all.

The term “teabaggers” has been used by those critical of Tea Partiers. Whatever the criticisms are, however valid they may or may not be, is this who we are as a nation? Do we insult and mock the opposition in an attempt to marginalize them?

I thought that in this country, a nation built on the principles of liberty and freedom of speech, that Americans would engage other Americans in discussion and debate.

Difference of opinion will and should always exist. It is via the introduction of these differing viewpoints in our government that our nation improves.

John Rawls, in his works including Political Liberalism, speaks about Public Reason. In his view, for democracy to function, citizens and officials need to discuss politics in an attempt to convince each other they are right.

They do this by arguing from principles and notions of what is just. Unfortunately, in this country that I love, I do not see this.

What I do see is childish and unproductive hurling of words. This seems to have no purpose.

In my view, the greatest democracy in the world, will find itself with scandals, which lowers the public’s trust in government.
Barrett leads team with dominance in the circle

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

It was an all around effort for the FIU softball team. After struggling with pitching in last week’s match-ups, the Panthers showcased some remarkable defensive plays, timely hits, and dominance in the circle. In the end, the Panthers were able push past Louisiana-Lafayette in two on April 10 and 11 at the FIU Softball Complex.

FIU 6, UL 2

Kasey Barrett was relieved to throw dominant game against the Ragin’ Cajuns. The senior pitched a complete game to earn the win, giving up just three hits and a pair of earned runs to go along with nine strikeouts in game one.

“IT’s a great feeling,” she said. “Since I’ve been here at FIU I’ve struggled against them so it was an awesome feeling to finally beat them.”

UL had a 2-1 lead heading into the fifth inning but the Panthers exploded with five runs in that inning to make the score 6-2.

Senior Lauren Spiers ignited the offense with a hit the middle to bring in Soberon. Burri then advanced to third base after freshman Beth Peller reached on a fielder’s choice followed by a passed ball. Burri scored the fourth run after yet another single by the FIU offense, this time coming from Ashley McClain.

UL finally ended the inning on a double play but Peller was able to cross the plate before the end of the game for FIU’s fifth run of the inning.

Peller scored a team leading two runs for the Panthers while McClain led the offense with a 2-for-3 effort.

FIU 4, UL 3

After Jennifer Gniadek threw five shutout innings, the Cajuns tied game two, 1-1, in the top of the ninth inning.

UL then tagged on two more runs in the top of seventh before McClain was called from right field to handle the pitching duties.

McClain not only got FIU out of the inning, the left-handed utility player also hit up the bottom of the seventh with her sixth home run of the season, a two-run shot to tie the game at 3-3.

“Look at McClain, we wouldn’t have gone extra innings and got the win without that bomb,” FIU freshman Brie Rojas said. “It really got us rolling.”

In the eighth inning both teams put runners on base but neither team could score. Again, in the ninth, there were runners on base for both but it was FIU who prevailed. After Peller knocked a hit up the middle, Rojas stepped to the plate to drive her in for the walk-off win.

“I felt calm and I saw the ball,” Rojas said. “[The pitcher] came at me and on the second pitch I hit it. I had nothing to lose.”

Barrett pitched the two extra innings for FIU, giving up a single hit while striking out three of seven batters she faced for her 12th win of the season.

“I thought that was probably the best day we’ve had this year,” FIU head coach Beth McClendon said. “I think [UL] is a great team, to come out and win two against them is a great day.”

Panthers drop a pair on the road to the Blue Raiders

JOEL DELGADO
Asst. Sports Director

MTSU 4, FIU 3

Another Golden Panther comeback came up short as Middle Tennessee dealt FIU with another loss with a walk-off fielder’s choice in the bottom of the ninth.

The Blue Raiders hit a pair of home runs off of FIU starter R.J. Fondon to build a 3-0 lead in the fourth inning. But the sophomore settled down, silencing the Blue Raider offense and keeping the Golden Panthers within striking distance throughout the game.

Fondon earned a no-decision after pitching 7.1 innings and allowing three runs on 10 hits. FIU struggled offensively throughout the game, squandering several opportunities to get back in the game. The offense broke through in the seventh inning on a series of singles sparked by a lead-off base hit by Tim Jobe.

Junior Arrojo stroked a single to left to drive in Jobe and put FIU on the board and then Pablo Bermudez hit another RBI single to make it a one-run game. A sacrifice fly by Jahari Henry drove in Arrojo to tie the game at 3-3.

Eric Berkowitz came in to relieve Fondon in the eighth inning and pitched into the ninth inning, where he ran into trouble late.

After loading the bases with only one out, Blake McDade ended it after hitting a pitch hard to Arrojo at shortstop, whose only play was at third base. The play allowed the winning run to cross the plate, dealing Berkowitz his second loss of the season.

MTSU 10, FIU 5

On day two, it was the UL that was fired up as the Cajuns scored nine runs off 10 hits to avoid the sweep on April 11.

The Panthers held a 3-1 lead before UL broke through two scoreless innings with three runs in the fifth inning and five in the sixth.

Donna Bourgeois (13-8) recorded the win in the pitching circle for UL with four strikeouts and three earned runs in seven innings of work. Meanwhile, Barrett (12-8) was tagged with the loss after giving up three earned runs and eight hits through five innings.

FIU will hit the home field again on Wednesday to face conference rival Florida Atlantic at 6 p.m.
Henry makes immediate impact for FIU

JOEL DELGADO
Asst. Sports Director

Jabari Henry seems to know how to make an entrance in a big way. It was the second game of the season against Maryland on Feb. 20, and his first collegiate start and at bat.

Almost as quickly as he stepped into the batter’s box, Henry crushed a pitch over the left field wall for a three-run home run.

His first impression was just a prelude to what he has been able to do since then. Henry has helped make the FIU offense a formidable one.

As of April 10, Henry leads all Golden Panthers in home runs with eight and has a team-high 37 RBI. After a week in which Henry exploded with five home runs, two of them being grand slams, and racking up 17 RBI while batting .500 in that span, national honors came rushing in as the freshman struggled to keep track of them all.

“All of my fans back at home are texting me, telling me I’ve won another award. Sometimes I don’t find out until some of my friends tell me,” Henry said.

In addition to winning the Sun Belt Conference Player of the Week for his breakout performance, he was named Louisville Slugger’s National Player of the Week, earned a spot on the College Baseball Foundation’s National All-Star Lineup and was also College Baseball Insider’s National Player of the Week.

CHANGE OF HEART

It wasn’t always baseball for Henry growing up, however. He was being groomed to be a basketball player by his father, Joe Henry, but young Jabari had other plans.

“I remember he came home one day and said he wanted to play baseball,” Joe Henry said of his son. “He said he wanted to pitch so we bought him a glove and we saw he had a pretty good arm. When I got home from work we took a bucket of balls, a bat and a glove and we would go hit every day.”

Now Henry’s family comes down from central Florida frequently to catch as many home games as possible.

Watching the left field player from a distance has been a bit of a role reversal for his father, who has been accustomed to having to do a hands-on role in his son’s development.

“It seemed like I have seen all of it before and I’m reliving it all over again but now in the stands,” Joe Henry said.

QUICK ADJUSTMENTS

Outside of striving to win conference championships and earning a College World Series berth, Henry has his sights focused on the tasks that lie right in front of him.

“He doesn’t look a day ahead. He always says that every at bat is a new at bat. Every day is a new day,” his father said.

While Henry has made an immediate impact, FIU head coach Turtle Thomas still believes that there are better things yet to come and expects him to continue to make progress as an everyday outfielder for the Golden Panthers.

“Jabari is a fine young, freshman ballplayer,” Thomas said. “The biggest thing he has to do is continue learning the game of baseball and to get much stronger. We’re expecting even better things from him in the future.”

Barrett proves to be a leader in and out of the circle

ROBERT BROWN
Contributing Writer

Kasey Barrett came into the FIU softball program just like other things in her life. She came without many expectations.

After playing a single season at South Florida Community College, Barrett started her career with Florida International University in 2008. Her first major achievement came modestly while pitching a complete game versus a No. 18 ranked Ohio State team.

“Pitching just kind of happened, my middle school coach asked me to try out pitching one day at practice and I have been pitching ever since,” the 5-foot-10 team captain said.

Head coach of the team, Beth McClendon, says that Barrett is one of the best people and players that she has had the opportunity to coach.

When asked how she felt about the senior pitcher, McClendon said, “Kasey pitches until it is right, comes to practice 10 to 15 minutes early to get better and never utters a word.”

McClendon has helped mold the Golden Panther softball team into a program that strives to be a tight-knit group priding itself on work ethic and loyalty on and off the field.

This philosophy was an ideal situation for Barrett to adapt and work on her skills in Miami and has molded her into a team leader that players look up to everyday.

A small town girl, Barrett was born and raised in Starke, Florida, which boast a population of just 5,000.

The move from SFCC to FIU has been quite a journey for her.

“It’s completely different down here, the team is like my second family,” Barrett said.

With two siblings, she is used to being level headed and laid back in most situations, helping her with the transition.

Barrett’s time at FIU has allowed her to take on a leadership role and become more assertive both in and out of the circle.

One of those assertions was putting on 30 lbs in the offseason to gain velocity on her pitches.

The sacrifices have seemingly paid off. The hurler presently leads the Golden Panther softball team into a program that strives to be a tight-knit group priding itself on work ethic and loyalty on and off the field.

Although the end of the season is nearing and Barrett will not be standing on the mound next year, she hopes to still be a part of the team. She will continue to have an influence on the team by coming back as an assistant coach.

“We are a team on and off the field,” Barrett said. “And we’ll always be there to pick one another up.”
Despite Tim Jobe and Jabari Henry turning in strong individual performances, it was not enough to overcome an early deficit as the preseason Sun Belt favorites were able to get their offense going against FIU starter Scott Rembisz.

FIU picked up a run in the top of the second to take an early lead after catcher Sean Reilly hit a sacrifice fly to center field deep enough to drive in Jobe.

But that would be the only lead the Golden Panthers would have for the rest of the night as the Blue Raiders picked up two runs in the bottom half of the inning and then scored five runs in the third, chasing Rembisz out of the game.

Rembisz picked up his third loss of the season, dropping his overall record to 4-3 on the season after giving up six runs, four of them earned, on four hits in 2.1 innings on the mound.

Down 10-3 in the seventh inning, Henry stepped up to the plate and hammered his eighth home run of the season, a two-run shot to cut the MTSU lead to five. FIU had a chance to come back in the eighth after loading the bases with just one out recorded, but Rudy Flores grounded into an inning-ending double play, stopping the potential rally dead in its tracks.

Jobe picked up two hits for the Golden Panthers and scored twice while picking an RBI in the loss, while Garrett Wittels extended his hitting streak to 27 games after a 2-for-4 performance.

Wittels, who has started in all but three games so far this season, has hit in every game he has played in so far this season.
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