The Beacon, February 14, 2011

Florida International University
Bill in Senate could allow guns on campus

GABRIEL ARRARÁS
News Director

New legislation recently introduced to the Senate aims to turn Florida into an open-carry state, allowing concealed weapon permit owners to carry their weapons openly—even on public university campuses.

Senate Bill 234, proposed by Republican State Senator Greg Evers, would allow those “in compliance with the terms of a concealed carry license [to] carry openly notwithstanding specified provisions.”

If passed, SB 234 would also limit a prohibition preventing the carrying of concealed weapons on all school campuses to allow them to be carried on University campuses; the only exception being sporting events.

Additionally, concealed weapons would still not be allowed into any K-12 schools, police stations, detention facilities, courthouses or government buildings.

Members of the Florida Police Chiefs Association and several State of Florida University police chiefs, including FIU Police Chief Bill King, have come out in unanimous opposition to the measure.

“I don’t think a University setting is the right setting for people to openly carry weapons,” said King, who believes having guns carried openly on campus would be an extra burden on Universities, forcing them to change procedures for taking reports and their active-shooter situation responses.

SB 234, which defines “concealed weapons” as any “handgun, electronic weapon or device, tear gas gun, knife, or biliee,” comes in the wake of a mass shooting in Arizona and the accidental shooting death of a Florida State University student. Events like these, and the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007, have gun-rights advocates suggesting that deaths could have been prevented if people had been armed.

Since the shootings in 2007, 22 states have introduced similar bills that would allow concealed weapons on campuses and all have failed, according to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

“The fear of instances like Tucson and Virginia Tech has caused a lot of people to look at their personal protection when it’s really not an issue,” said King. “The more weapons that you have on one campus, the more and more the fear of other students who are here.”

Several student organizations across Florida have also come out against the measure. Both University of Florida’s Student Government Association and the SGA Senate at Modesto Maidique Campus have passed resolutions condemning SB 234.

“Even at FIU we are no longer that the current GRE, with additional time employee,” Martinez said. “I don’t have time [to study] but there is no way I’m not taking the GRE after August.”

This announcement has set students at FIU in motion as many change their plans to take the GRE earlier than anticipated.

“Protests bring down Mubarak’s regime”

Egypt exploded with joy and tears of relief after pro-democracy protesters brought down President Hosni Mubarak with a momentum march after he finally resigned Friday.

Protests bring down Mubarak’s regime

105 die in fighting between army, rebels

Two days of fighting in Southern Sudan between the region’s army and a rebel faction killed 105 people in a reminder that violence can still explode in the volatile region.

Protests bring down Mubarak’s regime

GET YOUR GREEN ON

The Black Out Green On event was held in the housing quad to promote environmental awareness and was organized by Student Government Association at Modesto Maidique Campus Sustainability Coordinator, Sasha ‘Blu’ Waters. Senior Scott Keeney and junior Vicky Morales (above) enjoy free food. University native dance crew ‘Illmatic’ (below) performed as part of the night’s entertainment.

Changes to GRE have some students changing plans

LIS MESA
Contributing Writer

Rodolfo Martinez’s newly purchased cap and gown hung over a stack of Princeton Review GRE prep books from 2008 that clutter his desk.

Martinez, 23, a Florida International University student who graduated in December, plans on taking the GRE General Test in March, on the GRE earlier than anticipated.

“I would say we’ve definitely seen a high level of enrollment in the last few months,” said Lee Weiss, director of Pre-Graduate Programs at Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, a company that provides tutoring services for students.

“Our enrollment has been growing.”

According to Educational Testing Service, the Princeton, N.J. company that produces and sells the test, the new revised version will be about three hours and 45 minutes, 45 minutes longer that the current GRE, with additional time for small breaks.

The same concepts of basic math will still apply to the Quantitative Reasoning section, but the revised test will focus on math that you can apply to real-life scenarios and will require students to be able to interpret more data. The new version of the GRE will provide an on-screen calculator.

The multiple-choice questions will include more than one correct answer and students will have to choose all of the right answers from the given choices. There will also be new numeric entry questions, which will require the student to enter the answer into a box instead of selecting the answer from the choices given.

The more drastic changes can be seen in the Verbal Reasoning section of the revised GRE as there will no longer be antonyms or analogies. The revised version is said to have more focus on higher-level cognitive skills, which will require stronger reading skills.

Text Completion questions will test this skill by leaving out crucial words in short passages and requiring the student to fill them in. New ways of answering questions include questions with more than one right answer and highlighted sentences within passages to focus the test taker.

The analytical section will no longer provide the students with a choice of topics, but just give them one. The student will still write two essays, one to evaluate a logical argument, and the other to express views on a critical issue.

A new scoring scale will be used. Instead of the scale of 200-800, reported in 10 point increments for the Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning sections, the new scale will be reported on a 130-170 score, reported in 1 point increments. The Analytical Writing scores will continue to be reported on the same 0-6 scale.

This narrower scale for the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning sections guarantees that in the revised GRE small differences in scores don’t look as big as they would have with the
students, faculty oppose new ‘open-carry’ legislation

strangers to acts of violence, such as the regrettable stabbing of Kendall Berry, which is why we feel strongly as a Student Senate that we should take a strong stance against any legal acts that could facilitate further acts of violence at our University,” said SGM-MCC Senate Speaker Hector Mujica, who proposed the resolution.

The resolution’s co-sponsor, College of Arts and Sciences Senator Chris Cahill, agreed with Mujica’s sentiments.

“I’ve seen people almost come to blows over a parking space [at FIU], and now you want to give these people guns? I’m pretty used to leaders at the state level making terrible decisions, but this actually surprised me,” said Cahill, who believes SB 234 would have a profound impact on in-class discussions and cause professors to be intimidated.

“It’s hard to give constructive criticisms to someone who has a gun on them,” said Cahill. “I’m not opposed to guns in general, but I’m opposed to carrying guns around in the public sphere.”

Thomas Breslin, chairman of the University’s Faculty Senate, shares similar concerns and told Student Media that there is “no appreciable faculty support” for SB 234.

“Why add the fear of being shot to already shots existing tensions on deadlines, grades, academic conduct, refusal to write letters of recommendation or discussion of controversial topics?” asks Breslin.

“I personally would look on someone other than a police officer carrying a gun at the University as somewhat disturbed and anti-social, and, if carrying it openly, sending a threatening message to fellow students and professors.”

While the measure would only allow those who have been issued a concealed weapon permit to carry a guns openly, King argues that it is “very easy” to get a weapons permit in Florida.

According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Licensing, to be eligible for a concealed weapon permit, you must be 21 years of age, a US citizen with proof of residence and be able to demonstrate competency with a firearm.

Possible reasons for eligibility include: prior felony conviction, misdemeanor crime of violence within the last three years, two or more DUI convictions within the last three years, being committed to a mental institution or judged mentally incompetent, or having a record of alcohol and drug abuse.

Florida prohibits concealed weapons on all school campuses, making it one of 49 states that either bar them outright or let the individual schools decide on the matter.

Currently, Utah is the only state that allows concealed weapons on its college campuses. This includes nine degree-offering public colleges and one public technology college. For a combined total of one hundred semesters, none of these schools has reported a single act of violence (including threats and suicides), gun accidents or gun thefts.

While those statistics may serve to defend the deterrence argument of SB 234 proponents, King believes this argument doesn’t “hold any weight at all.”

“All it takes is that one incident where you have a gun battle in a classroom and you’ll have an uproar,” said King.

He hopes the measure will fail but believes it has a chance to pass due to Florida’s mostly conservative legislature and the strength of pro-gun lobby like the National Rifle Association.

“The legislation is irresponsible on a test that grad schools won’t know how to properly evaluate,” said Salle.

“I think that instead of taking the GRE I’m just going to apply to a MFA program where my portfolio sways the admissions committee. I hope that the legislature, protected by metal detectors and squads of armed guards, does not pass this legislation.”

Students dislike highway

Students and faculty oppose new ‘open-carry’ legislation

GRE, page 1

broaden scale of the current version, while big differences are still able to stand out. “But what is everything is changing about the test,” Kaplan’s Weiss. “Anytime anything changes, students have uncertainty, have to test right now that’s a very predictable test.”

“It hasn’t changed for a very long time,” he said. “Why take something new that’s a little undefined? I think a lot of students would rather take the test now.”

This is the situation facing FIU graduate Jose Batula, 23, who moved from New York City in the summer of 2009 to pursue a career in photography. Working as a concierge at a hotel, he hopes to take the GRE before the changes take place.

“If I take it now, the results will be good for the next five years,” Batula said. “It’s a good back-up plan.”

Even though the revised GRE is being advertised by ETS as “good news” for the student who will take it in August, the new format is already alienating some.

James Salle, 24, an English major at FIU, has started looking at other options.

“The problem I face is that there are few ways to prepare for a test that no longer exists,” he said. “So I become the beta-class and they can work out the kinks for future test-takers.”

“But where does that leave me? Getting a mediocre score on a test that grad schools won’t know how to properly evaluate,” said Salle.

“I think that instead of taking the GRE I’m just going to apply to a MFA program where my portfolio sways the admissions committee. I hope that the legislature, protected by metal detectors and squads of armed guards, does not pass this legislation.”

Students dislike highway

Highway, page 8

Barbara Keller counter that these lanes actu-
ally alleviate another problem that roads or a construction crew have potholes on a road — that and terrible potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.

“Drivers feel the lanes create more traffic for those traveling short distances and are common to I-95 — too many people are trying to get on this too fast,” said Bantula.

“I-95 extend beyond mere short-distance commuters have more traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous. A lane of traffic with potholes everywhere. How do you have potholes on a road where people are going 60?”

She, however, said that the roads create traffic for those traveling short distances and are often more dangerous.
Golden Panthers season begins with mixed results

MALCOM SHIELDS Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers took the field for the first time this weekend as they hosted No. 22 Ohio State and Kentucky on opening night and took on Memphis and DePaul the following day as part of the Combat Classic.

OHIO STATE 2, FIU 1

The Golden Panthers would lose to Ohio State in a pitcher’s duel by a score of 2-1. Jenn Giandiek would pitch a complete game for FIU, giving up six hits over seven innings and recorded eight strikeouts.

“I think I did pretty good,” Giandiek said after the game. “Our hitting was a little off but catch us on any other day and it’s a win.”

The Buckeyes would strike first in the top of the second as Rachael Shepherd hit a home run down the left field line to give the Buckeyes a 1-0 lead.

BASEBALL

SPORTS REPLAY

The Golden Panthers continued their offseason training with an offseason match against D.C. United of Major League Soccer on Feb. 9. Things didn’t go very well for FIU, failing to score a goal in a 4-0 shutout at Lockhart Stadium in Ft. Lauderdale.

The scoring started early for D.C. United, which is currently training in South Florida as they prepare for the 2011 MLS season, when Stephen King scored in the 12th minute to put them on the board. Just three minutes later they would add another goal when Yang Men scored off a cross pass from Kurt Morsink. Two more goals would help secure a win for D.C. United.

It was not the first time the FIU has squared off against an MLS team. In 2009, FC Dallas defeated FIU by a score of 9-0 in similar exhibition match.

But just a year later the Golden Panthers would avenge themselves with a 1-0 victory in a rematch with FC Dallas.
First win of season comes in thriller vs. Memphis

**SOFTBALL, page 3**

She got a hold of it,” the Golden Panthers would counter with long ball of their own when Jenny Welch hit a 2-run homer from Buckeye starter Kasie Kelly over the wall in right-center field in the bottom of the fourth to tie the game at 1-1.

The biggest blow came in the same inning when Brittany Cervantes hit a two-run home run off of the helmet of college baseball's No. 1 team last season, bringing home the winning run.

**KENTUCKY 5, FIU 0**

Kentucky would keep the Golden Panther offense at bay in their matchup as Rachael Riley would pitch a complete game shutout for the Wildcats en route to a 5-0 win.

Freshman pitcher Mariah Dawson made her season debut for the Golden Panthers and would pitch six innings, giving up five earned runs and recording nine strikeouts.

“Our offense really did not show up today,” coach Beth Torina said.

The biggest blow came in the same inning when Britany Cervantes hit a three-run homer out of the park to give Kentucky a 5-0 lead.

“We were one pitch away from a completely different ballgame,” Tornia said of the home team.

**DEPAUL 6, FIU 4**

The Golden Panthers were unable to put consecutive wins together as pitcher Jeni Gniadek would struggle against DePaul, giving up four runs in two innings of work in a 6-4 loss to the Blue Demons on Feb. 11.

Ashley McClain would come in to slow the Blue Demon offense. The Golden Panthers would score on a double by Slowik which plated two in the fourth to cut the lead to 4-3. DePaul would score in the sixth and seventh and seal a 6-4 victory.

**BASEBALL**

**TIM REYNOLDS**

AP Sports Writer

He’s been tempted over the past eight months. The dark locks now extend well below the helmet of college baseball’s reigning hit king. But superstitions are superstitions, and Wittels vowed not to get them trimmed until his 56-game hitting streak, still going from last season, ends.

“Gets annoying sometimes,” Wittels said, tugging one of his curls. “But it’s not that bad.”

Hair, Wittels can laugh about. But there’s more hanging over him than that.

Wittels’ status for the Feb. 18 start of FIU’s season, when he was to return to the lineup against Robin Ventura’s 56-game Divis- sion I record streak set in 1987, is unclear, after he was charged in a rape case in the Bahamas in December.

The university’s decision on his status is expected next week, although the charge will likely be pending for several months.

Wittels declined to discuss specifics of the case in an interview with The Associ- ated Press, on advice of his attorneys. He was freed on $10,000 bond and allowed to return home without entering a plea. Bahamian law does not plan to begin a prelim- inary evidentiary inquiry until April.

“The day that everything came out, that was the hardest day of my life,” Wittels said.

He is accused of forcing sex on a 17-year- old girl. The age of consent in the Bahamas is 16. Wittels was with a group of friends, some of whom were charged raping both the male and female who accused Wittels and another 17-year-old as well.

“I just put myself in a bad situation,” Wittels said.

Coaches and close friends say that when Wittels is on the field or in the batting cage these days, he seems the way he was last season. Wittels batted .412, was the Sun Belt Conference’s player of the year, he was tabbed Friday as the preseason pick to win that award again, and helped FIU reach the NCAA tournament.

When the streak was in jeopardy, he was at his best, going 7-for-7 in situations where he was down to his final at-bat without a hit.

For someone who hit .246 in 2009, last season was more than a breakthrough.

“He’s handled it like an absolute champ,” FIU coach Turtle Thomas said. “He’s solid as a rock between his ears. He’s been ready to expect to do well and be the best and prac- tice hard, play hard. He’s been raised to be a winner. And he’s clutch. It could end Feb. 18 or it could go a long time into 2011.”

Thomas was tightlipped when asked about Wittels’ legal matters, saying only he has not lost any faith in his shortstop.

“None whatsoever,” Thomas said.

ESPN plans to broadcast FIU’s opening series. Wittels got more media attention than he thought possible last season, and finds himself curtailling use of Facebook and Twitter because wants to keep some sense of privacy.

The constant attention, he says, can be too much.

“You can’t really worry about what people think about you,” Wittels said. “The No. 1 thing I’ve learned throughout this whole thing, really, is that you just have to know who you are and that the people who are around you are your backbone. You’ll have your fans, your haters, all these people... but the people around you are the ones who’ll have your back.”

That includes the FIU clubhouse.

The attention Wittels’ streak generated last season never seemed to truly bother teammates. The only thing that the Panthers regularly bicker over is the type of music that should blur pregame, rap, country or reggae.

“We’re focused on the whole team and that’s really what’s important,” Thomas said.

“From what I know, they’ve handled it very well. They understand. It’s good for them. It’s good for the program. It’s good for their maturation process as kids and ball- players to play with a little expectation on the ‘new’.”

Wittels went through that expectation process last summer.

He grew up in the Miami area, and other than a stint playing summer ball in Virginia in 2009, had not spent extensive time away from home in his life. So his 2010 summer season was about as far from Miami as possible, in Alaska, 5,000 miles away.

“I can’t quit,” Wittels said.

FIU will gather Saturday for its annual start-of-season baseball banquet, and Wittels plans to wear his 2010 championship ring. He’s only slipped it on a few times, choosing instead to simply look at it when he needs inspiration for this season.

“It’s a reminder of the storytorybook 2010 and makes him briefly forget everything, posi- tive and negative, swirling around him.”

“You can’t be a one-year championship. It can’t be one of hitting .400,” Wittels said.

“Sports is about ‘What have you done for me lately?’ All I’m worried about right now is balls and strikes, wins and losses, just playing ball.”
A bad Valentine can leave a permanent scar

The time of year is here for flowers, balloons, candy and hearts. People are running around, trying to muster up the courage to show affection towards special people. Couples wait to sit down at a place to eat. After all that, then what?

Valentine’s Day is the one official day out of the year for men and women to declare their love for one another.

With all honesty, this has not been a good day for me in the past. My first true Valentine’s Day memory was in high school, when I found out that my then-girlfriend was cheating on me.

A couple of years later, I was dumped on Valentine’s Day and ended up watching the movie Hitch with a male coworker. Also, a girl stuck up on a dinner date. The only excuse was that she was invited to a movie with her friend. All of these instances occurred within a five-year span and left me thinking..."With some people, I think Valentine’s Day reopens wounds that past loves have left," said FLU alumnus Agustina Prigoshin.

That pain makes people dislike the day, especially for those who’re single.

What makes people dislike Valentine’s Day?

For some, such as myself, it’s the memory of horrible past dates.

“...and until that day a year ago, I had never been in a relationship. However, that all changed when I first met her,” said junior Patrick Benedetti, a psychology major at FLU. “At first, I didn’t know what to do. Being overseas, I felt isolated.”

“I was in a relationship for two years and I was really close to our relationship breaking up. I even made an effort to make the day memorable for her,” said senior Elizabeth Benedetti, who got a surprise Valentine’s Day gift from her boyfriend.

“I think that’s the worst Valentine’s Day I’ve had,” said Benedetti. “I was actually one of my students who had a really big pet of who we were, and being on campus reminds us of us all.”

With all honesty, this has not been a good day for me in the past. My first true Valentine’s Day memory was in high school, when I found out that my then-girlfriend was cheating on me.

“At the end of the day, I still don’t know if I want to celebrate Valentine’s Day,” said Benedetti.

On the other hand, some people try to make Valentine’s Day special.

“If you’re in a relationship, why not do something special for your love today?”

No matter what has happened in the past, I look forward to the day that Valentine’s Day will create something special to me.

“I have friends that go out and celebrate Valentine’s Day, sometimes miracles happen,” Mangual said.
FASHION FINDS

Romantic holiday is just an excuse to wear a flirty dress

I’m not a big Valentine’s Day girl. It’s probably because I really hate the color pink and this holiday decides to shove it in my face for weeks.

But wearing the clothes I am, I love Valentine’s Day only because I get the chance to buy a flirty dress and heels and someone buys me flowers. That I can handle. Whether you have a date or not, you should relish in the cutest vibe of the holiday and go out. You’re either having a dinner party with plenty of food, my girlfriends and lots of wine.

That being said, here are my tips for looking great on Valentine’s Day.

• Don’t let anyone make you feel bad about being single or write yourself off. If you can’t do relationships back-to-back, I had forgotten the best of my life. After being in two long-term relationships back-to-back, I had forgotten how great it felt to be single and that being a little selfish was totally acceptable. I’ve been able to focus on my friendships in the present.

• When you get home from your long day today, do something nice for yourself like taking a long candlelit bath or just pull out your credit card and splurge on yourself a little. Make sure the style has ankle support because it’s easy to twist your ankle in any kind of tall shoe.

WHEN: MMC
WHERE: MMC GC Ballrooms
HOW MUCH: Free

ON THE PROWL

Don’t fret being single on Valentine’s; throw a party instead

Being alone on Valentine’s Day isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Yes, it’s a stupid, commercialized excuse for the flower, chocolate and greeting card industries to make a pretty penny, but it can also be a day of great self-realization.

If you’re single on Valentine’s remember this:
• Love yourself. If you can’t do this simple task, you won’t be able to successfully dedicate yourself to loving anyone else.
• Buy yourself a bouquet of your favorite chocolates and indulge in your own favorite flowers or a box of your favorite chocolates and indulge in getting gussied up and putting on a dress. Keep the style flirty with an A-line style skirt. I love the look of a mini-a-line skirt because it has the sexiness of a mini but it’s not as provocative as a body-con.
• Take advantage of this special day to show your loved ones, family and friends that you appreciate them. Send them personalized Valentine’s Day cards or gifts. You can also plan to have or make dinner with them to just enjoy each other’s company. Call it an “Un-Valentine’s Day Dinner” if you have to lure your single friends in.
• If you’re not quite at this point, just stay active and busy so the day will fly by.

THE MUSIC MAN

The FIU School of Music presented The Wind And Percussion Arts Series: Chamber Series for Winds at the WPAC on Saturday Feb. 5.
Student involvement needed to fight gun bill

Our economy has suffered and states are finding ways to compensate. Over the last few years, we all have seen the effects of state-wide budget cuts to education. Our tuition has risen 15 percent annually, and it looks like it will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

The variety of courses offered across different majors has diminished, leaving foreseeable future. It looks like it will continue to rise for the

Also, while economics is important, large, which is why we have decided to take a stand and make it known that it is important for textbooks to be included tax-free week.

Ultimately, if Student Government is going to have an impact on... the overall quality of student life, we are going to need your help.

The variety of courses offered across different majors has diminished, leaving

Student Government understands these items are of the utmost importance for many reasons. While tough times have affected us all, education must not be viewed as an easy or acceptable place to make cuts. We at Student Government are engaging Florida Senators and Representatives, letting them know of student concerns, especially regarding upcoming legislation.

For instance, textbooks are currently not included in the upcoming tax-free week, despite having been included in the past. We understand that these are tough economic times and understand the amount we pay for books is extremely overall quality of life and well-being is also a concern. Upcoming legislation is looking to allow individuals with concealed weapons permits the right to carry handguns on campus. We at Student Government, while respecting the Second Amendment, have student welfare as our chief concern and thus are against this legislation.

Ultimately, if Student Government is going to have an impact on these and other items of legislation, as well as the overall quality of student life, we are going to need your help. Now is the time to stand united. There are many ways of getting involved on and off campus, some of which require only a few minutes of your time.

On March 22, you can join us for Rally in Talli, where we will meet with state Senators and Representatives in Tallahassee, FL. If you are interested in joining us at Rally in Talli, please contact us and we will provide you with more information. These are just some ways that SGC- MMC is working on behalf of students. If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas you’d like to share please feel free to contact us at sga.lobbying@fi u.edu.

-Christopher Diaz, SGC MMC Student Lobbying Coordinator

State of the FIU Union is a bi-weekly column addressing University issues from the perspective of the Student Government Association. Look for it every other Monday.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Save a child’s heart this Valentine’s Day

There are two types of people: Those who like Valentine’s Day and those who don’t. While many students here at the University are getting ready to surprise their sweethearts with gifts, others feel the meaning of Valentine’s Day has been lost in consumerism.

Well, I think that Valentine’s Day still shines as a time when people make the extra effort to share and make others feel good. You don’t have to give fancy candy or jewelry. There are other options to consider and one you should definitely know about. This year on campus, you could Save a Child’s Heart.

In the spirit of Valentine’s Day, Shalom FIU is hosting “We Heart Your Hearts,” a student-run global campaign to raise money for 3 children who need cardiac surgery. The Children’s, Muaz (age 3) from Ethiopia, Seba (8 months) a Palestinian from Gaza, and Yaa (age 1) from Ghana are all suffering from congenital heart disease.

The international humanitarain organization, Save a Child’s Heart, is working on bringing these children to the Wolfson Medical Center in Israel where they will receive free medical treatment and life-saving surgeries. As an international endeavor, it is important for the University community to support SACH. With students from all over the world, we have the power to extend a helping hand on a global level, and in my opinion we have the responsibility to do so.

The mission of Save a Child’s Heart is to improve the quality of medical care for children in developing countries who suffer from heart disease and to create centers for competence in these countries. SACH has treated more than 2,500 children from over 40 countries where adequate medical care is unavailable.

According to its website, 40 percent of the children who underwent cardiac surgeries are from Africa, 49 percent are from the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Iraq and Morocco, 4 percent are from Eastern Europe and the Americas and 7 percent are from Asia.

Cupcakes and heart shaped cards will be given away on Valentine’s Day from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. outside the Graham Center Main Entrance to raise awareness for the cause. The goal of the “We Heart Your Hearts” campaign is to raise the $30,000 needed to give these children a second chance at life. Because the surgeons associated with SACH do not work for profit, the costs are low and the funds are used to cover transportation to Israel and expenses related to treatment. SACH is completely funded by private donors.

I ask the campus community to show their hearts and their love for Muaz, Seba, and Yaa this Valentine’s Day and prove to the cynics that this day is still about love.

If you would like to help Save a Child’s Heart, send a message to shalom.fi u@gmail.com or visit the Shalom FIU organyc page. For more information about SACH go to savевичildsheart.org

FIU Shalom is a pro-Israel student organization.
I-95 sits atop list of nation’s most dangerous roadways

**Ronnie Figueroa  Contributing Writer**

Although University students taking Interstate 95 to and from campus face a less dangerous commute to school today than they did in years past, accident and fatality rates on the highway still soar above the national average.

During the past five years, more than 20,000 accidents and 163 fatalities occurred on Miami-Dade and Broward counties’ 42-mile stretch of I-95, according to data compiled by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Last year, however, marked a low in both categories for the past 10 years, with most officials attributing the drop to road and traffic flow improvements.

The improvements, however, aren’t enough to deter three South Florida’s 88-mile stretch, which includes Palm Beach County, from the top spot in the United States in terms of fatalities per mile over the past five years with 3.13. The next closest is New Jersey’s Interstate 76 with 1.64 fatalities per mile.

The National Highway Safety Administration ranked it the most dangerous highway from 2004 through 2008. During that span, Miami-Dade County alone averaged more than 100 injuries per mile.

With the majority of FIU’s 42,000 students living off its two campuses, driving to class can pose a greater challenge than school itself.

Fort Lauderdale native, Patterson Murphree, treks I-95 every weekday to get to Biscayne Bay Campus.

“There’s never a dull moment on I-95,” he says. “You’re either getting cut off or flipped off. I think I see an accident every day.”

Murphree considers himself lucky.

HIGHWAY, page 6

---

**BECCA GRIESEM**

Staff writer

Camilo Hernandez, a biomedical engineering freshman, wants Biscayne Bay Campus to run on natural energy by the time he graduates. For now, the lower division senator from Columbia just wants everyone interested in the environment.

Hernandez, presented, and the Senate passed, a resolution for the Panther Pickup Recycling Campaign on Feb. 7, which proposes to add new recycling bins and move old ones to higher circulation areas.

Hernandez said the Panther Pickup bill would need to be allocated about $800 from the senate discretionary fund to cover costs of advertising and doubling the amount of bins on campus, from about 15 to 30.

Maybe we could throw in some type of trust system there, where students can deposit money in a bin and get it back if they take out a certain amount of materials, Hernandez said.

“Our recycling system so it could better benefit everyone.”

Hernandez based the recycling bill reform on a resolution Miguel Reyes, former SGC-BBC lower division senator, was working on to support the green movement made at BBC.

Not that many students in this campus know about our recycling system so it could better benefit everyone,” Hernandez said.

Hernandez hopes to make a career in engineering spending the rest of his days working with Old Dillard Museum in Fort Lauderdale.

Student Government Council

Council passes resolution to add more recycling bins

**Becca Griesemer works as a Beat Writer covering the Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus.**

---

Negro League Exhibit brings baseball fever to campus

**Katie Lawrence**

Contributing Writer

Baseball fever started early at the Biscayne Bay Campus as an event showcasing the Negro Baseball League and their accomplishments was hosted in the Wolf University Center as part of the University’s Black History Month activities.

Students wandered through booths of photos and memorabilia the afternoon of Feb. 8 in the Wolfe University Center while television shows movies charting the historic accomplishments of the Negro League. Even some former league players were on hand to share pictures and stories of their time in a tumultuous era playing America’s greatest game.

The event was sponsored by the Department of Campus Recreation in partnership with More Than a Game, a non-profit organization based in Fort Lauderdale that educates the community about the history of blacks in baseball and promotes the game to inner-city children.

“It’s really about keeping the history alive, and getting kids into it,” said Danny Phillips, founder and executive director of More Than a Game.

“Kids today want to play baseball or football, so we try to remind them how fun baseball can be.”

Phillip, a former minor league player, coach, and lifelong baseball fan, founded More Than a Game in 2004. The organization has since put on numerous events with the African American Library in Fort Lauderdale, worked with Old Dillard Museum and private collectors to bring memorabilia to the masses, and even started inner-city youth little league teams, the last of which Phillips said brought almost 200 kids out.

Once the Panther Pickup bill is passed and funds are appropriated, Hernandez said he will meet with a custodial services worker to ensure collection and movement of bins in a timely manner.

Hernandez is aiming for a recycling campaign.

“Not that many students in this campus know how our recycling system is single stream, which means you can place anything in any of the bins,” Hernandez said.

Single stream is possible because the materials will be sorted out at a recycling compound. This means even though some bins are shaped like a bottle and have a bottle-sized hole for discarding materials, anything recyclable is acceptable.

According to the Recycling Program Outline from the University’s Custodial Services, Recycling & Solid Waste Management, the single stream project was implemented in June 2009 after a single stream recycling plant was opened in South Florida.

Hernandez is improving a map Raye made of BBC that shows high, medium, and low circulation areas.

The two-story walkway from the Wolfe University Center to the Glenn Hubert Library is classified as high circulation, and is noted for having three trashcans on both levels, but no recycle bins in sight.

In a paper Raye wrote on what’s wrong with the campus recycling system, she listed areas with a lack of or incorrectly labeled bins. The paper ends: “and the list goes on.”

While the bins were originally placed by SGA, Hernandez said it needs to be strategized and discussed with building managers to make sure there are no fire hazards.

Ruth Bonami, an English senior, said she buys a drink everyday on campus, but doesn’t always recycle.

“I try,” Bonami said. “If there were more recycle bins, I’d definitely recycle every time because I’d feel bad throwing something in the trash when there is a bin next to it.”

Once the Panther Pick-up ball is passed and funds are appropriated, Hernandez said he will meet with a graphic artists to design a new theme for a recycling campaign. He will work with Jennifer Grimm, the environmental coordinator in the Office of the Provost, BBC.

“I hope (Grimm and I) develop some type of trust system there, where I can just go to her and she can help me out,” Hernandez said. “She knows a lot more about the environment than I know, and about what’s going on around campus.”

This is the third resolution Hernandez has presented in two semesters on the council. The first resolution was to provide nicotine gum for smokers during the transition to a smoke-free campus.

Working on the Panther Pickup resolution has made an impact with Hernandez.

“It inspired me to write a paper about everyday’s Pacific trash island, where trash is being collected in the water, forming almost an island of garbage” Hernandez said. “I’m really interested in the environment.”

Hernandez hopes to make a career out of engineering innovation, such as making gasless cars and incorporating photosynthesis into electronics.