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Senate fills positions left vacant

VINCENT FERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

While many leadership positions were left open due to resignations, the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus was able to fill many of those key positions, including the Senate Speaker Pro Tempore and the Chair of the Finance Committee.

After serving as Speaker of the SGC-MMC Senate since the summer of 2010, William Jose Velez resigned from his position as Senate Speaker and Senator of the College of Engineering and Computing so Velez could focus fully towards his academics. Due to a line of succession set so Velez could focus fully towards his academics. Due to a line of succession set in place by SGC-MMC in case this situa- tion would arise, the speaker pro tempore would become the active senate speaker.

With Hector Mujica moving to senate speaker, the speaker pro tempore seat became available, leaving the SGC-MMC senate to choose among four candidates in a special election: College of Education Senator Samir Patel, Lower Division Senator Patrick O’Keefe, Housing Senator of University Custodial Services, and Seniors Katya Serrano and Michael E. Dicks.

Sophomore Lelany Barea made a stuffed giraffe for her niece Kayla at SPC's Build-A-Bear GC pit event in honor of Valentine's Day. SPC has successfully organized this event for two years now.

SBC-MMC, page 2

University starts ramping up recycling efforts, awareness

RONNIE FIGUEROA
Contributing Writer

One way Florida International University is staying “Worl’s Ahead” is through its revamped recycling efforts.

Since taking control of the University’s recycling program four years ago, staff within FIU Custodial Services has seen a steady rise in recycling and anticipates further reductions in the current 7 million pounds of waste the university dumps each year.

In the past 12 months, the University has recycled 29 percent of its total waste output, a seven percent increase from the previous 12 months. By comparison, the university was recycling less than 19 percent of its total waste in the beginning of 2008.

Joost Nuninga, assistant director of University Custodial Services, attributes the growing figures to an increase in awareness within the university community.

“People are thinking more green now than they were several years ago,” he says.

He credits the commitment of student organizations, increased funding and administrative involvement.

While public buildings are mandated to recycle at least three items, FIU currently recycles paper, glass, plastic, aluminum, batteries, used oil and tires, light bulbs, wooden pallets, ink cartridges and other items.

In 2008, then-Gov. Charlie Crist signed an energy bill mandating state agencies to recycle 75 percent of their waste stream by 2020. Nuninga said the university goal is to reach 50 percent within the next five years.

For a university constantly cutting costs due to budget cuts, recycling could provide needed relief. “It’s still cheaper to recycle,” Nuninga says. “It is financially sound for the university to invest in this.”

The current waste removal contract with its contractor, Waste Management, costs FIU slightly more than $50,000 for the year. It’s an average cost of $54 per ton for non-recycled waste. Recycling, however, costs $35 per ton. The school also makes $10 for every ton of paper it recycles.

“Priority No. 1 is placing more bins around campus,” Nuninga says.

Ryan Vogel, a senior majoring in Parks Management and Environmental Studies, identified spaces throughout the Graham Center he felt could use recycling bins. His suggestions led to seven new bins.

But he sees a troubling discrepancy in recycling trends among the different campuses. Initiatives are concentrated more throughout the Modesto Maidique Campus. “There is no student organization to pressure administration to make changes,” Vogel says of the lack of Biscayne Bay Campus-based environmental organizations. “There is very little student initiative for envi-

mental causes.”

He notes that the major envi-

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RONNIE FIGUEROA
Contributing Writer

A PORTRAIT OF LOVE

Juniors Roberto Jimenez (left), a business administration major, and Gretel Vigo (right), a nursing major, have their caricature drawn by an artist for the A Parisian Valentine’s Day activities hosted by FIU Alumni Association. Jimenez and Vigo met their freshman year at FIU and have been together since.

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RECYCLING, page 2

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama outlines budget

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Staff

President Barack Obama is sending Congress a $3.73 trillion spending blue-

print that pledges $1.1 trillion in deficit savings over the next decade through spending cuts and tax increases.

Obama’s new budget projects that the deficit for the current year will surge to an all-time high of $1.65 trillion. That reflects a sizable tax-cut agreement reached with Republicans in December. For 2012, the administration sees the imbalance declining to $1.1 trillion, giving the country a record four straight years of $1 trillion-plus deficits.

Jacob Lew, Obama’s budget director, said that the president’s spending proposal was a balanced package of spending cuts and “shared sacrifice” that would bring the deficits under control. Appearing on ABC’s “Good Morning Amer-

BUDGET, page 2
WEIRD NEWS

Illinois Woman, 61, Gives Birth to Own Grandson

An Illinois woman has given birth to her own grandson. Kristine Casey, 61, agreed to act as a surrogate for daughter Sara Connell after Connell spent years trying to have a baby without success.

Connell and her husband, Bill, are the biological parents of the boy, Finnean Lee Connell. Through in vitro fertilization Casey carried and gave birth to the child.

Connell told the Tribune that she held her mother’s hand as Finnean was born through a Cesarean section.

Kiss me not-so-quick: Lovers seek world record

A kiss is still a kiss — even if it goes on for more than a day. Fourteen couples gathered at a Thai beach resort to try to break the world record for kissing, attempting to spend more than 32 hours locked lip-to-lip.

The marathon kicked off at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday, with each couple given one hour of square meter (yard) in which they had to spend the time kissing, without leaving except for bathroom breaks.

Any break in the lip lock resulted in disqualification.

32 Percent of Russians say the Sun Revolves Around Earth

Does the sun revolve around Earth? Is radioactivity a human invention? Did humans ever live side by side with dinosaurs? A surprising number of people in Russia answered those and other questions with a resounding “yes.”

A survey published this week by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center targeted scientific superstitions among Russian citizens and was released as Russia’s president, Dmitry Medvedev, announced that Russia should develop its own space exploration program.

“Living green isn’t something you do one week of the year or if it’s convenient,” said Dr. Fred Blevens, News Writing course taught by Professor Ronnie Figueroa, a December journalism graduate, produced this story in the JUO 336 Advanced News Writing course taught by Dr. Fred Blevens.

Nature Preserve status ‘up in the air’

The first to present was Ed Vogel was pleased to see that FIU ranked among the top in environmental thinking. For the past two years FIU has partnered with Rescuing America, a competition where hundreds of colleges and universities compete to see who recycles the most. After seeing disappointing results in the first year it competed, Vogel was pleased to see that FIU peaked among the top five in the state of Florida this past year.

“What we can change starts with FIU,” Vogel says.

Election board members confirmed

After all special elections ended, the senate moved to confirm new members for seats left open after previous meetings. Two candidates were presented for the open College of Business Administration chair, which was left vacant after Kevin Gonzalez became SGC-MMC Comptroller.

Eventually, Francisco Perez was selected to fill the position, due to having “very short pointed terms,” keeping in mind that senators only have three more months to be in session.

Finally, as the meeting wound down, two candidates were brought forward to try to break the world record for kissing, and to be confirmed as new members of the SGC-MMC Student Elections Board.

The first to present was Ed Prenzo, who recycles the most. After their presentations were made and debate by members of the SGC-MMC Comptroller, the Senate leadership assured everyone that their would be no problems with the new elections board, and that they would all succeed in their new positions.

Obama concentrated his cuts in the one-third of the budget that covers most domestic agencies, projecting $400 billion in savings from a five-year freeze in this area. Some state and local budgets were hit far harder than others. For example, programs that would not see funding frozen at 2010 spending levels but would be targeted for sizable cuts.

Republicans, who took control of the House of Representatives in the November elections and picked up seats in the Senate in part because of voter anger over the soaring deficits, called Obama’s efforts too timid.

They wanted a spending freeze at 2008 levels before efforts to fight a deep recession boosted spending in the past two years.

BUDGET, page 1

America,” Lew said that Obama’s budget would “leave the test that we live within our means and we invest in the future.”

Senior administration officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity in advance of the formal release of the budget, said that Obama would achieve two-thirds of his proposed $1.1 trillion in deficit savings through spending cuts including a five-year freeze on many discretionary programs.

The other one-third of the savings would come from tax increases, including limiting tax deductions for high income taxpayers, a proposal Obama put forward last year only is necessary. As manager of FIU’s nature reserve, a nine acre area complete with organic gardens, a pond, and two main trails, Vogel is constantly fighting to keep the environment from suffering from another parking garage.

“The preserve is safe until 2015, but after that it’s up in the air,” said Loreto.

Biological, environmental science, education, and art and photography students frequent the preserve. Safeguarding it from the construction of new dormitories and parking can be difficult if everyone doesn’t come into the concept, but Vogel remains skeptical.

“Students at FIU haven’t gotten into the culture,” he says of environmental thinking.

For the past two years FIU has partnered with Rescuing America, a competition where hundreds of colleges and universities compete to see who recycles the most. After seeing disappointing results in the first year it competed, Vogel was pleased to see that FIU peaked among the top five in the state of Florida this past year.

“What we can change starts with FIU,” Vogel says.
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED
FIU closes out Combat Classic with victory

MALCOLM SHIELDS
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers broke up a scoreless tie in the bottom of the sixth inning to defeat the University of North Florida Ospreys by the score of 3-0 to give head coach Beth Torina her 100th career win as a head coach.

Both teams struggled to sustain any form of offense as FIU’s Jenn Gniadek (1-2) pitched a complete game - a two-hit shutout to help keep the Ospreys in check. Gniadek also recorded a season high ten strikeouts in the win.

UNF’s Cortney Radke (0-4) pitched six innings giving up five hits and surrendering the three runs in her outing that helped FIU to its second victory of the season.

The Golden Panthers had a scoring chance in the fourth inning when Briie Rojas reached on a walk. After she advanced to second on a wild pitch by Radke, catcher Jenny Welch reached first base on another walk from the Osprey starter.

With two outs in the inning, Rachael Slowik came to the plate with an opportunity to drive in Rojas from second, but she fouled out to the pitcher to end the inning.

The Golden Panthers finally broke through against Radke in the sixth inning, who at that point had only given up one hit in the pitching duel.

Jessy Alfonso led off the inning with a walk, but was thrown out at first by catcher Jackie Reese. Kayla Burri was able to compensate with a double to right center and Ashley McCann followed with a single of her own, advancing Burri to third. After Rojas walked, which loaded the bases, Jenny Welch broke up the tie with a single back up the middle to drive in a run.

With the bases still loaded, Patty Zavala capped off her 2-for-3 day with a single to right field to score both Rojas and McClain, giving the Golden Panthers a 3-0 lead heading into the top of the seventh inning.

Gniadek closed the door on UNF as she only had one base runner, who reached by being hit by a pitch. Gniadek struck out Lauren Pollock and Alyson Bailey to end the game.

The Golden Panthers completed the 2011 Combat Classic with two wins in five games over the weekend.

WEEKEND NOTES

Pitcher Jenn Gniadek has been busy over the weekend, appearing in four of the five ballgames for FIU and currently holds 3.50 ERA on the season.

On the offensive side of the ball, catcher Jenny Welch and outfielder Ashley McClain lead the team with batting averages of .400 and .375, respectively.

FIU recorded errorless games against Ohio State and North Florida and compiled at least 10 hits against Memphis and DePaul, a good sign for an offense looking to get off to a fast start.

Welch’s home run against Ohio State in the opening game was déjà vu for her.

She hit a home run in the first game last year against Southern Illinois in last year’s Combat Classic.

“That was kind of exciting because last year I did the same thing, so it’s kind of weird,” Welch said after the game on Friday.

MEN’S BASKETBALL

MTSU deals Golden Panthers another road defeat

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers lost for the second time this year against Middle Tennessee by a score of 80-68 as they got outrebounded 33-27 with Phil Taylor putting in 21 points off the bench on Feb. 12.

The rebounding proved to be the biggest difference in the latest defeat and it was due in large part to being undersized against the Blue Raiders big men.

Eric Frederick did not play due to a coach’s decision and Brandon Moore only played seven minutes as the team was left with only one true big man in freshmen Domini- Prime Ferguson, who would only grabbed three rebounds.

“We got to recruit better rebounders and bigger players,” Coach Isiah Thomas said. “We just got to keep getting better and wait till they get a little older and a little stronger and wait for another class to support them.”

“The first five minutes set the stage for the rest of the game when MTSU started out on a 10-0 run over FIU that forced them to have to fight back to keep in the game quickly. They closed the deficit within two points with 11:54 to go when the Blue Raiders went on another run.

The Golden Panthers kept closing the gap throughout the first half but were never able to take the lead and went into the locker room at halftime down 34-26.

In the second half, the Golden Panthers (9-16, 4-9 SBC) never went on any runs that allowed them to come back into the game as they kept on exchanging baskets with Middle Tennessee (14-12, 9-4 SBC). Every time they came closer, the Golden Panthers would be unable to push it any further and fall right back to being down by double digits again.

They battled back one last time late in the game with 1:54 left when they found themselves down 68-61, but they were soon forced to send MTSU to the line where they made their free throws when it mattered most and never let FIU get a chance at the come- back upset.

On offense, the Golden Panthers relied heavily on Taylor, who came off the bench in a big way, putting up 21 points in just 29 minutes of action. The next closest player for the Golden Panthers was DeJuan Wright, who finished the game with 10 points on the night.

“I just go with the flow of the game and take what the defense gives me, they gave me some open shots I knocked them down, and that’s how I was as able to do it tonight,” said Taylor.

DeJuan Wright [center] finished with 10 points in a game where the Golden Panthers struggled to rebound.
The Golden Panthers went into Murfreesboro, TN riding a five-game winning streak and a chance to sweep Middle Tennessee in the season series. Instead, FIU left Tennessee with their streak broken and while losing ground in the Sun Belt Conference race for good tournament seeding.

Middle Tennessee beat their SBC opponent 66-52 on Feb 12 as FIU struggled to get their offense going, helping the Blue Raiders clinch the top seed in the East division.

Redshirt junior Fanni Hutlassa led the Golden Panthers with 18 points and 10 rebounds for her second double-double of the season while senior Michelle Gonzalez added 11 points and five assists. Freshman Jerica Coley added seven points, nine rebounds, and three steals in the loss.

Both the Golden Panthers and the Blue Raiders began the game strong offensively, as MTSU held a 7-6 early in the first half. Middle Tennessee would go on a 14-2 run to take control of the game and as the first half progressed, FIU saw their deficit grow by as much as 20 points as the Blue Raiders held a 35-15 lead with minutes left until halftime.

Hutlassa was able to cut into the lead as she scored eight of the game’s next 10 points, but MTSU would score the final eight of the half, including a three-pointer by Anne Marie Lanning, to give the Blue Raiders a commanding 53-26 lead at halftime.

FIU would look to power themselves back into the game when Hutlassa hit a three-pointer to start the second half. The Blue Raiders would quickly respond with a 9-0 run, giving MTSU a comfortable 53-26 lead, more than double the points the Golden Panthers had.

FIU would look to finish the game strong, outscoring the Blue Raiders 26-13 in the final minutes to lessen the damage of the loss, but MTSU would come away with a 66-52 victory.

Ebony Rowe led the charge for the Blue Raiders with 22 points and 13 rebounds, leading the Blue Raiders past an FIU team that struggled in many areas of the game. The Golden Panthers failed to control the painted area, second chance opportunities, and regularly gave up points off of turnovers. In all three categories, FIU gave up 28, 17, and 20 respectively.

Things haven’t been and will not get any easier for the Golden Panthers after the loss of senior Elisa Carey for the remainder of the season due to re-aggravating a knee injury she suffered in the off season.

Along with Carey, Rakia Rodgers has not played in six games since she is currently out with an ankle injury she suffered on Jan. 22 against South Alabama.

The Golden Panthers will have time to rest, not playing again until Feb 19 when they will be at home to host South Florida rival Florida Atlantic. This will be a tough test for the Golden Panthers, a litmus test for how well prepared they are for the conference tournament.
Professor encourages to ‘follow your bliss’

ASHLEY LAPADULA  
Staff Writer

Wayne E. Robinson Jr., a professor in the Department of Theater, was drawn to theater as a child. He pursued his dream and attended Phillips Academy, Northwestern University, The National Theatre Conservatory and the American Conservatory Theater.

In these institutions he developed both teaching and working experience. He then moved to California where he applied for multiple teaching positions and was presented with the opportunity to become a professor of the University’s faculty, which he said he gladly accepted.

Robinson chose acting for a few reasons.

“I did not come from a family with a background in the arts, but I immediately became drawn to musical theater as a young man,” he said.

After he pursued acting, he realized that theater was a wonderful way to examine human nature and life overall.

“The best way to get a profound experience in the theater is to feel as if everyone is part of the same experience,” he said. Apart from working at FIU, Robinson is an actor and director whenever it does not conflict with his schedule at the University.

His overall career includes acting and directing in over 50 productions, which have taken him from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Robinson is no stranger to moving from place to place, when he was a young boy his father was in the Air Force which caused his family to be continuously on the move. After living in many states, he immediately felt at home in Miami, Florida, he said, “this is the place I was destined to be in.”

Robinson believes you should always “follow your bliss.” This motto has been replicated in his students genuine pursuit of happiness. After being part of the FBI faculty since the Fall term of 1994, Robinson has had a positive influence on his students.

Students described their experience in the class as being “entertaining and motivating.” Students have also said that he strives to develop a strong bond within the classroom, which in turn makes the class engaging. Most, if not all students, say that they would take him again and recommend him to all under graduates who are thinking about taking one of his courses.

“I think Professor Robinson showed me how great theatre truly could be. Now that I have taken his class, I have a better appreciation and understanding of it all,” said theater student Danny Gomez.

Professor Robinson has been recognized for his work, in fact, he recently received an award in 2009 for his Excellence in Directing “Electricidad.” Putting on a stage production is strenuous and time-consuming but Robinson said, “I do not see it as a job, just something I love to do.”

The primary goal of the theatre program is to give an intensive theatre guidance through classes and productions which are managed with professional theatre discipline and the highest possible quality work.

Apart from all the work that goes into the curriculum, theatre majors are also required to take part in all the major productions presented while the student is enrolled in the theatre program. Plays are selected to offer students the opportunity to work with a wide range of styles and periods, from contemporary to classical, straight drama, and musicals.

The department presents a main stage season of four shows each year, as well as Second Stage and Student Theatre Lab productions. The New Plays Festival attributes work written, directed, and performed by students within the department.

Professor Robinson says he hopes to one day develop a graduate program for the department. He said he loves what he does and is immensely passionate about theatre.

“I want to continue to do what I am doing, and compel students to do what I love,” he said.

He is a firm believer that although relatively unconventional, theatre can lead to a successful and rewarding future.

FASHION FINDS: GRAMMY’S EDITION

Grammy Awards lets stars unleash their quirky style

Out of all the awards shows, the Grammy’s is the one where the stars of the music industry get to unleash their crazy sides and it’s perfectly acceptable.

Lady Gaga was dressed as an egg and hatched on stage. Does it get more kookier than that?

LEA MICHELE: The only thing I think of when I see Michele is, “Oh, hi. I’m Lea Michele and I try way too hard.” Nothing about her Emilio Pucci worked on the petite actress. It was overwhelming and did not suit her bubbly persona. If the dress didn’t have the ruffles cutting across the skirt, I might have liked it a little better. I will give her props on her accessory choices. Michele wore jewelry by Lorraine Schwartz and Christian Louboutin shoes and they compliments the dress well. It was pretty cute too that she wore berry-colored lipstick as an homage to her Glee character, Rachel Berry.

KATY PERRY: No matter what Katy Perry says or does I will love her. She is bubblegum pop and if “Teenage Dream” does not make you tap your feet and make you just a teeny bit giddy, you have no heart. Perry, her husband Russell Brand and her grandma all wore custom-made Giorgio Armani outfits. Perry’s dress was exactly what the Grammy’s are about. It was whimsical and fit her great. The Swarovski crystal-encrusted bodice and feather wings made the dress look like it was from a Victoria’s Secret runway and it was just so fun! Her performance outfit was also great because it bottlenecked up what Perry’s music is. The sparkled design paired with glitter tights was fun and flirtations.

Perry’s outfit choices for the night were just an expression of what she sells herself as: fun. GWYNETH PALTROW: The Oscar winner has somehow weaseled her way into music. She performed “Forget You” with Cee Lo Green and creepy and colorful puppets in a skintight jumpsuit that shows off her incredible body. The real show stopper was her amazing multi colored Christian Louboutin shoes. I wouldn’t know how to incorporate those into my wardrobe but I would put them in a glass box and make a shrine for them in my room.

EVA LONGORIA: I just don’t understand why she was there. Longoria can’t be taller than a pint and the Ashi Studio dress she chose was so overwhelming for her petite frame. Her bottom half was great. It was short and cute and her Brian Atwood pumps were beautiful. If it wasn’t for the ruffled bodice, the dress could have worked.

NICOLE KIDMAN: Though the dress wasn’t stunning, it was unlike anything she’s ever worn. She really did look beautiful and youthful. Her Jean Paul Gaultier gown was straight from the runway and she paired it with Fred Leighton jewelry. I’m glad she chose a natural looking hairstyle but it didn’t compete with the grand- ness of the dress. The same goes for her soft and clean makeup. The combination of her makeup, hair and outfit reminded everyone that she has one of Hollywood’s most beautiful faces. Nothing to do with her dress, but I couldn’t help swooning over how cute she looked as she danced and sang along with Katy Perry.

RHIANNA: On anyone else, Rihanna’s risqué dress would have looked like a high-paid hooker’s dress. The dress alternated ruffles with sheer panels. It was a completely scandalous dress but my initial thought was “It’s Rihanna. She can so wear that.” Someone from her team have worked.

BEST: KATY PERRY  
WORST: LEA MICHELE

Lyric Lu/The Beacon

Professor Wayne takes his lesson outside as he teaches a theater movement class in the WPAC Atrium.

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Miss FIU believes she was crowned ‘to make a difference’

PEREZ, page 8

with no time wasted took her first step to what would become a plethora of social involvement at FIU. Bronwen Bares, assistant director for the Center of Leadership and Service and full time staff member of the Women’s Center at MMC, was Perez’s Freshman Experience teacher who promoted the Academy of Leaders in her class, which sparked Perez’s interest.

“Ever since I met [Perez] she really stood out as someone who had a lot of potential,” says Bares. It was after this weekend retreat that Perez says, that Sunday when she came back home she was super excited and told her mom she wanted to join everything on campus.

“I don’t think I would be who I really am without the Academy of Leaders” says Perez. Now holding the crown and an open window of opportunities to network, Perez plans on building up her platform for a high school program equivalent to all to influence and mentor younger students for a brighter future. Perez’s future goals are to attend the Peace Corps or Teach America, and with graduation scheduled for Fall 2011, that future is closely at hand.

“I was put here to make a difference in peoples’ lives,” Perez said.
Proposed bill has low risk

GISELLE RODRIGUEZ 
Staff Writer

Imagine that an argument breaks out in class because a fellow student does not agree with what your professor is saying. Suddenly, the student reaches into his backpack and withdraws a handgun, waving it at the professor in order to intimidate him. Now, imagine that one of Florida’s senators has introduced legislation that would make this legal.

Fortunately, Senator Greg Evers’ proposed amendment to the Florida constitution does not actually allow this. The Student Government Association recently published their opposition to this proposed Senate resolution, however, I do not think this is necessary.

Senate Resolution 234 is actually an amendment to make Florida an open-carry state, meaning that if you have a concealed weapon and the license that goes along with it, you may, within certain parameters, wear it openly. Only seven states and the District of Columbia have bans on openly carrying weapons and this proposal would remove Florida from this list.

While there are always problems inherent in changing weaponry laws, I do not think this resolution merits support as it has been receiving. Ultimately, what is being changed is the fact that people who are already legally able to carry weapons will be able to wear them on their belts.

If nothing else, this would be better for the safety of those who are openly armed are not seen as “soft targets,” and as such are less likely to be victims of violent acts or school shootings. The main contention mentioned in the SGA’s opposition is that the resolution changes the definition of a school to exclude universi-
ties and colleges. This change allows for concealed weapons to be carried onto a university campus, something the SGA purported would “present a grave safety concern to the Student Body.”

Students are just as paramount, yet it is difficult to argue that legal adults with concealed weapons licenses should be able to carry their weapons into a supermarket or a crowded shopping mall, but not a university. With regards to the law, there is no real difference between these places. If we are allowing weapons into pretty much every other crowded, poten-
tially dangerous environment, nothing makes unver-
bearable that the facts the act themselves are technically referred to as “students.”

Of 107 school shootings that have occurred since 1966, only approximately 25 have occurred in colleges or universities. Of those less than 10 occurred with what are classified as concealed weapons.

This is not to down-

The SGA points out the irony of his quotes and the conse-
quunce” would hardly deter any criminal from illegally carrying his weapon and can only encourage more

JOSEPH GONZALEZ 
Staff Writer

A new Senate Bill is causing controversy at the University and the Student Government Associ-

tion. Senate Bill 234 aims to make it easier to carry concealed weapons on campus with a license. Or that is less than 10 with occurred with weapons. It is in no way a safer option to allow students to carry weapons on campus and potentially take the law into their own hands.

Allowing easier access to weapons on campus will increase the number of university shootings such as the University of Arizona shooting in 2002 and the shooting at the Virginia Poly-
tech Institute in 2007.

Although university shootings are relatively uncommon, looser regu-
lations on hand guns and the ease of transporting a weapon on campus that the bill provides can only lead to more frequent occurrences.

One factor that may have prevented countless university shootings is the student getting caught with the weapon before having a chance to use it. If this bill passes, it will become lawful for any student to carry a weapon on them at anytime, as long as they have a license.

Along with violent and sexual assaults, other crime rates can be expected to go up. If weapons are allowed on university campuses. Theft, low grade vio-

tism can all be expected to happen more often with loser gun restrictions.

A student is much more likely to take the law into his own hands if he has a legal weapon in his possession, and more weapons on campus would also make it easier for criminals to commit theft and sexual assault, which are already common on college campuses.

From 2007 to 2009 there were seven sexual assaults, 16 aggra-
vated assaults, and 392 total thefts reported to the authori-
ties at the University alone, according to police.ufl.edu.

In addition to decentral-

izing weapon possession on campus, the new bill reduces the penalty for carrying a weapon without a license to only $25. This “conse-
quence” would hardly deter any criminal from illegally carrying his weapon and can only encourage more

Send us your letters

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (550 words maximum) to opin@fiuwire.com or drop by our offices at either MSE 104 or 114. Your letter will be sure to include your name, major and year.

The Politick is a political op-ed column. Look for it every other Wednesday.

S

Staff Writer

Spring is around the corner, the State of the Union address went off with a bit of a hitch (unless you are Republican, but that is a conversation for another time). The smallest of bills and resolutions is in the air and there is a fresh political sex scandal that has lead to the shaming resignation of yet another United States congressman.

As of Feb. 9th, 2011, Representative Christopher Lee of New York’s 26th District tenured his resignation from the United States House of Representatives. Lee is known for his weekly column, "his own personal advertisement, (you can already see where this is going) and sent lewd photos of himself to her. While the woman in question has yet to be named, what is clear is that Lee used his name and personal email address and a series of weak lies to begin a correspondence with the woman.

To now, Lee’s credit, he did attempt to come up with a couple of stories about himself. He responded by saying that he was a 39-year-

old divorced lawyer. In his fantasy life, his wife is out of the picture, he is seven years younger and he lives the fast life of a lobbyist with a kid, because if there is anyone you can trust, it is a divorced single parent lobbyist working in Capitol Hill.

Given our politicians’ propensity for scandalous affairs, this one is pretty tame. There is no secret family, no love child, no gardener named Tony who is a protege, and no molestated pages and aides, just some good old-fashioned lying and attempts to deceive and cheat on his wife.

According to the emails and a photo leaked by the woman in question to news and gossip website Gawker, Lee complained about people who lie on Craigslist, and apparently what may seem like an innocent and appealing marketing offer can have serious consequences. Private information and images can so easily be used without a person’s consent, and the idea that he supposed hindsight is always 20/20, but to be fair, the bill did not cover the dangers of lying to your wife.

With the advent of the 24-hour news cycle, the Internet, camera phones and newspapers, there really is no way to hide an affair. What politicians need to learn is control and restraint. While many wonder how the tame affair of a lawmaker to such noto-
riety, he got bust out without actually doing anything, or anyone, for that matter. It is the simple fact that he lied and got caught in the most public of forums, the Internet, and that is what made this story important.

While Lee is no Silvio Berlusconi, Italy’s prime minister who currently accosted of soliciting an underage prostitute and bailing her out of jail, he is still a disgrace to the American people. If we cannot trust a poli-
tician to be faithful to his family, then how can we trust him to be faithful in the Amer-
ican people?

The Politick is a political op-ed column. Look for it every other Wednesday.

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Tough time in Miss FIU’s past inspires her present

SANDY ZAPATA
Staff Writer

There aren’t many people who can walk into a room and completely change the mood.

Ana Perez does that and so much more.

The 20-year-old journalism major may sound familiar because she is the president of Panther Power at FIU and Miss FIU 2010 Scholarship Pageant.

Her platform for Miss FIU is to extend Alternative Breaks to local high schools so that younger students will have a chance to feel its experience through direct service, global learning, self-esteem building and team building, as stated in her presentation application.

One of the main reasons for this platform is because in her junior year of high school she moved away to Atlanta and was faced with a tough time in her life, she said.

“I thought I was going to drop out of school” said Perez.

Her problems inspired her to create a program through which teenagers could learn valuable life skills.

“I got lucky because I’ve always been strong willed and I had help from a professor that would stay with me and talk to me,” said Perez. “I started thinking to myself if there was something in school that would help kids through rough times.”

Perez moved back to Miami and with no time wasted took her scholarship.

Director sees more programs, building in SEAS’ future

BRIAN CORREIA
Staff Writer

“Five to 10 years from now, I see FIU as a national leader for solving environmental problems, both locally and around the world,” said Dr. Michael Heithaus, School of Environment, Arts and Society Director.

Central Ohio born and raised, Heithaus was the son of two Biology Professors at Oberlin College. He longed to be a Biologist all his life and never imagined his career going in any other direction.

“I never wanted to be anything other than a Biologist, but never imagined I would become a Director of an entire School,” Heithaus said.

Heithaus did his Undergraduate studies at Oberlin College in Central Ohio and then went on to attain his PhD at Simon Fraser University in British Colombia, Canada.

“Choose SFU because it was the school that would allow me to further research why dolphins choose certain habitats,” Heithaus said. “I also got to learn more about the impacts of tiger sharks in their ecosystem.”

After completing his education, Heithaus got recruited to start a show on National Geographic called “Critter Cam.”

Working on “Critter Cam” gave him the opportunity to travel around the world, specifically to Western Australia, where he got to further his research endeavors in the hands-on approach directly in the ecosystem.

While he was working for National Geographic, the position at FIU was brought to his attention. Heithaus originally applied for the position of Assistant Marine Biology Professor.

“I learned a lot working for National Geographic, but I wanted an Academic position where I could bring students into the ecosystem for a more hands-on learning and understanding of environmental issues,” Heithaus said.

In 2009, Heithaus was asked to be the Director for the School of Environment, Arts and Society at FIU by Kenneth Furton, dean of the College of Arts and Society.

One of the short-term goals Heithaus envisions for SEAS is to create more degree programs within the school. The additional degree programs will be based on the three core disciplines of Natural Science, Humanities and Social Sciences.

“Students need all three pillars in order to solve the environmental issues of today,” Heithaus said. “They also need to understand all issues surrounding the ecosystem and help other people to understand and care about the problems before resolutions can be thought of.”

Two of the long-term goals that Heithaus envisions for SEAS are to create innovative educational programs and to maximize the positive impact of research.

Maximizing the impact of research consists of three main components: provide the tools necessary for research, create links to decision makers and the public to maximize the impact and to teach younger students and community members to become more engaged in their environmental issues.

“I feel that SEAS is completely aligned with University President Mark Rosenberg’s strategy plan,” Heithaus said. “The environment is one of the major pillars of the plan.

In order to remain aligned with Rosenberg’s strategy plan, Heithaus has a few things in mind for SEAS in the near future: Develop FIU’s first PhD program in the Environment and Society, help every student to have an understanding of all environmental issues, expand the Biscayne Bay Campus more by adding an additional building and provide excellent course work and additional hands-on training for students.

“We definitely will need a new building at BBC, if we are going to grow SEAS any further,” Heithaus said.

Even with a new building needed by SEAS, Heithaus does not want to split up the Arts and Sciences program at FIU.

“I am a firm believer of collaboration between all programs and SEAS,” Heithaus said. “I don’t want to put up barriers between any of the schools, but would rather build a strong group to provide only the best services to all students and faculty.”