Facebook: You’re invited to protest in Egypt

JONATHAN SIMMONS
Contributing Writer

The message caught sophomore Kiroillos Habib by surprise. Born in Shobra, Egypt, he and his parents had lived in the United States since 2001.

But on Jan. 22, Habib opened his inbox to find a message sent through Facebook, inviting him to a protest in Tahrir Square, Cairo.

Habib, a member of Egypt’s Coptic Christian minority, had heard about the uprising in Egypt through his church. But with the call to action in his inbox, Habib became one of thousands of young Egyptians, some living a continent or an ocean away from Egypt, invited to participate in the mass movement that would in 18 days demolish the regime of a despot who had ruled for 30 years.

Habib was surprised by the message, but the uprising did not surprise him. Egypt had needed a revolution, he said, and it was about time it got one.

And Egypt’s history had given Habib reason to hope that the protesters in Tahrir Square would be successful. "In 1919," Habib said, "there was another revolution, and that was successful."

In 1919, Egyptian nationalist leader Saad Zaghloul petitioned the colonial British to recognize Egypt’s independence. The colonial administration jailed him and his compatriots, igniting massive strikes across the country.

Men and women, merchants and students, Christians and Muslims poured into the streets and the British government caved. Egypt won its independence from Great Britain in 1922.

Habib felt that a nation whose people had so boldly rebelled against the oppression of British colonialism should have the strength to end an autocracy led by one of its own sons. The precedent was clear.

But Mubarak’s government, virtually unchallenged for 30 years, was not a foreign colonial power; if there were to be a revolution in Egypt, something needed to dramatically upset the regional status quo.

And that, said Habib, was exactly what dramatically upset the regional status quo.

"A revolution in Egypt, something needed to agitate tension in Egypt. It was agitated by Tunisia," Habib said. "It was the last straw." But there was a sense of agitated tension in Egypt, he said, and in the wider Middle East before the revolt in Tunisia that ended the regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Professor Charles MacDonald, a Middle

THE WIRE

ENGINEERS TO FUNDRAISE FOR GOOD CAUSE

ANALIA FIESTAS
Staff Writer

Enjoying a meal with friends at a local Chili’s can be an easy way for students to contribute to a humanitarian cause.

Engineers Without Borders, a national organization that aids the underprivileged around the world, will be hosting a fundraiser at a select Chili’s on March 29 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Any customer that visits the restaurant that day can benefit EWB because a portion of each patron’s paycheck will go to the organization.

EWB is a non-profit humanitarian organization that partners with developing communities worldwide through engineering projects that involve and train engineering students. The organization completes public engineering work assignments that focus on sustainable water sanitation.

"Our organization loves to work with water. For example, if communities are not receiving clean water or if they do not have a good and reliable water system then that is when EWB steps in," said Andrew Hipolito, member of both the hydrology and fundraising team at EWB. Members from EWB are currently reconstructing part of Costa Rica’s water supply — the reason for the Chili’s fundraiser.

According to Hipolito, Costa Rica obtains their main water supply from spring rains. In order for the water to spread to the villages, spring boxes trap the water. These boxes have undergone weather damage and the water is often contaminated from animals that climb up on them.

Hipolito explained that the spring boxes have been rebuilt, and the fund-
**NEWS FLASH**

Mark Kelly: Gabrielle Giffords “Remarkably Well”

Gabrielle Giffords’ husband, Mark Kelly: the astronaut said at a press conference that his wife is beginning to walk and talk “and improving every day.” Kelly will command the Shuttle Endeavour, which takes off April 19, and he said they are awaiting to see in what kind of situation they were at. On our last trip he said that the residents could get clean drinking water, said Hipolito.

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Charges against speaker dropped

James L. Rosica

Prosecutors dropped corruption charges against former Florida House Speaker Ray Sansom on Friday after the judge in his trial rejected a key witness. Circuit Judge Terry Lewis ruled that prosecutors had not shown sufficient evidence that a conspiracy existed in response to a motion to introduce testimony by Bob Richburg, a former college president who had been charged in the case before agreeing to testify against Sansom. Without Richburg’s testimony, prosecutor Willie Meggs said he could not continue.

He dropped the charges against Sansom and co-defendant Jay Odom agreed to pay restitution.

Sансом had been charged with scheming to get a $6 million state budget appropriation in 2007 to build a hangar at the Destin airport for Odom, a local businessman and major Republican donor. Defense lawyers said the money was for a much-needed and hurricane-proof emergency operations center for the city of Destin.

The project was funded in 2007 but never built, and the state lost its money back.

Meggs’ theory of the case was that Sansom wanted Northwest Florida State College to build the project and include some classrooms to call

**NATO to Take Over Full Libya Mission**

The U.K. foreign secretary, William Hague, says NATO will take over command of the entire military operation within days. So far, NATO has agreed to take over only the no-fly zone, which they may do as early as the weekend, so for the time being the U.S., Britain, and France are still responsible for strikes against Gaddafi’s ground forces.

NATO’s limited takeover of military operations is partly due to differences among the NATO allies about what the operation should be and what its goals are, with France pushing regime change and Turkey balking at aggressive bombing.

In the meantime, French and British forces continue to strike Gaddafi’s forces, bombing an artillery battery and armored vehicles near the town of Ajdabiya.
Middle East expert finds parallels across uprisings

EGYPT, page 1

East expert who has written extensively on uprisings and armed conflicts in the region, drew a parallel between the circumstances in Egypt and those in Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution that swept the shah from power.

Both uprisings, MacDonald said, were preceded by “a revolution of rising expectations … that created a feeling of being cheated, of being wronged – which is a very powerful source of unrest.”

In pre-revolutionary Iran, many were angered by the shah’s public extravagance while much of the country languished in poverty.

In the Arab world today, families with TVs and computers consume pixilated images of wealth, luxury, political and social freedom, that is generally denied to them.

Financial crisis hit the region, the middle class slid towards poverty and the poor towards desperation. The media, watched on TV as the wealth of their nations were poured into the designer homes, cars and personal wardrobes of rulers who called themselves guardians of the people’s interests.

Finally, something snapped.

In Tunisia, the authorities confronted the push-cart of a young man who supported his family selling fruit and vegetables off his wooden cart by the roadside. Publicly humiliated by the police, 26-year-old Mohamed Bouazizi walked all the street in front of the local municipality building, poured fuel over his body and set himself on fire.

In this act of anger and despair, Bouazizi gave voice to the ire of many across the region frustrated by poverty and government corruption.

His message resonated in Egypt.

“There wasn’t enough money, not enough jobs,” Habib said. “(Mubarak) was stealing all the money for himself – there was just an explosion of emotion. All of a sudden, everyone wanted to overthrow the regime – because they were fed up.”

But for Habib, the revolution really began earlier in Alexandria. “On New Year’s Day,” Habib said, “there was a suicide bombing in front of a church.

The government said the bombing was committed about the lack of ability to secure the Christian areas in Egypt.”

Protests in the Christian communities started immediately. AP reports from the time recounted angry protesters chanting, “Mubarak, the Copts’ blood is boiling!” and attacking policemen.

The police responded with clubs and tear gas.

There was a seething anger at a security force which had abused the populace under the pretext of security and then failed to provide it when it was needed most.

“Government said the bombing was committed by foreigners,” Habib said, “but meanwhile, the country’s police were terrorizing their own people.”

MacDonald pointed to Egypt’s long-standing emergency laws as a source of anger at the regime. “Emergency laws which existed in Egypt, he said, “had just gone on way too long, and the wide powers that they granted the Egyptian government were often abused.”

The laws, enacted after the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981, had been in power as long as Hosni Mubarak – and were just as deeply resented.

The Coptic Christians’ anger at the government made it easy for the bombing fed into a wider discontent with the conduct of the Mubarak government.

“It’s not just an issue that the government completely ignores or neglects Christians,” said Habib. “It’s the whole people – everyone is affected because the government is so corrupt. It’s the youth that were suffering most from the bad conditions – the corruption, the unemployment.”

Though Habib had supported the uprising and watched it progress with faith that the protesters in Tahrir Square would succeed, he was unprepared for the moment that Hosni Mubarak left the country, “I couldn’t believe it at first,” Habib said. “Then I started being concerned about what’s going to happen after.”

For this story in its entirety, check out fi usm.com

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fla. House Speaker to pay $103,000 in restitutions

SANSOM, page 2

It is an “educational facility,” which would qualify it for state money for educational buildings.

Charges were also dropped against Odom. He declined comment outside the courtroom.

“The judge clearly stated the state and the defense and the court have a fundamental difference of understanding about the law of conspiracy,” Meggs said after court adjourned. “From the direction of the court’s ruling, that you can’t steal the appropriation, we would not be able to prevail to show theft.”

Sansom and Odom each agreed to pay $103,000 in restitution to Northwest Florida State College in return for Meggs dropping the charges.

The college had spent more than $300,000 in design and planning costs for the Destin facility, which it later had to return to the state.

Sansom’s lawyer, Stephen Dobson, said his client would likely have to borrow the money.

Sansom, holding back emotions, thanked God and his family during the months leading up to trial.

“We could tell it was a tough ride,” he haltingly told reporters. “But when I first met with my attorneys they told me, ‘Ray, the truth will set you free,’ and we saw that today.

“I want to thank the justice system,” he added. “I had a chance as a legislator to fund the justice system, and I didn’t quote get it (then), but I get it today.

“Here’s the sad part: That budget (is still) needed … I knew it was needed 15 years ago.”

Of Meggs, Sansom said, he had told him at the grand jury, “Indicting a legislator for a budget item is no way to stop legislation, but he wouldn’t listen to me.”

He said he still loves education and hopes to keep his job at a charter school in Okaloosa County. Of any further political aspirations, he said, “I’m not concerned about any political future. My future is in God’s hands.”

James Judkins, Odom’s attorney, said even though Meggs dropped the charges, the defense team felt they would have won.

Judkins then launched into a diatribe against news media that had reported on the case and against Meggs personally.

Meggs “took it this far, to the tremendous waste of taxpayer money and the lives of these men who have been on trial,” he said. “This was a silly case, a stupid case that should never have been brought.”

Sophomore Adam Israel, an architecture student, adds final touches to a midterm model for his Design 4 class.

FINALE TOUCH
BASEBALL

Fielding miscues, sparse hitting sink FIU at home

Brandon Wise
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers fought hard but just could not get the bats going enough in a 6-4 loss to the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers.

Although the Golden Panthers scattered seven hits throughout the night, they stranded ten base runners in a number of key situations, dampening R.J. Fondos’s solid performance on the mound as the starter. “R.J. Fondon threw outstanding tonight,” coach Turtle Thomas said. “That’s probably as good as he can pitch right there.”

In the first, Ivan Hartle and Kes Carter both singled. Then catcher Jose Behar attempted to make a pick off of Carter at first, but first baseman Rudy Flores dropped the ball, allowing both runners to advance. Logan Robbins then hit an infield single that brought home the first run of the game.

After that, Fondon settled into a groove and would last six innings and pick up five strikeouts. Thomas said. “We had some defense a little bit,” coach Turtle Thomas said. “We had some miscues there in the field that we need to make to win that kind of baseball game.”

Joe Velasquez came on in relief of Fondon, he picked up two quick outs with runners on first and second. But a passed ball advanced the runners, which then set up Hartle’s single to bring home the third run of the evening.

When pitcher Jose Velasquez came on in relief of Fondon, he picked up two quick outs with runners on first and second. But a passed ball advanced the runners, which then set up Hartle’s single to bring home the third run of the evening.

Western Kentucky got the juices flowing with a solo home run to make it 6-1.

After Behar led off the seventh with a single, Patton then hit a shot to right that advanced Behar to third. With two outs, Garrett Wittens then put the Panthers on the scoreboard with a double to center to make the game 3-1.

In the ninth, the Hilltoppers lead off singles by Tyler James and Jabari Tyler, followed by a ground out to short then picked off Robbins on first, then Robbins then singled and allowed Hartle to advance. Logan Robbins then hit an infield single that brought home two more.

The Panthers made it interesting in the bottom of the ninth.

After a hit by pitch and walk issued by Rye Davis, Patton doubled down the right field line to bring home a run to make it 6-2. Flores then hit a double down the right field line to bring home two more.

However, it was just too little too late, as the Hilltoppers then got Mike Martinez to line out to end the game.

“You got to score some runs to win,” Coach Thomas said. “That’s the bottom line.”

Wku 3, fiu 2

It was a tough battle for the Golden Panthers, but in the end the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers proved to be too much, defeating FIU 3-2 in the first game of a three-game home series.

Defense played a key role throughout the game as FIU committed four errors while Western Kentucky had none. Although only one defensive mistake ended up leading to a run, it ended up being the difference.

“We need to shore up the defense a little bit,” coach Turtle Thomas said. “We had some miscues there in the field that we need to make to win that kind of game.”

The scoring got going when Kes Carter led off the second inning for the Hilltoppers with a solo home run, but then Haig rebounded to strike out the side.

The Golden Panthers (14-10, 1-3 SBC) responded right away with two runs of their own in the bottom half of the second. Following lead off singles by Tyler James Shantz and Jabari

Strong performances at road invitational show promise

Jackson Wolek
Staff Writer

This season has been about getting better every week for the men’s and women’s track and field team.

Following their great performance last week at the Feldberg Invitational, they improved as a team and as individuals at the UCF invitational on March 25 and 26 to show they have what it takes to compete with the bigger schools in the nation.

This season, coach Eric Campbell has heard what he has known all along: that FIU is making a name for themselves on the track and field circuit.

“I’d say the second or third meet in was when I would start to hear the rumbles and grumbles of a lot of the local coaches,” said Campbell. “That feels good because it lets you know as a coaching staff that you’re headed down the right path.”

On the first day of competition, both Sebastian Castillo and Daniela Espino came in first in the triple jump. Castillo ran a time of 9.93.34 on the men’s side, and Espino got a time of 11:11.27 for the women’s. Also, Marissa McEven placed second in the women’s long jump with a jump of 6.14m.

“Right now all the teams all across the country participate in track meets that are really to help us prepare for our conference meets and obviously the national championship,” said Campbell. “You really know how a team is based on how the kids perform from one week to the next.”

One of those kids, Benia Gregoire, set a personal best 53.33m on her hammer throw. Although she did not place in the hammer throw, she was able to place the next day in the women’s shot put, getting a first place finish.

The schools that attended this two-day meet along with FIU were Bethune-Cookman, Florida Atlantic, Florida Gulf Coast, Jacksonville, Miami, Nova Southeastern, Palm Beach Atlantic, Maryland, Cincinnati, Rhode Island, Georgia Southern, Tennessee, University of Florida and host Central Florida.

Even with being in competition against much bigger schools, FIU held their own and proved that they will be a force to be reckoned with when it comes time for the national championship.

“It’s kind of exciting to see our kids perform against the bigger schools because now they understand they’re not just potentially good, but can actually compete with the other bigger schools in the country,” Campbell explained.

On Saturday, FIU’s individual events continued to place well. Tyson Kemp came in first in the men’s shot put for the field event. On the running side, The Golden Panthers took both second and third in the 4x100 and 4x400 relay events.

Golden Panthers enter final week of spring practice before their annual Blue vs. Gold game on April 2 at FIU Stadium. With concerns at various positions at both sides of the ball, FIU hopes to use this time to see who will emerge at different positions.

Eric Campbell
FIU Track & Field Coach

[Kristi Camara/The Beacon]
Strong outings by Fondon, Haig not enough for wins

MIAMI HEAT

Spoelstra getting his message accross to team

TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer


Those are Miami Heat coach Erik Spoelstra's real starting five.

Not players, but buzzwords the foundation of the message he's been trying to instill within the Heat for the past six months, and they'll stay in his vocabulary rotation all the way through the season's final buzzer. It's a deliberate balancing act for coaches, trying to stay on message with a team while not appearing to be saying the same thing day after day after day.

Ask the Heat, and they say Spoelstra is finding a way to avoid that problem.

"He kind of changes it up," Heat forward LeBron James said. "You don't want to try to say the same thing over and over and over. That's when it kind of drowns out guys. Spoon kind of keeps it fresh. He's young and hip enough to know what's fresh, so he gets his point across, but he changes it up a lot for us."

Clearly, the Heat are listening to pretty much whatever it is Spoelstra is saying.

Friday night's 11-9 win over Philadelphia got Miami to the 50-victory mark for the season, the first time the Heat have been there since the championship campaign five years ago. Miami is within a half-game of Boston for the No. 2 spot in the Eastern Conference and has won seven of its last eight games since dropping five in a row.

The buzzwords are buzzing right now.

"I don't get tired of it and I know that's the most important thing for this team," Spoelstra said Saturday. "When you do three press conferences a day, you guys probably get tired of it. But that is the message. We have to stick to our process."

And Spoelstra does that, almost without fail.

A year ago, it was "purity," usually in reference to giving effort. This season for the Heat started with "sacrifice," especially after James, Wade, Bosh, Udonis Haslem, Mike Miller and others all agreed to take less money than they could have gotten elsewhere to fit into Miami's salary structure. For a while, Spoelstra took to calling the Heat a "Band of Brothers," which even was the theme for his Christmas gifts to players and a phrase he used again Saturday. With the playoffs looming, Spoelstra can work "consistency" into nearly any sentence these days as well.

"Uh, umm, who said it was fresh? Coaches are repetitive," Wade said, breaking into a sly grin. "That's what they do. They say it enough to where it sticks. If it don't stick the first, second or third time, he's going to keep saying it until it sticks. So when he comes with something, when he wants us to focus on something, whether we're losing or winning, that's what we're focused on."

James has played for a variety of coaches with a variety of styles, from Paul Silas to Mike Brown in Cleveland, Larry Brown and Mike Krzyzewski with the U.S. Olympic teams, and now Spoelstra in Miami.

The methodology tends to change from guy to guy, but the points typically remain the same, said the NBA's two-time reigning MVP. And whatever it is that Spoelstra's selling to the Heat, James says he's buying.

"We're growing together with him every day," James said. "Just about any coach in any sport will wrestle with this question: How do you stay on point without becoming a bore? It's certainly not exclusive to Spoelstra, but by a long shot.

Spoelstra simply doesn't worry about it. It's his process.

"We still have room for improvement," Spoelstra said. "We are unique, we feel, to other teams. We still don't know necessarily what our ceiling is and we've got to keep on striving for that. Part of that is consistency. Part of that is getting more players involved, aggressive and confident."

He's expressed all those sentiments before at times this season. They seem to be working.

In the seventh, Haig's night came to halt after giving up a two hits and then hitting the next batter. He finished the game with seven strikeouts. Mason McVay then came on to shut the Hilltoppers down without giving up a run.

Following a Henry walk to open the bottom of the seventh, Behar ripped a shot down the left field line that was difficult to determine whether the fielder caught or not. In the confusion, Henry rounded third, but then it was found the he actually tapped it and Henry ended up in a pick and between third base and home.

"We were running, and we held [Henry] up at third," Thomas said.

"And he kind of kept running. It's a miscue that's all there is to it."

Though the Golden Panthers showed some sparks of a comeback, they could never pull all the pieces together to score the tying run.

"When you don't sniff a run for seven innings it's pretty hard to win," Thomas said.
FIU 12, NORTH TEXAS 3 (5)

In game two, the FIU lineup broke the game open by scoring five runs in the third inning, highlighted by a grand slam from Burri. “She did a really good job,” Torina said of Burri. “I think she was seeing [the ball] really well.”

The Mean Green scored three runs in the third inning off of three FIU errors and a Courtney Bradshaw RBI single.

“We played some of our worst defense,” Torina said of the third inning. “We definitely need to clean up the defense.”

In the fourth, FIU scored five more runs on consecutive singles by Jessy Alfonso, Peller and McClain. Another run scored on a bases loaded walk to Rojas and a sac fly by Burri scored the fifth run of the inning.

Dawson pitched a complete game for FIU as she recorded her sixth win while striking out seven.

BAYLOR 2, FIU 0

The Golden Panthers were unable to scratch out any runs against Bears starting pitcher Liz Paul as she pitched a complete game, giving up just four hits.

“She [pitched] a good game against us,” coach Beth Torina said. “We just couldn’t figure [Paul] out.”

The Bears scored first on an RBI single by Dani Leal and would score again in the fourth inning.

The Golden Panthers best scoring opportunity came in the sixth inning. FIU loaded the bases with two outs, but pinch hitter Jackie Tietlow grounded out to end the inning.

“We did struggle offensively,” Torina said. “We just couldn’t figure it out offensively.”

FIU’s Jenn Gniadek pitched six innings and allowed three hits, but it wasn’t enough to pick up the win. “We [pitched] well right back at them,” Torina said. “They really didn’t hit anything hard off of Jenn all day.”

BAYLOR 4, FIU 3

In the second game, untimely errors hurt FIU as Leal hit a two run homer after a runner reached on an error to stake Baylor to a 2-0 lead in the first inning.

A combination of hits by the Bears and errors by the Golden Panthers extended Baylor’s lead in the second inning when they scored on a throwing error by catcher Megan Horne. The Bears added another run on a Kathy Shelton double.

FIU chipped away at the lead with a two run third inning with RBI hits by Beth Peller and Ashley McClain. The Golden Panthers last chance to tie the game came in the seventh with runners on base and Ashley McClain at the plate.

McClain, who went 2-2-for-4, singled up the middle scoring a run to cut the deficit to 4-3, but Baylor’s Whitney Canion struck out Brie Rojas to end the game.

“[I]t was a really good game,” Torina said. We faced one of the better pitchers in the country and we scored runs off of her.”
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Student exhibit now at the Frost

ESRA ERDOGAN
Photo Editor

The reception for the official opening of the Aesthetics and Values exhibit was Mar. 23 at the Philip and Patricia Frost Art Museum. This year’s exhibit included works by well-established artists Jacin Giordano, Karen Rifas, Daniel Arsham, Cristina Lei Rodrigues and more.

The show, which was curated by students in John Bailly’s Aesthetics and Values class, allows local artists more exposure and teaches students art appreciation.

“Being a business major, I don’t usually get a chance to do anything artistic at all. I had the opportunity to do something most can’t do unless they’re pursuing a masters degree in fine arts,” says junior Allen Feliz, who is studying management and information systems.

2. Artist Cristina Lei Rodrigues’ inspiration for her sculpture was nature. Her works resemble organic scenes.

3. Aesthetics and Values student Kharla Salazar (right) explains Jacin Giordano’s piece to senior Kristofer Ruiz (left), a philosophy major, and senior Lisandra Cassola, also a philosophy major.

4. Junior Katie McCarthy (left), a social work major, and junior Tingjun Chen, an education major, look at artist Jen Stark’s “Sunken Sediment, 2010.” Stark attempts to explore the intricacies of nature “with an explosion of color and form through the use of papercutting.”

5. Josh Neel’s piece uses a weight scale and gold bricks to bring the phrase, “worth your weight in gold” to life.
Alternative student band ready for debut

KATHY PAZ
Staff Writer

Rostislav “Steve” Vaynshtok, a sophomore public relations major, draws influence and inspiration from a lot of bands many people probably never heard of before. Zonbi, Rarator, Mogwai and Explosions in the Sky are just some on that extensive list.

In an industry often marked by mass-market appeal and reproducing carbon copies of the mundane, auto-tuned style, a breath-of-fresh-air appeal can be just the ticket to getting noticed. An introduction by

Brett, said Vaynshtok. “He was the only person who knew the songs inside and out. We rehearsed a few songs and got back into the swing of things. It was around that time that I asked him to be a permanent member of the band.”

THE BEACON: Who does what in the band?

STEVE VAYNSHTOK: Brett and I wrote the majority of the songs, actually all of the songs. Then Brett [Flaherty] adds his parts, does the programming for the drums and synths [synthesizer], unless I’ve written it with a certain synth pattern. He programs it all and sends it back. Then we get together and rehearse it. Once it’s down pat, we finalize some parts, chop some parts up and voilà! It’s very easy to work with someone who knows exactly what he wants to do with the song.

TB: What’s the story behind the name “Fight Like Animals”?

S.V.: There’s this epic painting of two men fighting with animal heads instead of their own. It totally got me. Then we eventually found out the acronym for FLA is also the abbreviation of fighting with animal heads instead of their own.

Like Animals?”

TB: We’ve got an EP for sale on Bandcamp.com right now. It’s our first EP. We’ve also got physical copies that we’re only selling at shows, but if someone bothers me while I’m in the bathroom, I’ll probably sell you one. Just catch me at an awkward time if you want one outside of a show. The EP is set to officially release on May 21 of this year on iTunes, Amazon, Rhapsody [etc.]?

TB: What has been your most memorable experience?

S.V.: Playing Anti Pop 2009. It was just super dope all around. We got to put up a van, head to Orlando, and mingle with famous people. We got these wristbands that every band got, and nothing was off limits to us. It felt really Hollywood, and I loved it. I’ll always remember how we were on the lowest spectrum of that festival but still sharing a bill with [bands] Minus the Bear, The Antlers, Grieves, Yacht and I Fight Dragons. It was the event that cemented my “I’m going to be doing this forever” attitude.”

Up until very recently, Fight Like Animals had been signed to Granuine Annie Records. However, conflicts arose over a lack of initiative on the label’s part, and the band decided to part ways with them. Though untimely and bitter, the departure has not affected the band’s other connections in the industry. Gibson Guitars, Orange Amplifiers, Visual Sound, a guitar pedal company, Wolfstone Custom Pickups and Blackbird Pedalboards currently endorse Fight Like Animals.

Fashion magazines and blogs a cure for bland wardrobe

FASHION FINDS

I love to read fashion blogs and sites to catch up on what’s in style, to get inspiration and to kill time. I’m really good at the last one, by the way.

There are plenty of fashion blogs that embody everything stylist. My problem with a lot of blogs, though, is their reliance on fashion magazines and zany styling. Call me boring, but simple style ideas that are easily incorporated into a daily life are a lot more appreciated by the typical girl. Plus, being a blogger is pretty much the best job ever because a lot of bloggers get tons and tons of stuff thrown at them for free. My top pick for blogs that incorporate top-fashion advice with simplicity is the blog Cupcakes and Cashmere.

The reason I like Cupcakes and Cashmere so much is because of the personal feel the blog has. The blogger, Emily Schuman, posts daily on all the topics that inspire her. Whether it’s outfit ideas, baking and cooking recipes or interior design, Schuman's lifestyle is simple, chic and accessible. Schuman is the ultimate “girl-next-door” when it comes to fashion and she doesn’t sacrifice comfort—except when it comes to her killer shoe selection, which any shoe girl will love to look at. Plus, every outfit she shows her readers is a combo of vintage pieces she picked up at flea markets and picks from my all-time favorite store—Forever 21.

I also really like the blog This Time Tomorrow. She doesn’t post as often but her style has an awesome 70s feel that’s irresistible. My favorite thing about her site is that almost everything is from inexpensive retail chains. The Cherry Blossom Girl is a really popular style blog, but I can’t relate to it. Yes, everything is beautiful and impeccably styled, but the site brings me more sadness than joy. I’m a brat and get so upset to see her flaunt her Chanel and Mulberry carelessly. She’s French and perfect looking, too. I’m just really jealous of her life.

When it comes to fashion sites that aren’t blogs, Style.com is number one on my list. The site is just as useful to me as the magazine which I’ve been reading since I was a young teen. They have online exclusives not featured in the magazine that help you out with hair, makeup and picking the perfect outfit for a night out.

Glamour.com is my online best friend as well. There are plenty of websites that offer daily newsletters about style and other little tidbits that lead to an aesthetically pleasing life.

A friend of mine introduced me to Daily Candy which sends out emails about sales and introduces the masses to smaller brands that aren’t easily found at department stores. Since I watch “The Rachel Zoe Project” religiously, I get a kick out of receiving daily updates from Ms. Zoe about what’s in at the moment. I’m totally contradicting myself by saying I enjoy Rachel Zoe’s fabulous style ideology because nothing on her site is in a reasonable price range. She’s built her name as a brand and is the leading stylist in Hollywood. Her style cannot get more ridiculous or unattainable than that.

Reading these sites really helps me get ideas for new outfits. It is also a great tool for figuring out what trends can or can not work for you. I suggest signing up for newsletters and checking out the blogs frequently.

If you’re nuts like me you’ll read blogs as often as you check your email.

Fashion Finds is a weekly column on fashion. Look for it every Monday.

MIND TRICKS

Mentalist and Illusionist Wayne Hoffman performs in the GC Ballroom on March 23. The event was held by SPC-MNC.
Money management course is essential

Understanding the concept of saving and applying this principle to one's lifestyle is a common challenge, especially amongst college students. Creating a financial plan is not the most desirable practice for most incoming freshmen, which is the most considered to help students understand the necessity of financial planning and develop a saving habit. I think that a course specializing in managing personal finances should be part of the University Core Curriculum.

According to the University, the UCC provides the "broad, well-defined curriculum that enables graduates to think critically, analytically, and creatively." To me, money management is a concept that students should be required to think about during their first year at the University. In order to ensure that students are not ignoring the importance of money management, a course need to be incorporated into the UCC.

With today's tough economy, students need to be better educated about the benefits of saving versus constant spending. Courses should be mandatory to encourage and teach students about the different possible ways of saving. In general, the benefits of saving for the future is not a concept that most Americans are well informed about. According to a 2010 survey conducted by Harris Interac- tive of the National Federation for Credit & Counseling, "34 percent of Americans (77 million people) gave themselves a grade of C, D or F on their knowledge of personal finance." Due to these disappointing and quite embarrassing statistics, we need to start spreading this knowledge at an early age to help the society as a whole.

Ben Baker, who teaches an annual personal finance workshop at Davidson College, said, "I will never understand why our education system puts so little value on practical things...an understanding of finance and personal responsibility has a direct impact on the quality of life of every person." Baker's statement solidifies my belief that universities need to take a more active role in educating our pupils and mandating personal financial courses, starting at the University. Understanding the importance and relevance of personal finances is not innate and needs to be taught.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin concluded that "Barley one-third of them [students] had taken a college course that included personal finance content." Basically, most college students graduate without ever taking a course about finance. This reality should be a concern for FIU.

Maryland Landrum, a student assistant associated with the Missouri Department of Higher Education, said university should "require personal finance courses." Also, Michelle Singleton, a staff writer for the Washington Post said, "College students shouldn't be bailed a degree without having taken personal finance classes." All of these examples exhibit the importance of implementing a mandated course on personal finances and the values of saving for all University students.

After graduation, our students should understand the basic fundamentals of personal financial. It is the Universi- ty's responsibility to provide the tools and education for its students on this basic knowledge.

Econ with Neda is an economics op-ed column. Look for it every other Monday.

Low candidate and voter turnout at BBC insulting

As election day for the Student Government Association draws near, there is a stark contrast between the state of affairs at the Modesto Maid- ique and Biscayne Bay campuses.

The Student Government Council at MMC is seeing its most competitive election since 2008 across the entire council. Only two senator seats are going uncontested, which is a great accomplishment considering its history of uncontested elections, particularly in the presi- dential and vice presidential ticket.

However, the troubling state of elections at SGC-BBC includes uncontested presidential and senatorial races.

There is one candidate running for the two Honors College seats, two for the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management seats, two for the two College of Arts & Sciences seats, and one for the Finance and Large. The remaining 36 council senate seats are set to be empty.

The Beacon questions a council with such a low number of viable candidates, most of which are running uncontested, can even be considered a legitimate governing body. The current situation which has been created to ensure proper student representation is being undermined.

If students do not truly have a choice as to who will comprise their council, it negates the point of having one, let alone an election. These circumstances make this election look like a necessity rather than a serious oppor- tunity for students at BBC to decide who would best represent their interests.

One improvement that can be made is making the application and deadlines available both in office and online at the start of the semester to allow more students to take the opportunity to run. It would also give the Elections Board ample time to evaluate candidates’ eligibility so last-minute disqualifications are eliminated.

The lack of voter participation needs to be improved, and “free,” student-funded pizza will not be the panacea. Elim- inating candidate obscurity will. The week before elections is not enough time for students to become familiar with candidates through campaigning, let alone be fully aware of the elec- tion. The campaigning period should be extended to allow students to become more informed and engaged in voting.

Recently, we addressed the inefficiencies of SGC-BBC’s council, ultimately concluding that one council solution would benefit the entire student body. Instances like these elections serve to strengthen that point.

Having one council would give students a consistent, unified government that consolidates marketing efforts and approaches students with a united presence. Addition- ally, a united student government would have a singular voice that any student who can focus on implementing, marketing and deploying elec- tions efforts across the University. Furthermore, the elections commissioner would presumably be appointed by the Fall or Spring semester, giving them even more time to prepare.

This, combined with an extended application and campaigning period, would give students more time to realize they can run for positions. More candidates will yield more votes.
A mangrove restoration project at Biscayne Bay Campus has successfully collected and planted 1,200 mangroves throughout Oleta Park and BCB.

The project, which the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management sponsored, started in 2009 with the help of the Alonzo and Tracy Mourning High School and intends to use education and preservation to help fill in some of the gaps in the protected areas on campus and at the park.

“The entire campus used to be a mangrove forest,” said Jennifer Grimm, environmental coordinator at BBC. “We are trying to restore what we can to the areas available.”

Rapid urbanization over the past 100 years has depleted the resources of Florida’s coastlines, and the delicate relationship within the ecosystem has caused the need for government intervention. Mangroves became a federally protected species in 1996, and laws regulate against trimming and altering existing plants.

Red mangroves, one of the three species of mangrove including black and white, has been the focus of the efforts because of their tremendous impact on the ocean and wetland ecosystems. They provide protection and habitats for many small creatures, as well as a sturdier shoreline and shoreline protection from elements such as wind and floods.

These wetland communities, which are essential to the general health of the estuarine ecosystem, where replaced by eroding, unconsolidated shorelines,” said Gary Milano, Coastal Habitat Restoration Program Coordinator of DERMA, who spearheads the efforts on campus. “These proposed restorations could benefit species from manatees to bald eagles.”

DERMA has also begun the process of removing invasive species from campus, including the Australian Pine and Brazilian Pepper, which grow rapidly and take over and kill native species, as well as take up space that could be used for more beneficial species. The efforts will coincide with the planting of the new mangroves and will be of no cost to the county, rather, saving it nearly $40,000 in the project as a result of a plea agreement through the State Attorney Office.

The project plans to restore approximately 12 acres of habitat within the University, pending university approval of seven more acres, and comes with a price tag of $1.2 million dollars.

“The project is phased to allow for progress, then application for more funds,” said Milano. “Miami-Dade has contributed $700,000 to the efforts initially. The University has not contributed any money, but hosts the program.”

Students from the University and ATM high school, as well as an environmental summer camp, collected the initial 1,200 propagules, or mangrove seedlings, and nurtured them to maturity in plastic cups filled with salt water until they were capable of being planted in soil in a greenhouse on campus. When their roots were strong enough they were then replanted in the protected areas.

The next round of propagules, slated to be ready for planting in September 2011, is numbered at about 2,500 seedlings.

“We [at FIU] haven’t tracked [the seeds] specifically, but what we’ve seen through county data, they have had about a 90 to 97 percent success rate,” said Grimm. “Hopefully we will continue to see this kind of progress.”

Student interest has been brewing, and Grimm eventually hopes to start a mangrove adoption program.

“A lot of the time students come in for service learning, and then they want to come back on their own to see it through,” said Grimm of the propagules they gather. The adoption program will allow students and faculty to nurture a seedling at home to maturity, and participate in its planting.

With the 2,500 plants becoming ready in fall, the need for planting at the University will be close to filled.

“But we are manipulating different situations that improve growth and survival rates,” Grimm said. “Hopefully this will be a long term ongoing project.”

The project was finally purchased in support of certain missions.

One of their projects consists in the Coral Holding System, which studies the diversity of coral species, and is conducted by one of the faculty members Dr. Rebecca Vega Thurber.

There is also the maintenance of water treatment systems for investigative matters, it will increase the possibilities to detect contaminated water coming through the bay, and facilitate the studies of marine species.

The process of putting this purifying machinery to work is something the students of the Marine Science Department are still not deeply aware of. This process excludes the students and focuses on those who are in charge of building the structure and the devices needed to finish it.

“Students have all the access to operate it under certain parameters of investigation for the correct development of their projects and research,” said Fernandez. “We are the building manager.”
MEXICO

MEXICO

Report: 230,000 displaced by drug war

The Swiss-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Center has done a study which suggests at least 230,000 people have been displaced in Mexico because of drug violence.

BECCA GRIESEMER

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

At-large candidate aims to help internationals

At-large candidate aims to help internationals

BECCA GRIESEMER

Staff writer

An international student who was "really, really lonely" during his first week at the University is running for senator-at-large, and will work to ensure other students have better first impressions than he did.

Odimayo "Tami" Oluwatamilore said he had to find his way around the University himself, and resorted to doing most things online, such as registering for classes.

"Because of my accent, I felt reluctant to ask questions when I needed help," Oluwatamilore said.

Originally from Nigeria, Oluwatamilore has lived in Miami for three years. He now describes living in the city as being a lot of fun, but it wasn’t until he received some advice that he began making steps to feel that way.

"A friend gave me the idea: if you want to make friends, join clubs," Oluwatamilore said.

Oluwatamilore promptly became an intern in the student government association.

During the internship, Oluwatamilore was initially not sure if he would be able to make a difference.

"Something peer advisors should do," Oluwatamilore said. "I imagine it like each international student is given a buddy that helps them go through the year."

Oluwatamilore also calls for surveys to be given to students for helpful ideas.

Haspel, who has recently taken the speaker pro tempore position, agrees there should be more events that allow mingling for freshly arrived students.

"I think there are events we can use to bring international students together," Oluwatamilore said. "The first week of school, they should come together. There should be more dinners."

But Oluwatamilore wants the dinners to be mandatory and scheduled around the first week of the semester, in order for each senator or student to be paired with an international student to mentor.

Nancy Hernandez, director of International Student and Scholar Services at BBC, said BBC is currently responsible for 400 S1, or student visas.

Oluwatamilore said the issue is "basically everyone" on the council, mentioning: Special Events Coordinator Marie Wray, Senator Pablo Haspel, and President Christian "CC" Battle.

During his first weeks, Oluwatamilore has already helped many cabinet members accomplish projects, and his commitment shows great promise as a member of SGC-BBC.

"It is also great to have people who share the burning passion for something, and he has clearly shown that to me," Haspel said in an email to Student Media.

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"In terms of events, I think we have quite a large presence of international students on campus, and as such it is a good idea to use [activity and services] funds to promote integration among all students," Haspel said. "And I will support him if he creates activities which involve the entire student body, since it will make international students feel more like regular students, as opposed to being defined by the term 'international.'"

As an international student himself from Argentina, Haspel stressed the importance of SGC-BBC’s role in organizing events to make all students feel welcome.

"They are first and foremost students, and as such SGC is mandated to represent and create opportunities for students, which means as long as they are planned properly, they will surely be successful," Haspel said.

Another minor concern Oluwatamilore has is that he will possibly take up as senator is with the College of Arts and Sciences, as he is a biology major that plans to get a masters in psychology to become a therapist.

Oluwatamilore believes some of the classes CAS requires in order to graduate aren’t actually relevant to certain majors.

"I like everything about the college, except some of the mandatory courses are really unnecessary," he said, giving an example. "Calculus 2 might not be necessary; statistics is better for pre-med."

Though only 19-years old, Oluwatamilore is a junior because students graduate early in Nigeria, around the age of 16, he said.

Oluwatamilore joined SGA to approach the issues he sees with a proactive attitude. It was after he saw members of SGA who didn’t accomplish their goals that he decided to join.

"I said: I’ll just try myself."

BRINGING IN SPRING

Top Left: Students tie red yarn around their wrists in an exercise meant to show everyone is connected by blood and came from a womb. The exercise was part of the Spring Equinox event held in Panther Square on March 23 which the Multifaith Council sponsored.

Top Right: The Rev. Linea Pearson, adjunct professor of religious studies, leads students in a prayer as the Spring Equinox event starts.

Bottom: Pearson, a professor of religious studies (second from left), talks to students and staff about spiritual elements and how it relates to humans during the Spring Equinox.