Smarty Pants Bowl attempts to spread AIDS awareness

JESSICA LOPEZ
Contributing Writer

Miami ranks first in the nation in AIDS case rates, according to data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Due to the fact that many South Floridians are uninformed about this disease, the School of Journalism and Mass Communications associate dean, Allan Richards, Kate MacMillin, reached out to Richards and the College of Medicine of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and part of the research team that first looked at AIDS, to incorporate the “Tell Somebody Now” campaign into his one of his courses by assigning the students a project that would require them to break into four teams to devise an HIV prevention plan for the FIU community.

“I noticed FIU doesn’t have an HIV prevention plan, and with a disease that has no cure, prevention is key,” said Darrow. Darrow, claiming to have dedicated his career to the study and eradication of HIV/AIDS, agreed to incorporate the “Tell Somebody Now” campaign into his one of his courses by assigning the students a project that would require them to break into four teams to devise an HIV prevention plan for the FIU community.

“ar are many conserva-
tives who don’t like talking about this issue since it is a disease that is spread intimately, but this is killing people. It’s necessary to talk about it,” said School of Journalism and Mass Communications associate dean, Allan Richards. Kate MacMillin, reached out to Richards and the College of Medicine for help in spreading AIDS awareness.

Dr. William Darrow, professor of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and part of the research team that first looked at AIDS, was more than happy to help. Darrow, claiming to have dedicated his career to the study and eradication of HIV/AIDS, agreed to incorporate the “Tell Somebody Now” campaign into his one of his courses by assigning the students a project that would require them to break into four teams to devise an HIV prevention plan for the FIU community.

“I noticed FIU doesn’t have an HIV prevention plan, and with a disease that has no cure, prevention is key,” said Darrow. After working for nearly a whole semester on their prevention plans, the teams finally had the opportunity to present all of their hard work in a competitive setting at the annual Smarty Pants Bowl on April 11.

Poking fun at American Idol, Darrow served as host while MacMillin and Richards portrayed Paula Abdul and Simon Cowell. The “Totally Rad Roaries” began the competition to present their to restate the FIU AIDS Committee to act as a sort of council that would look over every other school organization’s AIDS involvement.

Team Captain Brianna Ortiz

SMARTY PANTS, page 2

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republicans pulling a lead over Democrats’ votes

ANN SANNER
CALVIN WOODWARD
AP Staff

State by state, Republicans are moving at light speed on a conservative agenda they would have had no hope of achieving before the big election gains of November. The dividends are apparent after only a few months in office, and they go well beyond the spending cuts forced on states by the fiscal crunch and tea party agitation. Republican governors and state legislators are bringing abortion restrictions into law from Virginia to Arizona, acting swiftly to expand gun rights north and south, pushing polling-station photo ID laws that are anathema to Democrats and taking on public sector unions anywhere they can.

All this as Democrats find themselves cowed or outmaneuvered in statehouses where they once put up a fight. In many states, they are unable to do much except hope that voters will see these actions as an overreach by the Republicans they elected — an accidental revolution to be reversed down the road.

A tug to the right was in the cards ever since voters put the GOP in charge of 25 legislatures and 29 governors’ offices in the 2010 elections. That is turning out to be every bit as key to shaping the nation’s ideological direction as anything happening in Washington.

A close-up review of the first wave of legislative action by Associated Press statehouse reporters shows the striking degree to which the GOP has been able to break through gridlock and achieve improbable ends.

The historic and wildly contentious curbs on public sector bargaining in Wisconsin, quickly followed by similar action in Ohio, were but a signal that the status quo is being challenged on multiple fronts in many places.
Man bites dog — then sues over police canine's act

A 33-year-old man who bit back after he was caught by a Phoenix police dog is suing police.

Ethin Sullivan alleges the dog violated his civil rights and used excessive force to capture him after a Phoenix police dog is suing police.

Police say Sullivan bit the dog back, injuring it.

The lawsuit names the cities of Phoenix and Glendale.

Sullivan also alleges Glendale police refused to give him insulin to treat his diabetes.

--- Compiled by Nicole Castro

Project boosts campaign’s mission

SMARTY PANTS, page 1

claimed that the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils served as an inspiration for the idea of a school-wide AIDS Committee.

The second team, “Soothsayers,” presented their idea of a six-year plan.

The “Perky Panthers” focused their presentation on offering a multitude of ways to create said dialogue, such as by creating Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts for the campaign.

“Creating dialogue about AIDS is the most important thing in preventing it,” said Basilia Perkins, captain of the team.

Their presentation was executed with an example of their vision for the YouTube account—a poem sent in by someone who was somehow affected by HIV/AIDS. “I have goose bumps,” said MacMillin after watching the rendering.

Even after such diverse presentations the title of Smarty Pants Bowl champions ultimately went to the last team, the “Divine Dazzlers.” By focusing on advertising AIDS awareness messages during school sporting events, the judges quickly deliberated to deem them as the first-ever bowl champions.

While the winners of the Smarty Pants Bowl earned an ‘A’ for their project, everyone at the event was content once it was over. Perkins, whose team came in second place, was not hurt over the loss, but rather excited by the project’s possibilities.

“This started off as a class project, but it became a passion in the process,” said Perkins.

Along with attendees at the event, MacMillin was satisfied with the presentations and the purpose of the event.

“It’s so exciting. This was not just a project; this stuff is going to be implemented,” said MacMillin.

The evening came to a close with a few brief words from Dr. Darrow, who thanked everyone for their hard work and for attending.

Special thanks were reserved for Donovan Thomas, founder of the BCP movement, a community movement created to raise HIV/AIDS awareness in South Florida.

The Thomas congratulated everyone on the success of the evening and seemed very impressed with all the information the teams had gathered.

According to MacMillin and other hosts, the night was a success and step forward for the “Tell Somebody Now” campaign.

“I think everyone was a winner tonight, and soon the whole FIU community will be winners with a new HIV/AIDS awareness program,” said Darrow.

Budget could be proposed next year

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BUDGET, page 1

submitted a repurposed budget to foster without final approval from the senate in session.

“All the people that voted against it, the majority of them were in the meeting that day.

There was a huge chunk that voiced their concern, they were there, and so I don’t see why it shouldn’t pass,” said SGC-MMC President Helena Ramirez.

On April 11, Housing Senator Carlos Rodriguez filed a petition with the judiciary against the SGC-MMC Budget Committee, claiming that the committee violated Florida Statutes section 1009.24 (10)(b). by submitting the proposed budget to Dr. Jones without prior approval from the Senate.

Rodriguez noted that the legislation states, “The allocation and expenditure of the [student activity and service fee] fund shall be determined by the student government association of the university.”

The court decided in Rodriguez’s favor. The budget provided by the Senate was supposed to vote on the SGC-MMC Budget at its next session on April 18, Jones has yet to send back the budget.

MacMillin claims that only Jones has the authority to circumscribe the constitution, and if the budget is not proposed to this year’s Senate, it could be presented to next year’s senators.

Florida Statute 1009.24 (10)(b).

“We found that they were guilty, but we didn’t punish them as in censuring them or removing them from office because there were mitigating factors. They had pressure from the administration,” said Octavio Mella, SGC-MMC chief justice.

The budget that was presented to Jones is still in her possession and at her disposal to make suggestions for changes. While the Senate was supposed to vote on the SGC-MMC Budget at its next session on April 18, Jones has yet to send back the budget.

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Bejarano and Castillo lead FIU at Invitational

CARLOS MONINO/THE BEACON

Garrett Wittels [above] connects on a hit against the Ragin’ Cajuns over the weekend. FIU won on Sunday with a decisive 11-5 victory.

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

The FIU men’s and women’s track and field team had yet another stellar outing at the Hurricane Alumni Invitational on Saturday, April 16th at The University of Miami, as they continue to improve both individually and as a collective unit in preparation for the conference and national tournament.

“We had a phenomenal meet, although it was delayed about 2 and a half hours due to the weather we had a number of personal bets and number of people won their events, so it was a tremendous event for us actually,” said Coach Campbell.

The success that many of the Golden panthers have had thus far has not gone unnoticed, as some of the athletes are ranked in the top 30 in the nation for their respective events.

The team of Marrisa McElveen, Lakesha Kelley, Carli Kuy Mills and T’Keyah Dumoy went into the meet Saturday ranked NO. 19 in the nation, along with having the eighth fastest time in the East Region overall in the 4x100 relay.

With all of the individual accolades achieved this year by the team, coach Campbell admits that “it is really hard to choose who would be the most improved or MVP of their team,” saying that as a program overall they have extremely improved.

“Each week we progress, we end up running faster and faster,” Campbell said. “We have had just so much success this year that it’s actually a lot of fun to witness.”

Three of the four are also ranked individually with Mills NO.30 in the East Region in the 100m hurdles, McElveen NO. 20 in the nation in the long jump and NO. 14 in the East Region, and Kelley NO. 39 in the 400m in the East Region.

Lu’Shae White was also NO. 21 in the East region in the 400m.

At the meet, Megan Home placed third in the javelin throw with a throw of 41.09, Sebastian Castillo came in second place in the Men’s 1500 meter with a time of 3:53.26, Michael Bejarano got first place in the Men’s 400 meter hurdles.

Bren Garcia grabbed third in the Men pole vault and Tyson Kemp got third in the men shot put.

“We didn’t run everybody but I definitely feel that it was one of the better events that we’ve had,” commented Campbell on his team’s performance. “Every meet that we competed in this year has been similar to the Hurricane Invitational. So if I had to rank any of them I’d say they were all equal because each and every week we just get a little bit better and a little bit closer to trying to win the Sun Belt tournament.”

There are only two more meets left for the Golden Panthers until the Sun Belt Outdoor Championships.

“The way the team has progressed so quickly, it is more about sustaining their success, rather than having to greatly improve before the tournament.”

“All the hard work and the training has been done, so right now it’s really about how sharp and how good can we have the athletes feel on game day as far as being able to compete.”

Eric Campbell
Head Coach

BASEBALL
Offense fuels comeback win as Panthers takes series

ANDRES LEON
Staff Writer

The FIU baseball team would get things started with a bang and beat their Sun Belt Conference in a comeback victory on April 17.

With a good performance from their pitching staff the night before, FIU (22-16, SBC 7-8) would start Daniel DeSimone to duel against TJ. Geith. DeSimone would only pitch two innings after giving FIU an early three run lead. DeSimone would allow four runs off seven hits and then come off for Kyle Fitzpatrick to relieve him.

The UL Ragin’ Cajuns would put up early and on the mound to combat the Golden Panther offensive. Geith would pitch four innings allowing six runs off of seven hits while striking out seven batters.

BUILDING AN EARLY LEAD AND DEALING WITH ADVERSITY

Pablo Bermudez would set the tone by homering off his first pitch to right field. Martinez would ground out to third later in the first to bring Patton home.

Yoandy Barroso would add the third run by recording an RBI single to center field to bring Garrett Wittels home for a three run lead.

“We didn’t get the hits early when we needed it, we bled a 3 run lead, the home runs don’t mean much to me, I’m here to get on base as a leadoff.” Said Bermudez, after recording his first two homeruns of the season on the weekend.

In the second inning, Desimone would allow four runs to come in to give the Ragin’ Cajuns the lead. As UL loaded the top of their line up, speedsters Alex Faseler and Greg Fontenot would come up big, as Faseler would record an RBI single and then Fontenot would hit a sacrifice fly to put the Cajuns up 4-3 going into the bottom of the second.

Both FIU and UL would score a lone run in the fourth inning. Lance Marvel would come in for UL as a pinch hitter and single to center field to bring Jordan Poirrier in for the score. Later on, Garrett Wittels would single right at the pitcher to bring Bermudez home to tie the score 5-5. Pitch hitter Jose Behar would score in the fifth after being brought in off of a wild pitch and on the previous play TJ. Shantz would come home off of a fielder’s choice from Patton.

FIU would take a one run lead after finally breaking through. In the previous two innings, the Golden Panthers would come up short on key situations with bases loaded and no outs. Things finally gave way after Martinez singled left field to bring Patton in for the third run of the inning. “When your not focused on what you’re doing, you swing at bad pitches you leave runners out there on base,” said Coach Thomas.

After rallying back, FIU would cruise on through the rest of the game. In the eighth inning, the Golden Panthers would record another three runs. Bermudez would single to second base and Jose Behar would follow with a double. On the following play Kenny Patton would swing deep to bring Bermudez on a double into a gap in left center field. Wittels would cap things off with a single to right field to score Patton. Bryam Garcia would get the call and close the game, grabbing the win for FIU 11-5.

“It was good to get are bullpen going today and it helps late in the season, and with about 50 percent left I feel we’ve got a good team with a lot more to show as the season goes on,” said Coach Thomas after Sunday’s series win.

The Golden Panthers will return to conference action next weekend as FIU will take on University of Arkansas Little Rock. The three game away series starting Friday.

FLORIDA MEMORIAL GAME CANCELED

FIU men’s baseball game on Tuesday, April 19 against Florida Memorial was canceled and will not be made up. FIU has added a game on May 11 at No. 21-ranked Stetson Hatters in Deland, Fla. The time of the game will be determined at a later date, according to FIUSports.com.

SOFBALL
Powerful offense carries team past WKU

MALERICK YIELDER
Head Coach

The Golden Panthers scored over 10 runs for the fifth time this season as they defeated Western Kentucky 13-2 in six innings on April 17. Sophomore Alex Casals led the Golden Panthers offensively, hitting her first career grand slam.

Western Kentucky scored the games first run on a leadoff solo home run by Kelsie Mattos in the top of the first inning.

In the bottom half of the inning, the Golden Panthers countered with a two-out rally to take the lead. Ashley McClain began the rally with a single.

After a walk to Brie Rojas, Kayla Burri hit a single to centerfield scoring McClain to tie the game.

On the play, Rojas advanced to third. Rojas scored from third base after Burri attempted to steal second base and the throw from the catcher.
Casals’ grand slam powers big conference win

SOFTBALL, page 3

After more than a month off, the NFL and its locked-out players have started talking again about how to resolve their differences. If there is no deal by mid-October, the NFL could lose a couple of weeks.

Western Kentucky (23-22, 4-11 SBC) had an opportunity to trim into the lead, in the fifth inning. After Mattox reached base on a walk, Garcia singled to left field but advanced to second base after the cut-off throw from left fielder Casals did not retire Mattox at third. With runners in scoring position, Gniadek pitched out of a jam by recording a strikeout and a groundout.

The Golden Panthers were able to break the game open in the fifth inning as they sent nine batters to the plate and forced the Hilltoppers to make two pitching changes. FIU loaded the bases and scored three runs in the inning on two bases-loaded walks and a single to shortstop Amanda Thomas was bobbled and trickled into the outfield.

The only sign of progress or productivity, though, was the nine hours or so both sides spent in the federal courthouse on Thursday. Sworn to secrecy about specifics of the court-ordered mediation, neither the league nor the players provided much insight about where they’re at in their dispute over the division of this $9 billion business. They were set to meet again Friday morning.

Commissioner Roger Goodell, Carolinas Panthers owner Jerry Richardson, Kansas City Chiefs owner Clark Hunt, Pittsburgh Steelers owner Art Rooney and New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft were among those on hand for the closed-door session Thursday with U.S. Magistrate Judge Arthur Boylan.

NFL executive director DeMaurice Smith was joined by attorneys, line backers Ben Leber and Mike Vrabel, as well as Hall of Fame defensive end Carl Eller.

“I had a full day. It was constructive and with the run support.

Goodell stepped away from the session to join a teleconference with 5,300 Cleveland Browns season-ticket holders for 20 minutes. He would not characterize the negotiations, which are supposed to remain confidential, but did reiterate the importance of the sides getting together.

I can tell you that it’s a positive step when the parties are talking,” he said. “We saw the March 11 proposal as responsive to issues raised by the players and there are many attractive elements in it. … Our entire focus is on getting a deal done.”

Goodell also said there are no plans to use replacement players as the league did in 1987 and that the Super Bowl in Indianapolis could be pushed back one week or the two-week gap after the conference championships could be shortened to one if necessary.

But Goodell’s main message to fans was to assure them they would see the Browns play next season.

“We’re going to make sure we have football, and make it work,” he said.

Goodell held a similar session Wednesday with Dolphins season-ticket holders.

During that call, he stressed the league’s goal of keeping player costs under control and, in response to a question about financial transparency, said the NFL’s disclosure has been “extraordinary.”

He insisted the players know “the revenue down to the penny,” a reference to the union’s push for the league to open the books.

“We want them to be informed,” Goodell said. “We want to make sure they understand why we have the issues that we need to address.”

The mediation is the first positive step in the dispute in more than a month, but the league and players still must agree on how to divide more than $9 billion in annual revenue.

U.S. District Judge Susan Richard Nelson, who ordered the mediation, is still considering a request from the players to lift the lockout imposed by the owners. After an April 6 hearing, she said she planned to rule on the injunction request in a couple of weeks.

Players including MVP quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning filed the request along with a class-action antitrust suit against the league. The lawsuit has been combined with two other similar claims from retirees, former players and rookies-to-be.

For now, at least the two sides are talking again — even though it’s under a court order.
Stepping on campus seal invokes superstitions

ALEXANDRA CAMEJO  
Asst. News Director

With finals week approaching and the end of the semester looming near, seniors are finally gearing up for graduation.

“I feel like I’ve been dying for graduation since my freshman year. All of the tests, the essays, the assignments, the projects and studying finally were worth it this moment,” said Melissa Delgado, senior and business major.

Yet, according to the Student Alumni Association, it wasn’t what Delgado did that led her to a diploma—it’s what she didn’t do. Having been warned in her freshman orientation, Delgado has never stepped on the great seal of FIU that is engraved at the Betty Chapman Plaza entrance of the Graham Center.

“I remember the story that my peer advisor told me about that seal, and no matter how many people were coming in or out, I never laid a toe on it,” said Delgado.

According to tradition, the workers who engraved the seal in 1997 placed a curse on it before students even had a chance to take a step. One worker, who cannot be tracked down, joked to another by saying, “Imagine if a student steps on the seal and doesn’t graduate within the expected time.” The workers laughed and continued to place the seal. Two years later Javier Lopez was admitted into the University as a freshman with hopes of accelerating to graduation within three years.

According to SAA tradition, Lopez showed little respect for the seal, and frequently stepped on it on his way in and out of GC. Due to his disregard of the power of the seal, Lopez never met his three-year goal for graduation. It actually took him a staggering nine years to get his bachelor’s degree.

Ever since, students have been warned to never set foot on the great seal, or else they would be deemed to suffer the same fate as Lopez or worse.

While SAA cannot provide any more information on this student or his current whereabouts, Lopez’s story and the curse of the seal have lived on for more than ten years. Peer advisors let incoming freshman know that students who step on the great seal will not make it to graduation on time, if at all.

On a given day, thousands of people walk through GC, and in this traffic it is not uncommon to find students and friends stopping each other from suffering the fate that stepping on the seal brings.

“When my friend told me about the seal curse when I was about two steps from it, and I managed to jump over the thing at the last second,” said Michelle Perez, a junior and biology major.

Correlating the University’s four-year graduation rates with the great seal’s curse would be impossible, and those that disregard the superstition find its believers to be outlandish. In fact, according to the American Enterprise Institute, four-year colleges graduated an average of just 53% of students within six years.

“It’s just a superstition just like...
Fashion show raises money to aid cancer patients

ALEX MACIEL
Staff Writer

Project Hope was created to provide a beacon of hope for individuals whose financial struggle keep them from affording the cost of cancer treatment.

Their latest event, a fashion show, used fashion for charity.

Florida International University teamed up with the League Against Cancer, a community-based, non-profit organization providing free medical care to cancer patients.

The financial burden of cancer treatment is overwhelming, typically costing approximately $50,000.

To help relieve the weight of a full chemotherapy treatment, Project Hope has come together to raise $45,000.

Nicole Millan, founder and president of the University’s branch, had the desire to help struggling families with the burden of these medical expenses.

“There is a history of cancer in my family. I understand that some families cannot afford the cost of treatment. I therefore hope to spread awareness and help these families,” said Millan.

On Apr. 16, Project Hope held a fashion show featuring a variety of designers and vocal artists.

The event, “La Mode de L’Espoir,” French for fashion of hope, was held at The Deauville Beach Resort in Miami Beach and is one of Project Hope’s biggest events.

“Many of our most fabulous and novel models walked the runway for a cause, showcasing different designs and new collections from local designers.”

The first collection featured was M-M Couture, followed by Kristina Ashley Swimwear, Cherry Bomb Boutique and lastly Minmi by Danitza Zimac.

Both performing artists, Sam Dearmond and The Bento Box Band, had acoustic and mellow undertones. Complimentary hor d’oeuvres as well as cocktails were served to attendees.

100% of the profits from Saturday’s event go to the cancer patients of The League Against Cancer. This includes the $40 ticket required to enter the venue that held up to 550 people.

A raffle was also held in order to contribute more to the patients.

The fashion show received additional help from volunteer students from Miami-Dade College and Florida International University.

Volunteers contributed their time and effort to garner corporate sponsorships, promote the event, and hosted an array of local fundraising activities leading up to the main event.

The Fashion Show aided a good cause while providing people with a fun and interesting event.

“Where there is love there is hope,” said Millan.
Electronic books no match for tradition

GIOVANNI GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

Mobile devises such as the iPad and Kindle make buying eBooks as easy as clicking a link, and they are usually cheaper to boot. With the failure of bookstores, such as many Borders across the country most recently, it is evident that physical books of all types are losing popularity against their digitized counter parts. Anyone with an Internet connection can get their favorite books, magazines and newspapers from any number of online sources without even having to turn a page. Despite the benefits of digitizing many aspects of our society, completely digitizing books would remove the personal, imaginative, and memorable qualities that many avid readers value. Almost every type of print can now be obtained online for a cheaper price. It is unfortunate that, with the huge success of digitized media, people can now be in a computer screen for virtually every waking moment of their lives. In a time where technology is invading every aspect of our lives we should be looking for reasons to get off the computer, not stay on. By comparison, eBooks are life-less and impersonal. Books are meant to be an escape, and it is much more difficult to become absorbed while staring at a screen. From personal experience, I can say that reading from a digitized screen lacks a certain immersive quality. Additionally, the feel of paper pages is just classic and no digital device will ever be able to replace it.

EBooks are definitely the next logical step towards the future. Where the printing press made physical books more accessible, eBooks make literature exponentially more so. However, the beauty lies in the experience of seeing the thickness of the book, turning the pages, and becoming engrossed for a few hours. No eBook can provide the same experience as a worn hardcover. While eBooks are gaining momentum because of their practicality and efficiency, print books will always be more appealing to me because of the hard back they provide. Digitizing everything has its advantages, but the rising popularity of eBooks eliminates yet another reason to get off the computer. Physical books should continue to be a good reason to leave the computer and do some studying or just get lost in a great story, not to mention it is easier on the eyes. According to www.prevent- blindness.org, sitting too close in front of a computer screen for extended hours can increase the likelihood of eye strain. Physical books are a prime example of the escape from the overwhelming embrace of technology that many look for when it is time to relax.

While most authors publish on both mediums to reach the maximum audience, some newer authors are relying solely on the eBook method to distribute their work, because of its ease. While this could tip the balance in the favor of the eBook, it is very probable that physical books will still be published for a while, as nostalgic readers everywhere will never get used to seeing no book covers disappear without a fight.

THE POLITIC

Political affairs taking an interesting turn

T o my readers: The semester is coming to an end, and unfortu- nately the b i s e s e a s o n a r r a i l s t h a t a l l o f y o u h a v e b e g u n b l o o k i n g a s f o r t h e f u t u r e , t h e y m u s t f o l l o w suit-for now. It has been a turbulent spring with the rainbow of revolutions that spread like burning oil throughout the Middle East, and in parts of northern Africa. Although, it does not appear that there will be a pot of gold at the end of this particular rainbow for anyone.

Americans also enjoyed a little sex scandal (although a boring vanilla one) the threat of a government shutdown and a brand new war with another insane dictator.

Currently, there is a no-fly zone still in place in the Syrian airspace. However, American involvement in the NATO-led assault has diminished, much to the chagrin of the dwindling number of rebel forces. The poorly armed, trained and led rebel forces are being-chopped up by Colonel Moammar Qaddafi’s forces and are engaged in what appears to be a never-ending tug-of-war with his forces in key cities.

Qaddafi has written President Barack Obama a poorly spelled note in broken English asking for the end of the no-fly zone, even though Qaddafi is dropping cluster bombs on civilian populations. It appears the force is not strong with this key city.

This spring’s sex scandal was the toast of the Internet for about a minute. New York Representative Christopher Lee, Republicans (shocker), resigned after he was caught claiming to be a divorced lobbyist and attempting to seduce women on Craigslist. Using his actual name and email address, he contacted a woman and sent her photos of himself.

She, like any metropolitan woman should do these days, “Googled” him and found out that he is married, has a child, and was a Congressman. The photos he sent to a woman leaked to the Internet and spread like-well, like burning oil throughout the Middle East.

It would appear that the government shutdown might be averted after all. After the Republican party offered up their economic plan, one which extended tax breaks for the rich, cut funding programs and aimed to privatize Medicare. On the other hand, President Obama’s plan called for an end to Bush-era tax cuts for the rich, tax increases and cuts in defense. President Obama’s budget proposal would reduce the deficit by $4 trillion that’s right, trillion-over the next 12 years.

Here are my predictions: our new engagement in the Africa is not going to end anytime soon. The goal of NATO and the American people is to oust Colonel Qaddafi and ‘create’ democracy, which has not worked in the past. As more revolutions continue to spread, so will our involvement in foreign affairs. Syria is undergoing a violent, if not the most violent, revolution of all the Arab Spring nations. There have been documented human rights violations and over 200 protesters have been killed by government forces.

Our economic crisis is one that has been brought on by greed and excess. The only way to solve this problem is through shrewd budgeting that does not affect programs that the poor, disenfranchised and the elderly need to survive the while increasing taxes and closing loopholes that allows top earners and businesses to avoid contributing their fair share.

While it is true that it is darkest before the sun rises, I wish the best of luck to our Political Science and Interna- tional Affairs majors who go on to graduate school.

The Politick is a political op-ed column.
New research center has community-oriented goals

Luis Roa
Contributing Writer

The Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, traditionally only at the Modesto Maidique Campus, has expanded onto the Biscayne Bay Campus.

The Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, traditionally only at the Modesto Maidique Campus, has expanded onto the Biscayne Bay Campus. After more than a year in the construction of the room, the college opened the doors to its new Division of Research and Data Coordinating Center in room 234 of Academic I on April 6.

“This is the first data coordinating center from the College of Medicine,” said Patricia A. Staufer, the center’s associate director for administration. “The first staff came on board in August 2009, but we were living on temporary space on an office in the first floor.”

The inauguration of the new offices received the visit of more than 30 guests, among them some distinguished university staff members, such as Dr. John A. Rock, founding dean of the College of Medicine, and Russell Benford, city manager. According to Staufer, the purpose of the center is to function as a research resource to University faculty and students. The center also strives “to meet the needs of the scientific and local communities.”

At the moment, the center has six permanent staff members, including Dr. Juan M. Acuña, the center’s director, and Dr. Juan M. Lozano, professor and associate director for research. Also, a group of community interviewers work as a functional part of the center. These are trained interviewers recruited from the community to administrate questionnaires to families living in the areas of study.

The work method for the center is to conduct community-based participatory research and clinical epidemiology methodologies. One of the center goals is to identify social determinants of health in order to inform policy makers with the final purpose of improving the wellness of residents of the community.

“We are set up with NeighborHELP in terms of evaluating their effectiveness,” said Staufer.

The NeighborHELP is a program the College of Medicine is using with its students to go out and do site visits to engage the students in community based activities, according to Staufer.

The data coordinating center produced their first community benchmark survey on the Northwest Miami-Dade Community.

The survey include a series of about 156 questions in order to gather a snapshot of the community health form October 2009 to April 2010.

“The center hopes the research can be beneficial to determine where the community stands in terms of chronic diseases and all kinds of other health problems.

Staufer also said that “the center” is to make sure things happening in terms of intervention are based on reality and data and not in what people’s think could be wrong in the community.”

Dianna Deonanan, a freshman from Hialeah, said. “It will pave a way for a concrete medical support team of researchers needed for combating medical problems in today’s society.”

Lecture emphasized importance of being news literate

Given the chance to give one last lecture to students before they graduate, Frederick Blevens warned them about believing such rumors as “President Obama to speak at FIU Spring Commencement,” or “PFIU to turn Tamiami park into water park.”

As part of Tau Sigma Alpha Honor Society’s “Legacies Lecture Series,” Blevens, a professor at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, spoke on April 14 about media literacy and the need to teach, especially high school students, the different ways to use media.

The series is an event which gives professors the chance to give the “lecture of a lifetime,” according to a TSA press release. Professors have the liberty to lecture on any topic they desire as long as it adheres to the question “If you had one last lecture to give to your students, what would you say?”

Blevens, a 2001 National Journalism Professor of the year, was the sixth professor to speak at the “Legacy Lecture Series.” He titled his speech “It’s an honor to follow in the footsteps of those who did this before me and those who did this nationally.”

He emphasized the importance of being news literate.

“Law requires you to take a speech class in college to teach you how to give a speech you will never give in real life, but there is no law that says you need to learn media, which is something you use every day,” said Blevens.

He ended his lecture with a quote from the autobiography of George Seldes titled, “Witness to a Century.”

“[My brother] Gilbert and I... remained throughout our lifetimes just what Father was, free thinkers, and likewise, doubters and dissenters and perhaps Utopians. Father’s rule had been ‘Question everything, take nothing for granted,’ and I never outlived it, and I would suggest it be made the motto of a world journalists’ association.”

“Dr. John A. Rock, dean of the College of Medicine (second from the left), at the inauguration of the medical research center at the Biscayne Bay Campus on April 6.”

“John A. Rock, dean of the College of Medicine (second from the left), at the inauguration of the medical research center at the Biscayne Bay Campus on April 6.”

“Luis Roa/The Beacon”

“Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine”

“Raul Castro proposes political term limits”

For the first time since coming to power, President Raul Castro proposed term limits for Cuba’s leaders. The term-limit proposal would make it all but impossible for a repeat of the Castro’s political dynasty.

“The truth about those Tweets: Notes from a Parallel Universe.”

“We know teachers have to follow a certain curriculum in the classroom and don’t always have the opportunity to say what they want and feel, so we have this event so professors get the chance to tell students what they want before they graduate,” said Andrea Cruz, president of TSA and journalism major.

According to Cruz, the idea for this lecture series came from the students themselves and picking the professors and the gathering of ideas can take some time.

“[Honors students] have a good idea of who is well liked and who is popular. We let the students give their suggestions and then we go ahead and contact the professor and see if he/she is available,” said Cruz.

The ability of the audience to interpret and be critical of what they read, listen to, and watch was major component of Blevens’ speech.

“In many ways, these efforts to spread news literacy ... [has put the tools that raise expectations and challenge the news] in the hands of the audience and challenges the news industry to haul what Bill Moyers often described as ‘our march towards pliancy.’”

Blevens said nowadays, so many people do not bother to do the extra bit of research and tend to believe the first thing they read or see. For example, Blevens had one of his honors classes work on a project that turned out to be a prank on society.

His class built up a site very similar to fium.com and published articles about how Obama was canceling his trip to Miami-Dade College and coming to the University’s spring commencement instead. The class also published an article saying the University was turning Tamiami Park into a water park. The class posted the articles on Facebook and watched as the clicks the pages received go up by the minute. At the end, The Miami Herald called the office of University President Mark Rosenberg for commencement.

Blevens stated the point of this project was to demonstrate how simple it is for people to read a simple statement such as “Obama is coming to FIU instead of Miami-Dade College,” and assume it is true. His point was to show people they need to investigate and make sure what they are reading is true and Facebook is not always their best place for verifiable information.

Blevens spoke about Twitter, its popularity, and how it is a big source of information for many people.

“Every platform in social media, whether you’re talking about Twitter, Facebook, regular Internet, email, or [instant messaging] has moved along at a lightning pace. It’s amazing and it’s scary. It’s scary when we’re talking about verifiable information. Those things that are important to us in conducting our daily lives and how it contributes to the democracy,” said Blevens.

Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine

“DOMINICAN REPUBLIC”

Drug kingpin’s ex-wife turns self in

Leony Nin Batista, 33-year-old ex-wife of a reputed Caribbean drug kingpin, is back in the Dominican Republic to face accusations she laundered money for her former husband’s alleged trafficking network.

“CUBA”

Raul Castro proposes political term limits

For the first time since coming to power, President Raul Castro proposed term limits for Cuba’s leaders. The term-limit proposal would make it all but impossible for a repeat of the Castro’s political dynasty.

“PUERTO RICO”

US tourist accused in hotel killing

George Toumantakis, a 33-year-old New Jersey man, is facing murder and weapons possession charges connected to a killing in the parking lot of a high-end resort in a popular tourist area of Puerto Rico’s capital.