

2-17-2016

The Beacon, February 17, 2016

Florida International University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/student_newspaper

Recommended Citation

Florida International University, "The Beacon, February 17, 2016" (2016). *The Beacon*. Book 858.
http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/student_newspaper/858

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections and University Archives at FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Beacon by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dcc@fiu.edu.

Extended dining hours will benefit University residents

NADINE MATAS
Contributing Writer
news@fiusm.com

Florida International University has a vast number of eating establishments on campus to accommodate students living on campus.

These students usually live on campus for the entire semester, and are sometimes on campus and in their dorms over the breaks.

Jose Sirven, president of the Residential Hall Association, says these students are the highest number attending campus restaurants since they are the closest and most convenient places to find food.

Sirven explains “there are students who are on campus 24/7 and work, then need to find a place to eat when they come home.”

This is an issue the Residential Hall Association has been attempting to resolve over the last few months.

Sirven, a sophomore majoring in international relations, has been at the head of negotiations with Aramark and the University to extend the hours of operation of the on campus food places.

“We started off with a lot of research and then I actually managed to speak with President Rosenberg about the issue we were facing.”

RHAs research showed that a reoccurring issue students

seemed to be facing was the early closing hours for most eating establishments on campus.

Erica Phillips, a senior Asian Studies major, says, “I remember being a freshman and hating that either nothing was open on the weekends or that, if something was open, it would always close super early.”

Sirven explains “after that step we have a meeting with representatives from Aramark, who actually interviewed me asking what we would need.”

According to Sirven, the process was long and difficult, “We had to find ways of getting feedback from the students, once we had that we started sending out surveys and getting as many people to fill them out as possible to show the need for the extension of hours.”

Aramark then came to an agreement with the University and its food providers, as well as the Office of Residential Life and RHA, to extend the hours.

Fresh Food now closes at 9 p.m. on weekends, which Sirven says is a small step in their future plans.

Phillips says, “I don’t go to Fresh Foods as much as I used to because I don’t have the unlimited plan that I had while I was a freshman, but even still I love the fact that Fresh has extended hours.”

“Some students don’t even have kitchens in their dorms so they need to find a place to eat.” Sirven says. He adds that “this is only the

SING IT OUT LOUD



NICOLE HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

Giovannah “Gia” Joseph, a senior studying biology, sings in the GC Pit on Friday, Feb. 12.

first step” something he insists on pointing out.

“The goal is that perhaps one day we can get some places to stay open 24/7 for students.”

Sirven says, “Students have different working hours and some come home late at night from their shifts, so it would be good to have

a place for them to eat instead of having to make food at that time, especially if they don’t have a kitchen in their dorm or work on weekends.”

RHA is working not only on the project of further extending dining hours, but also on a free transportation system to get the

residents easier access to other locations around the university. Sirven says that he and his team are working hard.

“[We] and the students have been disgruntled, but know we will make this possible one day. There’s definitely a lot more to come.”

RHA addresses resident Wi-Fi complications

MORGAN BENOIT
Contributing Writer
news@fiusm.com

Florida International University is attempting to tackle the current issue of wireless internet complications within the dormitory halls. Internet connection is a concern for most students on the University campus.

FIU is taking this problem into consideration to reach a solution by pinpointing the core cause of the poor connection. The cause could possibly result from the large amount of devices and wireless printers being used.

A large sum of students throughout the housing facilities depend upon the internet for course assignments, cellular devices and personal needs.

Without a dependable and consistent internet connection, this can pose as a serious problem for the housing department, hindering the residents.

Jose Sirven, president of the Residential Hall Association, discusses the effects of poor connection.

“Some of our students cannot study in their rooms because of the quality of the Wi-Fi connection or lack thereof. Some students are still frustrated with the Wi-Fi.”

Concerned students are instructed to contact the division of IT so that they can aid with the issue at hand.

According to Joe Paulick, director of Housing, “Wi-Fi in on-campus housing is challenging at all universities. On-campus

housing Wi-Fi is provided by the Division of IT. Housing had provided resources to the Division of IT to upgrade Wi-Fi in housing.”

Paulick discussed how a survey was conducted in order to discover the weak points, stating “Division of IT added new access points where weak areas were found. Access points were also adjusted in location to provide better coverage.”

Housing is further reinforcing their actions by partnering with the Residence Hall Association, the governing council of the on-campus community. As RHA President, Sirven has a huge responsibility to serve the residents of FIU.

He describes what his role entails stating, “As RHA President, it

is my responsibility to advocate for the 3,200 students who live on campus whose voices can sometimes fall on deaf ears. My amazing team and I work to create a sense of community on campus through programming. We also participate in conferencing.”

In order to continue advocating for the students, he must ensure that their concerns are addressed and resolved to its full extent.

The RHA partnership with the housing department titled “New Year New Wi-Fi” allows students to directly contact the RHA to identify problem areas.

The flyer states that residents are to email RHA with information containing your hall and room number to explain

the situation.

Once this is completed, housing will send out a technician to solve the problem.

Certain weak spots on campus are hard to detect through IT, which explains the importance of students reaching out and bring awareness to where and what their technical issue is.

Sirven reports that the new system is being utilized by many students, “It has proven beneficial for the students who have been sending us the emails. We will encourage all of the students who email us to fill out the online IT WiFi Troubleshooting Form.”

Other actions have been taken by housing in the process of resolution.

According to Sirven,

“Housing has upgraded all of the hardware in all of the buildings, placing a router in each room. We are working with IT to fix the spots where there is no or bad service.”

“Housing uses the Division of IT to give the students Wi-Fi access. I congratulate Housing Director Paulick and the Division of IT for their continued attention and for advocating on our behalf to address the issue,” he says.

Though this may not be an easy task, the housing department and RHA stress that they are aware of what issues need to be fixed pertaining to Wi-Fi and are currently working to provide every resident with reliable access to the internet.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Obama to host Southeast Asian leaders at summit

President Barack Obama this week turns his attention to the part of Asia that is not China, meeting with the leaders of the 10 nations that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. About 635 million people live in Southeast Asia. Monday and Tuesday, Obama will host their leaders in Rancho Mirage, Calif. It will be the first time a U.S. leader has hosted a summit for all 10 ASEAN leaders.

Russia hit 1,888 targets in Syria in a week

In the seven days before the announcement early Friday that a cease-fire might go into effect in Syria in another week, Russian forces hit more than 100 times as many targets within the embattled nation as a military coalition that includes the United States. Exactly how the cease-fire proposed at an international conference in Munich would work is still being decided.

Obama likely to look to appellate courts for Scalia's replacement

Kansas-raised and Stanford-educated, federal appellate Judge Sri Srinivasan could next secure the possibly mixed blessing of being nominated to the Supreme Court by a president nearing the end of his term facing a partisan Senate. Srinivasan is not the only potential contender for a nomination that's certain to spark an election-year fight but by no means guarantees confirmation. He is, though, among the apparent front-runners.

Students keen on social issues

TERESA WATANABE
Los Angeles Times
TNS

Today's American college freshman is more liberal, less religious and increasingly committed to civic involvement and political activism compared with those in previous generations, according to a national survey by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Nearly 60 percent of freshmen said they expected to vote sometime during their college years, and majorities supported same-sex marriage, abortion rights, affirmative action, legalization of marijuana and equal pay for women. They also overwhelmingly opposed U.S. involvement in other countries' wars.

"Collectively, the findings suggest that more students are committed to social justice," said Kevin Eagan, director of UCLA's cooperative institutional research program, which has conducted the annual American Freshman survey for the last 50 years.

"That may be why they are the most committed to political and civic engagement of any of the previous 49 classes," says Eagan.

The results released last week showed that one-third of those surveyed said they were "liberal" or "far left," the highest proportion in four decades, while one-fifth described themselves as "conservative" or "far right."

But their attitudes were markedly different according to race and ethnicity.

Although interest in political and civic activism has grown among all students, African-American and Latino students were far more likely than Asians and whites to expect to participate in a campus demonstration. They were also more likely to believe it important to promote racial understanding and influence politics.

For instance, only 6 percent of Asians planned to participate in a protest or

felt it important to influence politics, compared with more than twice that share for African-Americans.

The UCLA researchers said the heightened interest in political activism could be the result of students witnessing the recent wave of protests against police shootings of African-American men and student demonstrations against campus treatment of minorities at Claremont McKenna College and Occidental College in Southern California, the University of Missouri and elsewhere.

Whether the enhanced political interest will affect the presidential election this year is another matter.

Although Barack Obama produced a record turnout of young voters in 2008, and won the backing of 66 percent of those under 30 years old, young people still have the lowest voting rates of any age group.

"We certainly see students embracing more of the progressive perspectives," Eagan said. "But will it actually translate to action?"

"If they organize, protest and show up at the polls, they may have a role in shaping the public discourse on issues related to social inequality, equity and discrimination," he said. "By contrast, if these students do not follow through on their intentions and goals, the enthusiastic support we're seeing for addressing social justice concerns will likely diminish, eliminating the potential for a broader impact in politics or American life."

The researchers surveyed more than 141,000 first-time, full-time students who entered 199 four-year U.S. colleges and universities in 2015.

Despite their overall embrace of liberal views, today's freshmen are more likely to support restrictions on free speech - a trend that has led to controversial student movements to disinvite commencement speakers, disrupt presentations by those with unpopular views and

demand "trigger warnings" before uttering potentially uncomfortable speech.

Support for banning racist and sexist speech on campus reached 70.9 percent in 2015, up from 58.9 percent in 1992. And 43 percent of those surveyed said colleges should have the right to ban extreme speakers, up from 25 percent in 1971.

Eagan said he understood student concerns that derogatory speech could lead to violence or harm students.

"At the same time, institutions need to make sure we aren't insulating students from ideas that may be counter to their narratives," he said.

The proportion of students who did not affiliate with a religion grew to 29.5 percent, an all-time high since the survey began. Freshmen also continued to report that they studied more and partied less in their last year of high school than previous classes.

For the first time, the survey asked students about their sexual orientation and gender identity and found that those who described themselves as bisexual, gay, lesbian, queer or "other" more frequently felt depressed and overwhelmed than the 93.2 percent of students who said they were heterosexual.

The survey also asked questions about financial aid for the first time.

It found that more than a quarter of freshmen received a federal Pell Grant, an annual award of up to \$5,775 for low-income students, and they were disproportionately Latino and African-American. Those students worried far more than others about their ability to pay for college and had to scramble more to take out loans, find work-study jobs and seek other ways to foot their educational bills.

The UCLA institute plans to release another analysis in June that will provide more detail about how college freshmen have changed over the 50 years of the surveys.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED AT THE 2016 YOUTH FAIR. Looking for a part-time job? There are job opportunities available now and during The Youth Fair! Advance Sales, Ticket Sellers, World of Agriculture, Concessions & Guest Relations. Call now (305) 223-7060 or mmc@fairexpo.com

THE BEACON

E-BOARD AND PRODUCTION STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF

SAM SMITH

PRODUCTION MANAGER

SARAH MEDINA

DESIGN COORDINATOR

CAYLA BUSH

NEWS DIRECTOR

ERICA SANTIAGO

ASST. NEWS DIRECTOR

ESH RAT NIKROOYE-ASLI
ALIANA ZAMORANO

SPORTS DIRECTOR

ALEJANDRO AGUIRRE

ASST. SPORTS DIRECTORS

LAURA GONZALEZ
JACOB SPIWAK

ENTERTAINMENT

DIRECTOR
DARIUS DUPINS

ASST. ENTERTAINMENT

DIRECTORS

EMILY AFRE
GUETHSHINA ALTEÑA

OPINION DIRECTOR

NICOLE STONE

ASST. OPINION DIRECTOR

MICHELLE MARCHANTE

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT

MEDIA
ROBERT JAROSS

ASST. DIRECTOR OF

STUDENT MEDIA
ALFRED SOTO

CONTACT INFORMATION

Modesto Maidique Campus:
GC 210, Mon-Fri 9:00 a.m.-5 p.m.
(305) 348-2709
news@fiusm.com

Biscayne Bay Campus:
WUC 124, Mon-Fri 9:00 a.m.-5 p.m.
(305) 919-4722
bbc@fiusm.com

Fax:
(305) 348-2712

Editor-in-Chief:
(305) 348-1580
sam.smith@fiusm.com

Advertising:
(305) 348-6994
advertising@fiusm.com

The Beacon is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during the Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during Summer B. One copy per person. Additional copies are 25 cents. The Beacon is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. The Beacon is an editorially independent newspaper partially funded by student and services fees that are appropriated by student government.



studentmedia
at florida international university

Get up to the minute news coverage,
instant sports updates,
what's new in student life,
music and talk shows,
event photo galleries and more at fiusm.com.

Print books claim victory over e-books

THE BEACON | Editorial

M TALK



MICHELLE MARCHANTE

According to the New York Times, e-book sales skyrocketed up 1,260 percent between 2008 and 2010. By the time Borders closed its doors in 2011, experts were convinced that printed books would be obsolete by 2015.

We're now in 2016 and the publishing industry has been comfortably rattled with the discovery that those predictions seem to be wrong-for now. According to a December analysis report by Nielsen BookScan, a data provider used by many in the industry, 571 million print books were sold in 2015, yet e-books, which experts had predicted would reach 50 or 60 percent of total book sales this year, barely reached the sale mark of 25 percent.

Living in a technology-dominated era, these numbers may sound confusing, as tablets, computers, e-readers and other technological devices are no doubt the most popular consumer purchases throughout the year. Yet those familiar with the history of books will know that this shift in the battle is only natural.

Before the production of what we've come to know as a book,

society used to have manuscripts, which would normally be made of processed animal skin, known as parchment, instead of paper. For a time, people could choose to either buy parchment manuscripts or printed paper books; but it looked like the printed book would be a passing trend.

This changed after the invention of the Gutenberg Press and the appearance of more paper mills, making the production and distribution of printed books cheaper and faster until they became the norm.

Today, it might look like history is repeating itself with the battle between printed vs. digital. People naturally assumed that this new way of reading would replace the old one but according to university professor, Heather Blatt, this isn't the case.

"When print technology initially developed, we can see that scholars looking back on that period... treated this form of transformative experience as if it would lead to the overturning of manuscript traditions but...more than 150 years after the introduction of the printing press we can see...other traditions of manuscript practices continuing even into the 20th century...and preserve that kind of handwritten manuscript tradition," Blatt said to FIU student media.

"The initial prediction of the

demolition of the printed book and the print book market were grossly overstated and we see that it continues to have a very hardy and even quite thriving tradition in contrast to the electronic book."

At the same time, Blatt recognizes the "aesthetic" appeal of e-books that physical books can't match such as in award-winning electronic novel, "Pride," where readers actually open the character's eyes to get the text.

While this battle for survival isn't a first for the physical book and it certainly won't be the last, physical books won't be going anywhere.

According to Blatt, the book has been significant in Western European culture alone for almost 2,000 years and its success is due to a variety of different things such as the way we associate the physical act of holding a book with certain memories or emotions and most importantly, its durability.

"We've seen it tested over 500 years that if it's made out of good material, a book can last quite a long time and we have a lot of examples already piling up with electronic formats that they don't," Blatt said.

"Although it might be possible to encode the data for centuries, reading and accessing it are very different experiences and we already have examples of early electronic works that were

designed for particular platforms and operating systems that we can no longer access as they were originally designed unless we have those machines also archived."

While the printed books of today have currently claimed victory in this fight, who's to say that in the near future- if not the e-readers- a new device will appear to combat the role of books in society. While the future of the book industry continues to be shrouded in mystery, we can be assured that the presence of the book will never truly go away.

"It might change in some of its traditions, it might change in some of its habits of presentation... maybe the appearance of the book will be somewhat different or how we represent its details but I think it will be there," Blatt said. "Even if our daily lives focus on electronic text instead, the physical object of the print book will still have a prominent role in our culture and in our lives."

Michelle Marchante is the Assistant Opinion Director for FIU Student Media. Her column, M Talk, focuses on new and innovative events and ideas. For suggestions or comments, please email Michelle at michelle.marchante@fiusm.com

The struggle between love and friendship

THOUGHTS ON A PAGE



DAMIAN GORDON

There is a centuries old tug of war battle going on between friends and the main squeeze. Honestly, friends might be better for you than your significant other will ever be.

The dating game is one where no amount of experience can make you a master and there's no cheat code to skip through the hard parts. Like maintaining a friendship, it requires a balancing act that would impress a circus.

A lot of people tend to drop their whole life for their significant other, pulling a Houdini on their friends and vanishing until the breakup.

Last year, a group of friends in Wales held a funeral for their formerly single buddy, Keiran. He didn't die, he just ghosted them for months because he started dating.

Helen of Troy was considered "the face that launched a thousand ships," but Craig of Miami-Dade

likely couldn't get a pool float from his boy, if Helen sent a "come Netflix and chill" text.

People's priorities shift, for better or for worse, when they start dating; but it's up to them on how they deal with the people in their lives.

Some stay in relationships where they're so teary eyed, most days feel like they're dating an onion rather than someone who's supposed to be their pick-me-up. In comparison to friendships, where if a friend is treating another like dirt, they're dropped quicker than a phone call signal on Metro PCS.

Whether it's the person of your dreams or that friend till the end, people change and as a result, so will relationships. Nobody is safe from this; the closest person can become the most unfamiliar stranger with time.

Chris Rock summed up how dating someone is at first with, "When you meet somebody for the first time, you're not meeting them, you're meeting their representative."

Constant pressure to impress

the person that makes your heart skip twice is a fate countless succumb to. The problem is that the representative is not the real you, leading the relationship to end later down the road due to the driver looking over and realizing that they've been riding with a stranger.

Friends don't grill each other over trivial things like the day they met. It's generally uneventful and not as important as all the great things that came after it. This is where couple life can be stressful. It feels like being pop-quizzed every other day.

There's more communication between friends than with couples. Think about who people talk to about their relationship. Ironically, it's often not the one they're dating.

Friends provide multiple exits to help alleviate the bad times. Unless you're a swinger, there's only one other person in the relationship and nobody wants to be an emotional dumpster.

Regardless of whether someone's dating or strictly friends, emotions come packaged with anything that a person cares about.

"Catching feelings" is a phrase that seems pretty accurate since no one expects to get them. It can be a ball of a sticky mess that's difficult to throw away, leaving stains even after being long gone.

It's not healthy to have your life revolve around one person, because if they leave, then your life can fall apart. This doesn't have to be said to a certain portion of people reading, but there's another part saying "why not?" and those are the ones who need the independence most.

Instead of single people spending February throwing shade at couples on Facebook and vice versa, be happy for all the friends you have, because that's the real backbone of everyone's life.

Thoughts on a page is a commentary on the topics everyone thinks about, but doesn't discuss. For suggestions or comments, please email Damian at damian.gordon@fiusm.com

Young votes matter

Each election year, political pundits harp on candidates "getting the youth vote" in their quest for office.

Historically, young people had been failing to get out and vote, with the bulk of young voters choosing to forego the lines and the hassle of voting.

These days, according to the Los Angeles Times, "Nearly 60 percent of freshmen said they expected to vote sometime during their college years."

The FIUSM Editorial Board believes that this movement toward more young people voting is one that holds promise for the future of the nation.

Gone are the days of the older generations choosing the path the nation takes. Political spaces are becoming an arena dedicated to the future of the nation making their own decisions regarding their spaces.

We believe that though this is a growing trend, it's also important to remember that each person should still get out and vote. Too often, there is the belief that just one vote doesn't change the outcome. But the reality is that if people don't vote, their input in policy is also absent.

For example, a large portion of the FIU student body identifies as Hispanic or Latino. Issues like immigration are hot button topics among political candidates and hit close to home for many in the University community.

Whoever is in public office has the power to decide how immigration policy is implemented, and it's up to us to choose who will represent us in the years to come. To not vote is to give this power to choose away.

As students at FIU, we're constantly bombarded with messages about being "worlds ahead." The only way to do so is to take note of the issues facing America and voice your opinion to change and shape the rest of the world.

When all is said and done, the ultimate thing to remember is that if you don't vote, you shouldn't complain about policies and the government - you have no one to blame but yourself.

LIVIN' THE LIFE



SAMUAL PRITCHARD-TORRES/THE BEACON

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of The FIUSM Editorial Board. These views are separate from editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials. Send them to opinion@fiusm.com.

Latin fraternity hosts Valentine's Day fundraiser

JAY VANPARIA
Contributing Writer
life@fiusm.com

Forgetting to buy a gift for your Valentine is a potential blow to all the time and love you invested in your relationship.

Luckily for Panther couples, the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity along with the Student Veterans of America came to the rescue. Working together, they organized a fundraising event, in which they sold a variety of Valentine's gifts.

The Student Veterans of America also accepted donations, along with membership applications from interested individuals.

The event was held at night in the Graham Center pit, Feb. 11.

"We are basically trying to do a bit of fundraising for ourselves and getting everybody to interact socially", said Israel Najarro, a member of the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity and a Student Veterans of America social chair.

"This does not happen very often that Greek culture and the veterans come together, so the event is a unique one", he added.

Omega Phi Beta Sorority also aided the two organizations in order to boost the event.

The gifts ranged from \$10 to \$25. The articles on sale included fuzzy teddy bears with roses in different sizes.

The fraternity had also organized an interactive activity to get to know new people.



JAY VANPARIA/THE BEACON

Valentine's Day gifts on display during Phi Iota Alpha and Student Veterans of America fundraiser.

Two rows of chairs were arranged facing each other and people would sit randomly and get to know the person sitting across from them.

Radoslav Buorov, a computer science junior said, "I really enjoyed the activity. It was a fresh concept and a great opportunity to meet some awesome people."

The Phi Iota Alpha is one of the oldest Latino fraternities, and was launched at FIU during the spring semester of 2011. The brothers of the fraternity are committed to

conservation of the integrity of Latin American character.

Pablo Damas, an alumn of FIU and a former member of the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity said, "I am no longer a member of the fraternity, but I like to lend them a hand every once in awhile."

The Student Veterans of America, who was also dedicated to the success of this event, is an organization which aims to provide military veterans with the resources, support and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education and following graduation.

Shane Vega, who is currently enlisted in the National Guard and member of the Student Veterans of America, expressed how the organization helps veterans returning from war assimilate into college life.

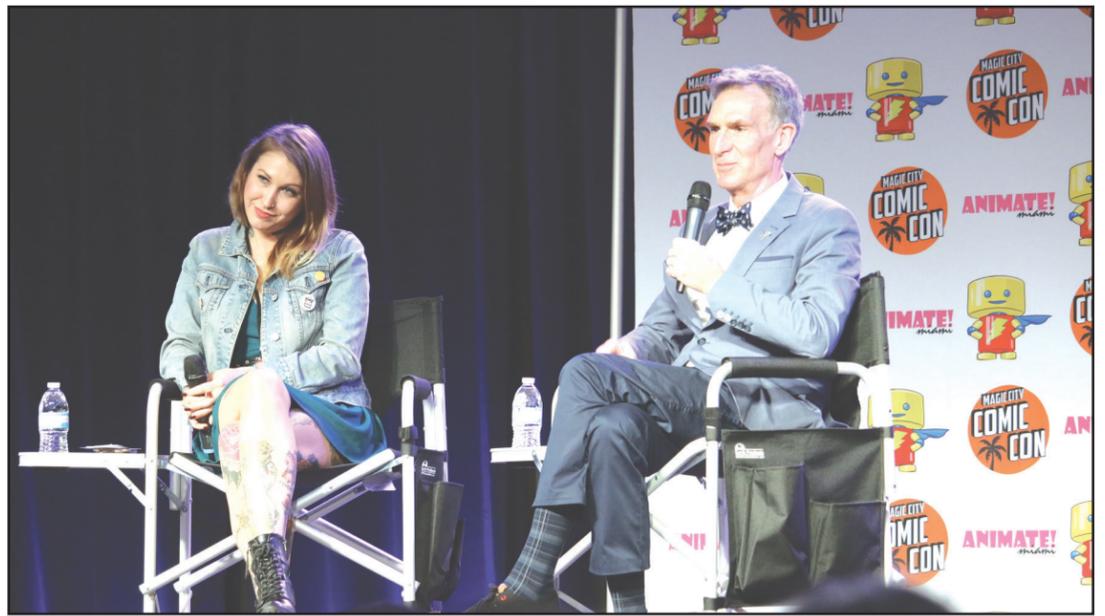
"When suffering with physical and mental wounds of war, a college degree can be a pretty elusive goal for people who return from military service. What the organization does is make that goal realistic," said Vega.

When questioned about his National Guard duty, he added, "I have been a national guard since I was 17, and it has been two years now. Whenever I have to fulfill a military obligation during the semester, my professors excuse me from attendance."

According to him, it can be tough to juggle between the two duties, but that is how you learn to multitask.

The event saw numerous former members of both the fraternities and organizations reunite for a common

cause. "This is just like old times. Actually when you look at it, it seems like a small reunion", smirked Juan Hernandez, former president of Phi Iota Alpha. Students walking by were impressed by the setup, especially due to the time of the event. This event was a success due to the hard work and determination put in by the participants and it is great to have events uplift the panther spirit of students.



COLLIN SIMPSON/THE BEACON

Bill Nye the Science Guy listens to questions from excited science fans during Magic City Comic-Con in January.

Magic city Comic-Con hosts convention at Miami airport convention center

BOOKS AND BOOKS



COLLIN SIMPSON

Magic City Comic-Con brought three days of entertainment and learning to lovers of film, comic books, and video games.

From Jan. 15-17, the convention took place at the Miami Airport Convention Center, starting the new year for comic and film fans off with a bang.

Fresh off the critical acclaim of the new film Star Wars: The Force Awakens, the convention featured two big names from the Star Wars franchise: Mark Dodson and Dave Prowse.

Prowse portrayed the nefarious Darth Vader in Star Wars Episodes IV-VI, and Dodson portrayed the despicable assistant of Jabba the Hutt, Salacious B. Crumb, in Star Wars Episode VI.

The convention also featured Brent Spiner from the Star Trek franchise, who played the android, Data in the Next Generation series. Star Trek is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

From the Dr. Who Sci-Fi series, the convention hosted a cast of actors including Jenna Coleman, Billie Piper, and Peter Davison.

Also appearing were Kristian Nain and Finn Jones, famous for their work on the critically acclaimed HBO series Game of Thrones as the House Stark servant Hodor and Loras Tyrell respectively, both of whom will return for the sixth season of the show which will premiere on April 24.

Both hosted several panels

over the weekend to talk about their experiences on the show, although they were both tight-lipped about details on the upcoming season on the hit HBO series.

From Supergirl in the 1984 film and the Flash in the 1990s television series, the convention hosted Helen Slater and Jon Wesley Shipp.

The convention also hosted a reunion of the hit classic film Rocky Horror Picture Show, featuring actors Barry "Brad" Bostwick, Patricia "Magenta" Quinn, and Nell "Columbia" Campbell, who appeared all weekend long. They were at their booths to meet with fans, plus they also had individual stage Q&As, as well as a special

the convention.

Magic City Comic-Con held something for everyone. From bins full of discounted comics to tables and racks covered in rare and detailed figurines, Shoppers were enthralled to find every kind of item that their heart desired and for great prices, too!

For those into the art of cosplay, the convention hosted multiple costume and cosplay events, including costume contests that let fans show off and decide whose outfits were the best! From the colorful world of comics from DC to Marvel, to the science-fiction gear of the Federation and a galaxy far, far away, there were outfits from every show, film, or franchise that one could imagine.

“

For those into the art of cosplay, the convention hosted multiple costume and cosplay events,

”

reunion Q&A on the main stage.

One of the guests of honor of this show was no other than famed scientist, Bill Nye, best known as the host of the Disney/PBS children's science show Bill Nye the Science Guy. He only appeared on Friday, hosting a Q&A on the Main Stage 3 - 3:45pm.

The con was also selling copies of his new book, Unstoppable: Harnessing Science to Change the World. Nye hosted a signing from 4-7pm. He would only sign copies of his book, which were pre-ordered online or bought at

If unable to attend, there will be plenty of conventions to attend in Florida throughout the year, such as Megacon (May 26-29), and the Florida Supercon, already hosting a large guest list with names from Star Wars, Star Trek and Harry Potter.

Books and Books is a weekly column about literary events, for comments and suggestion, please contact collin.simpson@fiusm.com

Film festival releases family drama 'Room'

SICK FLICKS



DAVID SEELY

Although it first premiered at the Telluride Film Festival way back in September 2015, Lenny Abrahamson's suspenseful family drama *Room* has finally been given a wide release in the United States for movie fans all across the country to properly enjoy.

The film is based on Emma Donoghue's novel of the same name and was written by the author herself. It tells the story of a 24-year-old mother Joy and her 5-year-old son Jack who are being held captive in a tiny, makeshift shed that they call *Room*.

This is all that Jack knows about the world as he was born inside *Room* and has never left, the only signs of life outside are

a tiny skylight and the television they are allowed to watch.

Their captor is actually Jack's father who abducted Joy when she was teenager and repeatedly raped her while holding them captive inside the secret shed attached to his house.

A week after Jack's fifth birthday Joy believes he is now old enough to help them escape their desperate and horrifying situation.

Since the film's premiere and its subsequent limited release, *Room* has been sweeping up awards quicker than they can be given out.

The movie has garnered four Academy Award nominations, and this wider release makes sense as a way to get this low budget film more exposure leading up to Oscar night.

After struggling to find her place among Hollywood's more

prominent actresses early in her career, Brie Larson takes her role of a lifetime to new heights and firmly plants herself as someone who won't be denied any longer.

Following television stints on shows like *Community* and *United States of Tara*, and supporting movie roles such as Amy Schumers' sister in *Trainwreck*, the 26 year old Larson has already won the Golden Globe and SAG best actress awards on her way to an inevitable Oscar win.

The stark and heartbreaking way in which Larson plays Joy as a mother who refuses to give up fighting for her and her son is a performance that deserves its universal praise, but it's newcomer Jacob Tremblay's work as Jack that really takes the film to another level.

Casting child actors are always one of the most diffi-

cult aspects of production, especially when the character is such a prominent part of the story.

The film almost entirely rests on the tiny shoulders of Jacob but he knocks it out of the park with incredible tenderness and emotional range.

The movie as a whole can be looked at in a number of different ways. You may look at it as a classic crime thriller containing of all the conventional ideas of kidnapping, torture, and eventual escape attempts. But when you look deeper into the meaning of the story you start to think about "Family" and what that word actually means to all of us.

The types of emotions that can be conjured up when thinking about our families can sometimes be overwhelming but there is a comfort that I believe each of us finds in realizing the true meaning of the word and how it

fits into our lives.

Jack knows nothing about the real world up until the age of 5, but then again, which one of us really knew anything when we were that young?

As horrifying as their situation is, you can certainly make parallels to other types of situations and how you might've grown up to escape a "Room" of your own. Through clever storytelling and fascinating characters "*Room*" continues finding success because of its connection to anyone still finding a path to true happiness.

Room is now playing at a Theater near you.

Sick Flicks is a weekly column that provides movie reviews on newly released obscure or independent films. To offer suggestions for David, send an email entertainment@fiusm.com

DIIV's frontman's addiction explained in new album

STEPHANIE ESPAILLAT

Contributing Writer
life@fiusm.com

DIIV has released their highly anticipated sophomore album, *Is the Is Are*. The band takes a familiar turn that complements their well known sound of heavy reverb and wailing guitar riffs that are highly reminiscent of 90's alternative bands such as Sonic Youth, Nirvana, and the Boo Radleys.

While also incorporating their familiar indie rock style, the album contains catchy uptempo rhythms and dreamy melodies that can also be attributed to their unique sound.

Claiming to not diverge from the same style heard from their debut effort, "Oshin" in 2012, lead singer Zachary Cole Smith suggests that the new album focuses on the importance in lyricism to create powerful vocal ballads that speak of despair and redemption.

Smith's new album makes a clear statement that this is DIIV, and that this is what DIIV will always sound like.

Even though this album took four years to make, for frontman Smith this album was either do or die.

He has even suggested that he

knew he had to make a great album or DIIV and himself, were done for.

Is the Is Are's lyrics set up the album to be presented as an experience of Smith's long battle with drugs that are explicitly the main influence for creating his record.

However, after a troubled period of hardship and struggling with

towards his drug induced spiral out of control.

Giving a sense of fading away and succumbing to his addiction; this opening suggests what this record was made for. It was Smith's challenge to remain relevant. It sets the framework and the reason for "Is the Is Are's" creation.

'Under the Sun'

“

Smith's new album makes a clear statement that this is DIIV, and that this is what DIIV will always sound like.

”

addiction, the record not only brought out a chillingly dark view of his creativity, but also produced a captivating album that signifies his liberation.

It seems when you first hit the play button to listen to the opening track "Out of My Mind", you are taken into this swirling spiral of sound, enhanced by uplifting rhythms that create a sensation of boundlessness.

Suggesting that we have something to look forward to. Smith begins belting out lyrics "I'm out of sight, I'm out of my mind", hinting

brings the first sense of optimism playing a repetitious rhythm that matches the tempo of a running pace.

This also describes what Smith is trying to suggest, "Yes, I'll catch up to you" and that he will reach the "sun". Explicitly using imagery to explain his desperate escape from falling into his darkness.

However, track four, *Dopamine*, states otherwise.

"Dopamine," the first single that was released in 2015 to promote the album, is also one of the most lyrically dark tracks

on the record.

Blaring guitars and upbeat rhythms echo throughout the track as Smith explains the fragility of his morality.

The song is known to be his first track written after leaving rehab in 2014. Smith was arrested for possession of heroin. Not only does the track's name give away a clear indicator of its message, but the lyrics propose the action of being "buried down in a heroin sleep", and no longer being able to escape this state. That he is "running in place", and no longer going in the right direction.

"Bent (Roi's Song)" is noted to be inspired by a psychic that told Smith's long standing girlfriend, Sky Ferreria, that if they were to continue using drugs that one of their friends may end up dying.

Ferreira who's also featured on the album, was also mentioned to be a main influence because of her encouragement to Smith to produce more meaningful lyrics.

Smith has also indicated 'Bent' as being his favorite track off the record.

The captivating entry of echoey guitars and an extremely catchy guitar riff in the middle of the song is what makes this

track arguably one of the best tracks on the album.

Closer to the end of the record we hear songs such as "Take Your Time" and "Is the Is Are" as obvious suggestions of recovery and a rehabilitation period.

We slowly are able to hear hopefulness coming back to Smith: "It works if you work it out, to clean your mind, and take your time" and "last time I walked down this street I wanted to die, now I'm fighting for my life".

These redeeming lyrics are suggesting the experience of Smith's hardship in a long battle of addiction and loneliness that could have only unfolded in the right way with his confidence.

DIIV's "Is the Is Are" has created anthems for this age that many can relate to and is one of the most anticipated releases for a reason.

The distinction and uniqueness amongst the different tracks makes this album more than just special, it gives us something memorable.

The vulnerable lyrics and noticeably perfected tunes are what defines this album as well as what we can expect from DIIV in future releases.

R&B triple threat opens up on single, 'Odd Future'

DARIUS DUPINS

Entertainment Director
darius.dupins@fiusm.com

Rising talent and Toronto native, Jahkoy drops new single, "Odd Future." This is the Canucks most down-tempo track and the most R&B he's sound. WondaGurl, producer of "Crown," (Jay-Z) and "Teen Spirit" (SZA), provided the hypnotic groove and laid back kick-drum.

Jahkoy, made the move to Hollywood in order for his "bipolar" sound to reach a whole new audience. "The community and market of music [in Toronto] isn't as big as we think it is," he confessed in an interview with *Noisy*.

The crooner has a knack for writing and a voice that has the ability to crossover to many genres. Jahkoy has also taken advantage of his geographical position in Hollywood in order to market his universal appeal. His previous records are energetic, deep house infused R&B tracks that pair

well with Jahkoy's sultry cooing.

"Odd future," is a remorseful message of love that is clearly one-sided. "A tenderness from being in between/an ego that I force myself to feed/ignoring what I want for what I need...you take it all away and let me do all the fiending/you know how much I crave you."

Jahkoy serenades throughout most of this five minute lush track, then raps a demanding sixteen bars asking for answers. "How ya gon get f***ed up and tell me it's nothing?" He then returned back to his sensual vocals as the track takes a different approach, featuring a break-beat that creeps in for the last minute before fading out.

"Odd Future" has potential to crossover with its pop sensibilities and honest cuts. This is another bipolar track from Jahkoy that is a mixture of sounds that manage to remain cohesive.

SOFTBALL

STRONG FINISH

Panthers' four win stretch ends tournament strong

SANTIAGO ARCHIERI
Staff Writer
santiago.archieri@fiusm.com

The softball team won their final four games of the Juiceblendz Invitational Tournament, which they hosted at Felsberg Field this weekend.

The Panthers went 4-1 overall, only dropping their first game to the nationally ranked 10 Florida State Seminoles.

The action kicked off Friday, Feb. 12, against the Seminoles, in what was a tightly contested matchup for the first five innings.

The game was all tied up heading into the top of the sixth inning, with both teams bringing in unearned runs off errors. In the sixth, another throwing error gave FSU the 2-1 advantage, and it stayed this way heading into the last inning of play.

Florida State then ensued to break the game wide open, scoring five runs and going on to win 7-1. Three errors haunted the Panthers, and Corinne Jenkins, the leader of the pitching rotation, dropped to 0-1 with 3 ERA after the game.

The Panthers had no time to dwell, as they had a doubleheader Saturday, Feb. 13. The first game of the day was against St. Johns, with Abby Summers starting at the mound.

FIU found themselves in an early deficit at the top of the second, but a 1-0 lead was nothing to be concerned

the fifth.

Summers picked up her first win, allowing 9 hits but only one run, with four strikeouts in 7 innings.

The second game of the evening featured FIU against University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Panthers were once again down early in the contest, as the Illini took a 1-0 lead after the first inning. However, in the bottom of the second inning, FIU bounced back with a 2-1 lead. The Illini were able to tie the game heading into a big fourth inning.

A four run fourth inning was highlighted with one of the most electrifying plays in all of sports. Enter Stephanie Teixeira with a runner on second base. Teixeira knocked one straight into left field. A few bounces and dings later, Teixeira recorded a two RBI inside-the-park homerun.

A 6-1 FIU lead was quickly cut after Illinois recorded their own inside the park homerun after the ball sailed straight over the second baseman in a throwing error.

However, FIU added some cushion in the fifth, taking an 8-5 lead. In the sixth, Teixeira got another home run, but this one sailing over the fences, and the Panthers took a 10-5 lead into the final inning of play.

The final rally by Illinois wasn't enough, and FIU went on to win 10-8. Jenkins allowed two runs, but picked up her first win of the season. Hunter Scharf was awarded

of the afternoon against LIU.

Dwyer went on to pitch 4.2 innings with just one earned run. She walked two, but was able to earn the win at the end of it all, her first of the season.

The Panthers dominated the first match of the day. LIU was unable to stop the Panther hitting, which scored in the first three innings.

The lead was 6-0 before LIU finally got a run in. With a 6-2 lead in the sixth, Teixeira hit her third homerun of the season as she crushed it over the fences and gave the Panthers a 9-2 lead, which would ultimately be the final score.

The Panthers also had no problem with Valparaiso in the second game of the afternoon. Megan Kugelmann got her first career start for FIU, pitching with one earned run and five strikeouts in five innings.

With the game out of hand, the run rule put the game to an end in the fifth inning as FIU went on to win 9-1. Three Panther managed to get 2 hits in the game, while Lauren Williams led the squad with 3 RBI's.

The Panthers went 2-0 for the day and would end the tournament on a great note. 28 combined runs in a 3 game span is a positive remark for Head Coach Gator Rebhan and his girls, with a 4-1 overall record heading into the next slate of games.

FIU will host the Panther invitational this weekend, as Indiana, Holy Cross, and Delaware will visit sunny



MEGAN TAIT/THE BEACON

Freshman pitcher, Amy Summers pitched a complete game against St. John's limiting them to only one run while striking out four.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Indoor versus beach, two different games

STEF'S SERVE



STEFANO RIVERA

boring moment.

As many know, there are two places to play the sport: on sand or indoor. I prefer the latter because I enjoy playing on solid ground, although I end up with many bumps and bruises at times. Also, I've been playing indoor for about five years now so I've become accustomed to the game.

During my senior year of high school at Saint Thomas Aquinas High School, I was fortunate enough to make a "Cinderella run" to the state semi-final game. Although we lost, it was a great experience.

Now, beach volleyball? Well that's a different story. I'd say I've only played in one or two tournaments, and although I never won any of them, they were

still enjoyable. What's not to like about playing beach volleyball? Living in Florida, I have the luxury of legitimately playing on the beach and cooling off in the ocean immediately after.

Believe it or not, there are many differences between indoor and sand volleyball. In indoor, you play with six people on each team. Traditionally, these players consist of four hitters, a setter, and a libero, or defensive specialist. In sand, there are only two players, who don't have set positions.

Also, there are some rules that are very different. For example, in beach, if you want to set the ball, it cannot rotate or spin. If it does, you will lose the point. When setting in indoor, rotation of the ball is allowed, as long as the setter doesn't get called for a "carry" or "double-hit". Having played setter most of my life, I enjoy being able to set the ball almost every rally, justifying my love for indoor.

One of the major aspects of volleyball is attacking, or hitting. Attacking not

SEE HOOPS, PAGE 7



NICOLAS GARCIA/THE BEACON

Head Coach Gator Rebhan calls for a mound visit with the infield to set up the defense. FIU won versus St. John's with a score 6-1

about. FIU took the lead just a half inning later after Kaitlyne Musa brought in two runs with a single. The Panthers went on to dominate the game, with another run in the bottom of the fourth and three more in the bottom of

the save for the Panthers.

FIU was prepared to close the weekend on a strong note against Long Island University- Brooklyn and Valparaiso. Rachel Dwyer, the sophomore pitcher, took the mound in the first game

South Florida to be a part of the tournament. The first game for FIU will be Friday, Feb. 19, at 4:30 p.m. against Holy Cross, and then at 7 p.m. with the second match of a double header against Indiana.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Panthers' win over UTSA ends five game skid



MEGAN TAIT/THE BEACON

Junior forward, Elmo Stephen drives to the basket against the University of Texas at San Antonio defense Saturday, Feb. 13, at Lime Court FIU Arena.

ALEJANDRO AGUIRRE
Sports Director
alejandro.aguirre@fiusm.com

For the first time this season Adrian Diaz, The Hialeah Hammer, was not in the starting lineup in the Panthers' victory over the University of Texas at San Antonio Saturday, Feb. 13.

The senior center came off the bench for the first time in his FIU playing career.

Even with the team's leading rebounder coming off the bench, the Panthers were able to win 79-65 and end a five game losing streak.

This new lineup without Diaz had its lack of size, but Head Coach Anthony Evans used this move as more of a morale boost than a strategic game plan.

"It was something I wanted to do. You try to coach and motivate in different ways. I thought that he can give us a little bit more."

The Panthers were able to control the tempo of the game even when UTSA was playing a full court press defense and a man-to-man coverage.

Even with the Roadrunners' aggressive defense, point guard Donte McGill was able to slice through the defense and lead the Panthers' offense with 20 points.

"For the most part I felt we were in control as a team. We stayed in control and didn't let their defense get to us," said McGill.

On both sides of the ball the Panthers were scoring consistently and defending at a high rate.

They shot 57.7 percent from the field and had a balanced scoring night by making 15 shots in the first and second half. Their biggest lead in the first half was nine points, but the only time the defense slipped up was when UTSA finished the half on a 13-4 run.

This would end the first

half with both teams tied up with 32 points.

In the first half, forward Daviyon Draper got off to a quick start offensively and ultimately played the entire 40 minute game. Draper was ready for that game knowing that Diaz, who averages the same amount of points per game as Draper, was not going to be starting.

"We still keep the same team concept. We probably had to rebound and focus on rebounding a little more and protecting the paint," said Draper.

Draper did pick up the rebounding slack as he finished with seven rebounds which were second on the team behind Diaz's nine boards. He complimented his effort on the boards with scoring 18 points.

In the second half, the Panther's offense shined. They took a 39-36 lead early in the second half and for the remaining 17 minutes of the game, FIU never gave up the

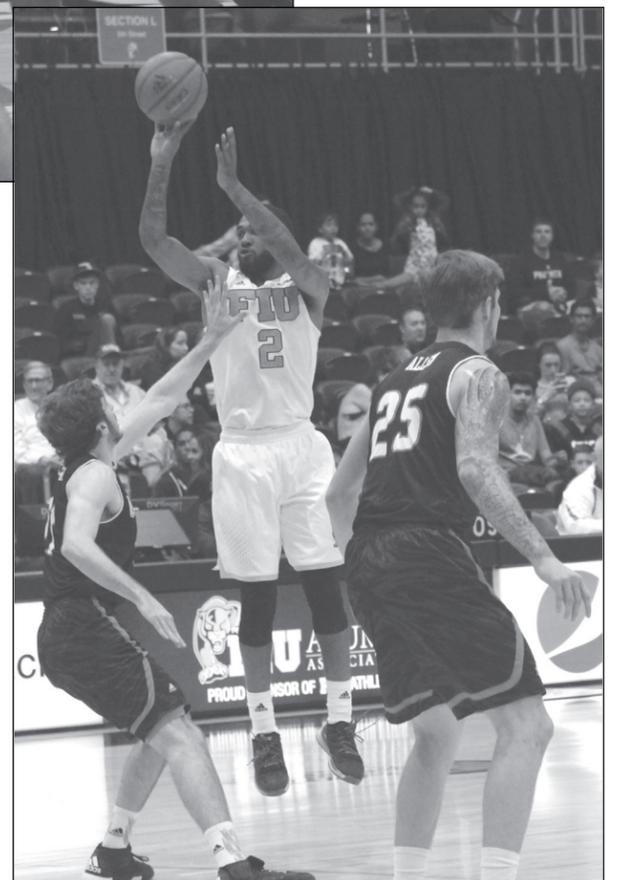
lead and had a double digit lead.

The highest lead they had was 17 points thanks to Diaz playing the majority of the second half. Diaz finished off with 17 points and nine rebounds and in limited minutes he was still almost able to pull off a double-double.

This Conference USA win puts FIU one game under .500 in their conference record and keeps them in the middle of the pack in the standings. The Panthers have the opportunity to still move up in the standings with five games left in the season. Evans stressed the importance of the upcoming three game road trip.

"Keep doing what we did yesterday in practice. Just keep working hard. It's a good team but that doesn't equal wins if you don't put the work into it. We have to put the work in consistently," said Evans.

Following this win, the



MEGAN TAIT/THE BEACON

Junior guard, Donte McGill shoots a two point jumpshot. McGill led the Panthers with 20 points for the win over UTSA

Panthers will travel back to Texas for the second time this season, where they will face North Texas Thursday, Feb. 18 and Rice Saturday, Feb. 20. From there they will wrap up the regular season with two

games at home.

The final home games will be Thursday, March 3 at 7 p.m. to face UAB, before taking on Middle Tennessee Saturday, March 5 at 6 p.m. to close out the regular season.

The relationship and communication that setters have with their hitters is one of the most vital aspects of the game. How will the hitter know what the setter will be setting if there isn't that connection?

If you haven't played volleyball, I encourage you to go and give it a shot. Whether it's with a group of friends or not, you'll enjoy it.

Stef's Serve is a column centered around beach volleyball. For commentary or suggestions email Stefano Rivera at sports@fiusm.com

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Beach, indoor volleyball differ in strategies

HOOPS, PAGE 6

only requires strength and power, but also strategy. One of the most strategic plays in volleyball is a well-placed tip shot. When playing beach, it is illegal to use "open hand tips". One way players combat this rule is by using their knuckles or fists while tipping. However, when playing indoor, anything goes, as long as it's not a "lift".

These are just a few major rule differences between the two. There are many more rules, however, they are minor and generally apply to only professionals.

Another major difference is the training involved

between indoor and sand. Personally, I feel it's much more difficult to run, jump and dive, three natural movements in the sport, on sand. Just walking on sand is arduous at times, and being in the heat takes its toll on you.

Luckily, I only went through one or two beach workouts while playing indoor. Don't get me wrong, my coaches were spectacular at training us, but I'd say they went a bit easy on us. I guess that's another reason why I prefer indoor.

If there's one thing similar between both sports, it's the importance of communication throughout the match.

Leukemia survivor makes mark on tennis team and in Conference USA

REINALDO LLERENA
Staff Writer
reinaldo.llerena@fiusm.com

Carlotta Orlando has overcome many challenges since she was a child living in Italy.

The senior from Como was selected to the Conference USA first team as a junior and the C-USA second team as a sophomore. But to make it to the C-USA first team for women's tennis, Orlando had several obstacles she needed to hurdle.

Orlando was diagnosed with leukemia when she was eight years old. She received a bone marrow transplant a few months after the diagnosis and was cancer-free when she was nine years old. The cancer has not returned.

While sidelined with leukemia, Orlando watched her family play tennis and developed an interest in the sport. When she was cancer-free, she started to practice and it became like an addiction for Orlando.

"All I did from 10 until 18 was play tennis," said Orlando. "I didn't want to go on vacations with my family because of it. I only wanted to play tennis."

As a teenager, she competed in Junior ITF Tennis tournaments around Europe. Her relentless work ethic as a teenager allowed Carlotta to climb to 256th on the Junior ITF rankings. In those junior

tournaments, she met Nina Nagode, now a teammate on the women's tennis team.

As signing day for tennis players came, Orlando said it was Nagode who made her sign with FIU over other schools.

"I had requests from Washington, Hawaii and Boston," said Orlando. "Nina was in contact with Katarina, the head coach, and she told me about the school. I didn't even visit the school, it just felt right. Signing with FIU turned out to be the best decision I've ever made."

Orlando was given a full athletic scholarship and her family paid for her flight from Italy to Miami. When Orlando arrived in Miami, she said her English was "bad" and the first few months were the most difficult in her transition to the states. Orlando said she would write down a word and place it on her dorm wall to learn English.

"Getting into conversations wasn't hard, but understanding material was difficult," said Orlando. "I didn't want to look dumb, but people at FIU appreciate that you want to learn. I was tutored at the [Student-Athlete Academic Center] four times a week. I still use the SAAC, but I'm not ashamed anymore of my English."

While adjusting to her new life in the states, Orlando did not need to adjust on the tennis court. As a freshman, Orlando went 10-5 overall in singles matches and won her first ever singles match as a

Panther, 6-3, 6-3, against Morgan Belcher of Florida Atlantic University.

Orlando improved on her freshman year with a stellar sophomore campaign. She had a 19-9 overall record and finished her sophomore year with six-match winning streak. She made the C-USA tournament that year and went undefeated in C-USA regular season play and she was named to the 2013-2014 C-USA Academic Honor Roll.

In her junior year, Orlando again made the C-USA Academic Honor Roll and finished the year with a 2-1 record at the C-USA championships. According to FIU Sports, Orlando "picked up 16 of her 21 victories in straight-sets." She was also named to C-USA's First-Team.

So far in her senior year, Orlando has struggled with consistency. She said she needs to build her confidence because as if now, she is scared to have a "mental block" while on the court.

"I had two matches this year that make it hard to stay motivated," said Orlando. "One loss at the UCF Quad Tournament I had match point several times, but lost and the same happened here a few weeks ago versus Troy. When I'm not confident in myself, things feel like they're out of my control. A ball that would normally be in when I'm confident will be an inch or two out when I'm not."

Orlando said she's scared for her final

match of her college career.

"Tennis has always been my life," said Orlando. "I'm trying to enjoy my last season as much as I can. This team is the best team I've ever been a part of. We're all very close and talented."

On her days off, Orlando is like any other Miami college student. She likes going to Wynwood, the beach and seeing movies on her days off with the team.

"Even though we're all from different countries, we're the best of friends," said Orlando. "We all go out together and we try to involve everyone on the team with everything we do."

Orlando would like to pursue a master's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics once her tennis career comes to an end. She is open to working in either clinical nutrition or sport nutrition.

"I like how food is preventive medicine. I find that very cool and interesting," said Orlando.

Orlando said she would like to be an assistant coach for the tennis team while she pursues her master's degree.

"I love this team too much to leave it so soon," said Orlando. "I want to stick around for as long as I can. Coming here and playing for FIU made me a more mature person and I will forever be thankful for my time here."

Can only Congress prevent climate change?

ERIC ROSTON
Bloomberg News
TNS Staff

Two south Florida congressmen last week created a new House task force on climate change that seeks to propose clean energy legislation in the next two months. And despite strong headwinds, the bill may not be dead on arrival.

The new Climate Solutions Caucus differs from most other House groups in that its co-founders, Reps. Carlos Curbelo and Ted Deutch, are from different parties. And they want to keep it bipartisan, with an even number of Republicans and Democrats. It's probably not a coincidence that Curbelo, a Republican from Florida's 26th congressional district, and Deutch, a Democrat from the 21st district, represent people witnessing climate change in its starkest terms; their communities, in Miami and surrounding counties, are slowly slipping into the sea.

The formation of the new group, while a baby step in a deeply polarized Congress, may be the beginning of the most serious attempt in seven years to build bipartisan support for climate policy in the House, which Republicans have controlled since 2011. And with the Supreme Court's decision this week to

freeze President Barack Obama's Clean Power Plan, the likelihood Congress will have the final say in this arena seems ever more certain.

"There shouldn't be this false orthodoxy, where if you're a Democrat you want to solve this problem and if you're a Republican you want to ignore it," Curbelo said. "That just makes no sense."

Republican presidential candidates continue to struggle with the topic, caught between a shifting party line and the fact that humans, those in richer countries in particular, are the dominant cause of global warming. Throw in the recent 195-nation climate agreement reached in Paris, and the result is a Republican stance on climate policies that mirrors those of North Korea, Syria and Nicaragua. Unlike those three countries, however, the U.S. is a major emitter of climate-altering gases - the second biggest, after China.

Republican lawmakers unmoved by the climate problem itself were given a new reason to act with Obama's attempt at a workaround, designed to cut emissions from electricity generation. Such increased regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency is viewed in some conservative circles as more offensive than a national carbon tax.

"I really want to find an alternative to the EPA," Curbelo

said, without singling anything out in particular.

And while the Supreme Court's stay of Obama's plan (pending resolution of a lawsuit by 26 states) may make Republicans less eager to exchange a carbon tax for the EPA regime, climate change isn't going away.

Membership in the new climate caucus is likely to remain limited until the goals are better defined. For his part, Deutch said he has no preconceptions as to what it may propose, seeing it instead as a forum where business and community leaders, academics, and others can address legislators, and topics can range from shoreline and city protection to carbon regulation. A key point of the new caucus is to move past the congressional stalemate that led to Obama's regulations to begin with.

Curbelo said he would like to see the group gain additional members and produce some kind of blueprint for a clean energy bill relatively soon.

"We need a bill to build some more consensus," he said. "I think within a month or six weeks, there will be, if not a bill, certainly the outline of a bill that will represent the first step."

Several Republican House members have expressed interest in joining, Deutch said. The Democrat wouldn't name names yet, but reasonable guesses may

include lawmakers who signed a Republican-only House resolution in September vowing "to study and address the causes and effects of measured changes to our global and regional climates."

Eleven Republicans signed, including two representatives - Chris Gibson, who sponsored the measure, and Richard Hanna of New York - who happen to be retiring after this term. Curbelo signed, and said he hopes "some if not all" of the others will join the new caucus.

A first-term congressman, Curbelo says he likes to bring some humor to the topic when it comes up with members of his party. Jokes defuse tension while making his point, he explains. If a fellow member disputes that climate change is a problem, Curbelo warns that, when Miami is no longer inhabitable, he's going to move to their district and run against him.

"I want to call this place home for the rest of my life," he says of Miami, "and I'm sure my daughters do. It's incumbent on us to do everything we can."

The caucus took Deutch more than two years to develop, working in part with outside groups such as the Citizens Climate Lobby. Curbelo signed on to the caucus over the past several weeks, he said.

Congressional caucuses in some ways are the after-school programs of lawmaking. Many

topics coincide with legislative business, but there are others on topics as varied as electromagnetic pulses, chickens, and colitis. The current Congress even has a Maker Caucus, which focuses in part on 3D printing.

And there is already one climate group in the House. Rep. Alan Lowenthal, a California Democrat, took over the Congressional Safe Climate Caucus when fellow Democrat Henry Waxman retired in 2014. Waxman successfully shepherded a massive climate bill through the House in 2009; it died in the Senate. Lowenthal said that a small, balanced group could be the best approach at this point. His group is made up of 50 Democrats and zero Republicans, a membership unlikely to attract conservatives.

A new group may not seem like a big deal, but any movement in the climate debate is a novelty these days. And it does represent real progress: Jay Butera, senior congressional liaison of Citizens' Climate Lobby, has championed the idea of a caucus since the summer of 2013. "In the early phases, it was unthinkable for us to use the word 'climate' in the caucus name," he said. That there's now a Climate Solutions Caucus, he said, "speaks volumes as to how far we have come in moving the conversation forward on the Hill."