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For the good of the team

Senior Ryan Bear has proven he's a team player.

—SEE SPORTS, 12



THE central florida FUTURE

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER SERVING UCF SINCE 1968

Thursday April 3, 2003



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Living by the stars

Looking ahead with astrology and tarot enthusiasts

—SEE LIFESTYLES, 18

Despite credentials, international students face internship hurdles

ROSEMARY R. DAY
STAFF WRITER

While some students may find it difficult to compete against others to obtain internships, international students find the difficulties to be even greater.

Senior Marcela Bernardine, an international student from Venezuela, recently searched the UCF Cooperative Education Web site for internships in industrial engineering and turned up meager results.

"There were over 20 matches on the Web site, but only two accepted international students," Bernardine, 22, said.

Sophomore Ethling Hernandez, 20, also has had a difficult time finding an internship, despite her credentials.

While recently attending a job conference sponsored by the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Hernandez, a Honduran international student, learned that her international status barred her from qualifying for internships because employers were unwilling to complete the extra paperwork and pay the extra costs involved with hiring an international student.

"I thought the conference would be a good opportunity to get internships since it was specifically for Hispanics, but as soon as employers found out that I was an international student, they told me they wouldn't hire me," Hernandez said.

"International students have visas that allow them to work while they are students, but once they graduate, companies have to pay money to keep them," Hernandez said. "They don't want to have to do that."

Junior Lino Silva, 19, faced the same problem. An international student from Venezuela, Silva applied to several internships only to be turned away because he was not a United States citizen.

"Employers may like you, but they turn you away because you are an international student," he said. "They don't want to deal with immigration paperwork."

In order to keep international students as employees after graduation, employers must file and sponsor a H-1B visa on their behalf that generally costs \$1,130. The renewable work visa allows resident aliens to work for periods of six consecutive years in the United States.

Instead of having to wade through paperwork and fees,

however, employers opt to hire only U.S. citizens, Silva said.

"If you run a business and two people who are equally qualified apply for a job except that one is not a U.S. citizen and will cost you more time and money to hire, logically, you would hire the other applicant," Silva said.

Even if employers agree to file for H-1B visas on behalf of graduating international students, a job is not necessarily guaranteed since only a limited amount of H-1B visas are approved each year.

“

Employers may like you, but they turn you away because you are an international student. They don't want to deal with immigration paperwork.

—LINO SILVA
UCF student from Venezuela

”

Next year, the opportunities for jobs will be significantly less for international students since the United States government plans to cut the H-1B visa limit from 195,000 to 65,000.

According to Melanie Parker, director of the UCF Career Resource Center, because of the limit on the number of H-1B visas that can be issued each year, H-1B visas are difficult to get approved.

"The employer has to make the case that a worker with certain skills cannot be found in the U.S. citizen applicant pool and that the only way to find someone with those skills would be to hire a non-resident," Parker said. "That's very hard to prove."

Further hampering international students are tight restrictions that dictate when they are allowed to work before and after graduation, Parker said.

"International students can apply to do curricular practical training during college, but they have to prove that it is a necessary part of their academic program," she said. "After graduation,

PLEASE SEE *Work* ON 7

SGA theme-park party invites 7,000 for free

Expense misdirected, some say, but they still plan to attend tonight

ALEX BABCOCK
STAFF WRITER

Tonight the Student Government Association invites UCF students to attend Universal's Islands of Adventure for the most expensive SGA-sponsored event of the year. And while interest is high, some members of campus groups that were denied funding this year say they wish that money had been spent funding their organizations and events instead.

The \$125,000 party is supported by



Peña

student activities fees, where all SGA money originates, and guarantees free admission for up to 7,000 UCF students. A valid ID is required; no guests will be permitted at the after-hours event, which runs from 8 p.m. to midnight.

Yet while she hopes to attend, Hope Wehrle can't help but wonder whether more students would have benefitted if some of those dollars had been steered her way.

PLEASE SEE *Stragglers* ON 3



KATIE FLATH / CFF

Classroom chairs and desk space play a significant role in how well students learn, according to design consultants who oversee such settings.

Designed with comfort in mind

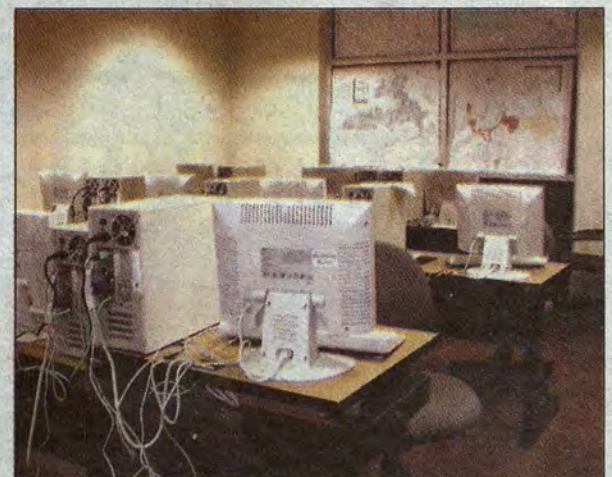
Environment can inhibit or induce the learning process, experts say

JOEL ADDINGTON
STAFF WRITER

When students attend classes in certain buildings on campus, they often must learn in less-than-ideal conditions. Whether it's uncomfortable temperatures or uncomfortable chairs, many classrooms leave much to be desired. Junior David Morales, for one, would change things about his classrooms in the Visual Arts Building.

"It would be nice if we had cushioned chairs," Morales, 21, said. "Or at least a desk with enough room for my textbook and taking notes."

Other students, such as freshman Katherine Bold, 18, complain about the temperature in their classrooms. "It's always freezing in the Classroom



KATIE FLATH / CFF

PLEASE SEE *Designers* ON 4

Computer work stations are often a sore spot for uncomfortable users.

INSIDE

Open access

U.S. Supreme Court hears first challenge in a generation to using race in college admissions process.

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Speed dater

Ybor's Martini Bar event offers eight dates in 64 minutes. Single hopefuls get more than enough chances.

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The Future publishes Mondays and Thursdays



UCF FACT

Diane Chase, Anthropology, and Eric Van Stryland, Engineering, were named this year's Pegasus Professors.

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Higher education around the nation

College protests administrator's warning against discussing war

A vice president at Irvine Valley College has warned professors not to discuss the war in Iraq in their classrooms unless the course is directly related to the issue, a suggestion that several professors say infringes on academic freedom.

Dennis W. White, the vice president for academic instruction at the Southern California community college, said he was responding to complaints from students when he sent the e-mail message to deans and department chairmen last week.

In it, he wrote: "It has come to my attention that several faculty members have been discussing the current war within the context of their classrooms. We need to be sure that faculty do not explore this activity within the context of their classroom unless it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of this office, that such discussions are directly related to the approved instructional requirements and materials associated with those classes."

Gregory Bishopp, an art history professor and president of the Academic Senate, said that White's message was a violation of professors' academic freedom and that the war was certainly a suitable topic for classroom debate.

Glenn R. Roquemore, president of the college, said the message was just an exchange among the vice president and the deans and was not a new official policy.

But in an interview on Monday, White said that while he would "rewrite it more sensitively," he stood by his memo. He argued that the war could be an appropriate topic for discussion in certain courses, including those on cultural anthropology or political science, but not on mathematics.

And even in those courses where the war is a reasonable topic for discussion, he said, professors should refrain from stating their personal views.

White said his concerns weren't limited to the war. When asked whether he would frown on a professor in a criminal-justice course expressing an opinion on the death penalty, he said, "Yes, for me, it would be problematic."

University in India bars visits by U.S. and British officials

Angered by the U.S.-led war in Iraq, faculty members of one of India's most prominent universities have agreed to ban American and British government officials from entering the campus.

More than 100 professors of Jamia Millia Islamia signed a petition on Friday barring the government representatives from the university. Those who signed the document also agreed not to attend any official functions organized by the American Center, the cultural wing of the U.S. Embassy. The ban does not extend to American and British students or professors.

"We, the members of the Jamia fraternity, wish to record our unequivocal condemnation of the U.S. aggression on the sovereign republic of Iraq," said the statement signed by 114 faculty members. "We express our solidarity with the Iraqi people, the victims of an unprovoked aggression, and call upon the invading

PLEASE SEE *Virus* ON 7



MICHAEL S. WIRTZ / PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (KRT CAMPUS)
President George W. Bush surveys the crowd upon his arrival Monday at the U.S. Coast Guard facility in Philadelphia.

Combination of religion and politics dangerous or divine?

GENO MEHALIK
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Since the advent of the war on Iraq, UCF students are trying to decide what role President Bush's faith should have in his political decision-making.

Junior Christine Harden, a member of UCF's United Campus Ministries, said, she believes it is beneficial for a president to be a Christian because it significantly affects the individual's style of leadership.

"He believes that God has all of the power and that God has given him his position as leader of the United States," she said. "It's

Bush's public
display of
religious
beliefs has
America
questioning
how his faith
dictates his
decisions
in war

Bush's Christian-perspective that makes him effective as a leader."

According to Deborah Caldwell, a writer for Beliefnet, an online resource for prayer and religious study, Bush's theology has changed dramatically since 1999 when he began his run for president.

"We are witnessing a shift in Bush's theology — from talking mostly about a Wesleyan theology of 'personal transformation' to describing a Calvinist 'divine plan' laid out by a sovereign God for the country and

PLEASE SEE *Bush's* ON 9

Patriot Act causes concern as liberties fade

DIANE LAZIC
STAFF WRITER

While the U.S. Congress sifts through the latest Domestic Security Act, proposed by the Justice Department and known as the Patriot Act II, students and professors are debating the implications of the act and its predecessor, the original Patriot Act.

As expected, opinions about the act falls largely along party lines.

Lindsey Ellerbach, the president of the UCF Young Democrats, said the Patriot Act and Patriot Act II "contribute to a false sense of security and violates the Constitution by taking away civil rights." She added, "It gives too much power to the executive branch, and does help push the agenda of the pro-right wing."

Brian Malenius, press secretary for Congressman Ric Keller, said the Orlando Republican heard arguments both for and against the first Patriot Act. "Congressman Keller was on the House Judiciary Committee; it was loaded with both extremes left and right, [and] they all agreed about this," Malenius said.

On Oct. 26, 2001, President Bush signed the USA Patriot Act (USAPA) into law. This law gave sweeping new powers to both domestic law enforcement and international intelligence agencies. Also at this time Attorney General John Ashcroft revamped the Department of Justice to focus more on anti-terrorism measures.

Most of the checks and balances rewritten by the act were put into place

PLEASE SEE *Civil* ON 6

Stragglers may have to pay their way into park

FROM PAGE 1

Wehrle, 22, is the event coordinator for Late Knights, a regular campus celebration that has drawn upward of 1,500 students at a time with its offering of free music, games and snacks. SGA only bought food for the first Late Knights event last fall. When Wehrle asked for more money, SGA refused.

"They didn't say why," she said. "They wouldn't even hear it."

UCF Bowling Club coach Pat Costello said his club has no hard feelings about the Islands of Adventure event, even though the club received none of the \$43,000 it requested this fiscal year.

Club members raised the money themselves, ultimately earning all that they were denied by SGA. Along with the skillful play of the members, the money has given them a chance to compete in a national tournament.

Costello said ESPN may cover the event, scheduled for next month. "We could be representing UCF on national television next month, and SGA didn't pay for any of it," she said. The \$1,000 the club received last year

from SGA was appreciated, though, she added.

Costello experienced problems similar to Wehrle's when approaching SGA. "They've always said get a senator to write you a bill, so we asked; we asked three or four times and didn't get anywhere with that," she said.

The group has about 90 booster club members who helped raise money through exhibition matches and raffles to make up for what SGA would not provide.

Jessica Isola, 22, of the campus Greenpeace chapter, said part of the SGA's job is to listen to its constituents. She conceded that most UCF students would rather go to Islands of Adventure than spend the money at UCF.

"I wish they would have spent the money on better things, like recycling on campus," she said. SGA has ignored campus problems to put on the event, she said. "Although students like to have fun, they also like senate representation," she said.

Isola also questioned what she sees as favoritism toward the Greek community on campus. "They got so much compared to all the other groups," she said.

Need a ride?

Four buses will ferry students who need a lift to tonight's free event at Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park. Buses depart at 7 p.m. from the Visual Arts Building parking lot and leave the theme park at 1 a.m. for the return trip. The ride is free and funded by SGA. Free park admission requires a current UCF ID.

Like other critics of the expense, however, Isola says she's going to Islands of Adventures anyway.

Wehrle would like to go. But she has a class tonight. A graduate student in hospitality management, she said the idea that others also may have to miss out bothers her. They might have a job, or have class, or not have a ride to get there if the four buses that SGA has lined up for transportation fill up, she said.

"They could've set it up a better way so more students could attend," Wehrle said.

Though SGA allocated \$125,000 for the event, they estimated it would cost \$113,000 — nearly triple the cost of last year's school-year finale at Wet 'n' Wild water park, which cost \$35,000.

The difference: More students are expected, and this time they will have the park all to themselves.

The free admission could draw between 5,000 and 7,000 students, SGA officials estimate. No guests or family are allowed. If more than 7,000 students show up, the stragglers will pay \$19.95.

For those who need a ride, SGA has allocated \$1,600 to rent four buses that will leave the Visual Arts Building parking lot at 7 p.m. and depart from Islands of Adventure at 1 a.m. for the return trip to campus.

Heather Thompson, president of the UCF United Nations Association, said her club has received more money than most campus clubs, and as a result, supports SGA's expense for the event. Members of her group plan to attend Islands of Adventure, including Thompson.

The draw of free admission and her choice of rides in a virtually empty park was too much for Thompson to resist.

"There won't be any lines," she said. Besides, "it came out of my activities fee," she said. "I paid for it."

—BRANDON HARDIN
CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT



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Designers try to improve learning with better technology, lighting and desks

FROM PAGE 1

[I] Building, and you can't change the temperature," Bold said.

Experts say the environment in which students learn can either inhibit or enhance the learning process. Further, they say, students learn much better in classrooms with minimal auditory and visual obstructions and comfortable surroundings. With comfort in mind, UCF designers try to make the university's newer buildings as conducive to learning as possible.

According to an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the Classroom Design Manual offers simple guidelines for universities to follow in designing classrooms. They include:

- Students should be able to see what's presented.
- Students should be able to hear what's said, "free from noise and distortions."
- Students should be comfortable (the manual mentions temperature and furniture among considerations).

Lighting, chairs, a room's layout, temperature and even windows are just a few of the considerations planners contemplate when designing classrooms. Designers consider all of these features with students' and professors' needs in mind. Classroom designs also vary according to the subject being taught.

Peter Newman, the director of UCF Facilities Planning, said that several features factor into the design of classrooms. "Acoustics are critical," he said.

The temperature of classrooms also strongly affects learning. "Nothing is worse than being too hot or too cold," Newman said.

Noisy heating and air conditioning systems can distract students from class. Similarly, if the walls are too thin, commotion in one classroom can disrupt a neighboring classroom.

Newman said seating is always a main concern for students.

"Students prefer comfortable desks," said Duncan Dickson, assistant professor of hospitality management. "Flip-arm chairs make working difficult."

Although students and planners often complain about the older flip-arm desks with lit-

tle surface area, some classes in the VAB and other buildings still use them.

Newman said many of the older buildings on campus, such as the VAB and the Math and Physics Building, need major improvements. Another older building, the Education Building, is being remodeled.

"The Math and Physics Building needs a lot of work and will eventually be completely redone," Newman said.

Added Dickson: "The Math and Physics Building is not well equipped and the lighting is not good."

Poor lighting can negatively impact learning, according to Daniel Niemeyer, who works as a classroom-design consultant and wrote a book titled "Hard Facts on Smart Classroom Design." In the *Chronicle* article, Niemeyer said, "There is a lot of research that shows that the more light there is in a room, the more likely you are to get interaction."

Considering the value of natural light, planners often debate whether to include windows in classrooms. The new Classroom I Building, for example, is windowless, while Colbourn Hall includes windows but has small classrooms, said Newman.

Some professors see windows as an inconvenience while others enjoy natural light and knowing what the weather is like before they go outside. "Windows detract from PowerPoint, so you have to take time to close them," Dickson said.

While some professors enjoy classrooms with windows, others prefer technological features. "Give me a classroom with working technology and I am a happy teacher. The other things, like windows, mean much less to me than technology," said Pamala Griset, an associate professor of criminal justice and legal studies, who teaches in the Health and Public Affairs Building.

"I use PowerPoint for lectures," Griset said. "I supplement my lectures with discussions of Web sites, so Internet access is essential for me."

Classrooms equipped with technology are also in high demand and greatly enhance student learning. The Classroom I Building, which features wireless network access throughout the building, and the

Health and Public Affairs Building are among the most high-tech buildings on campus.

"I've only taught in Classroom I; the classrooms there are exceptional," Peter Ricci, an assistant professor of hospitality management, said. "Whenever there is a technological glitch, they seem to be repaired promptly."

"Classroom I has in-ceiling document cameras so you don't ever need an overhead. They have VCR tape capability, CD-ROMS, and Internet access," Ricci said. "The only thing they are missing at this point is DVD capability. It's just fantastic."

Classroom designs are function specific. For example, if a classroom is going to be used for large lecture classes, an auditorium-style room with tiered seating might be considered. The function of each room and the number seats in each room are determined by facilities planning.

There are at least two other departments involved in classroom design. The Office of Instructional Resources is responsible for the 117 multimedia classrooms on campus, and the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is responsible for the four studio classrooms on campus.

Studio classrooms are designed to enhance a more independent student-to-student learning process, rather than the traditional lecture and note-taking routine. Such studio classrooms feature tables or stations that sit four students each and contain two computers. Typically there is one computer for every two students.

These classes are usually used in a lab-type setting where students work together on exercises. Computer science, math and physics courses lend themselves to studio classroom instruction.

Ruth Marshall, the director of the Office of Instructional resources, said faculty considerations play a large role in classroom design. "The design elements [of multimedia classrooms] are based on the requests of the faculty and administrators who are responsible for the building," Marshall said. "They tell us what they want to do in the building and each of the rooms, and we determine what equipment is needed to implement their requests."

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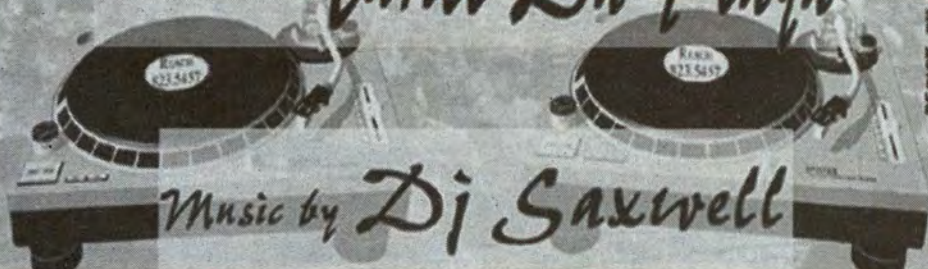
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Civil libertarians not alone in raising their concerns

FROM PAGE 3

after revelations of previous misuse of surveillance powers by federal agencies, including the discovery in 1974 that the FBI and foreign intelligence agencies had spied on more than 10,000 U.S. citizens, including Martin Luther King Jr.

This is specifically what Mathew Miklautsch, 24, a senior and president of Objectivist Club at UCF, doesn't understand. "The focus should be less on Americans and more on terrorist countries that the Justice Department has listed as sponsoring terrorism. Iran and Syria are places that they list as huge supporters of terrorism, yet we are focusing on Iraq," he said.

He said these changes suspend due process and threaten public interest. "The manner of gathering evidence and going to a judge worked fine. I don't see why they are changing it, or how changing this process combats terrorism. There should be due process for all people."

The changes "went through quickly because of patriotism that follows a national event," in this case the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, said Drew Lanier, a professor who teaches American Constitutional law.

"The Supreme Court has ruled in other types of cases that in war times, free speech and civil liberties can become more restricted and they can step up investigator activity," he added.

Allison K. Benthel is the director of civil rights in the office of Florida Attorney general Charlie Crist, a Republican. "Constituents are not expressing any concerns about the Patriot Act to us," she said.

But it's a different story in the office of U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, a Florida Democrat. "We have had very limited positive feedback," said Robert Luke, a staff member in Nelson's Orlando office. "Most of the feedback has been negative by concerned constituents."

Civil-liberties organizations and some conservative groups are now raising the same concerns because it appears that many of the act's provisions had not been carefully studied before they were embraced.

Chief among the concerns are that it expands surveillance — in the form of wiretaps, search warrants and subpoenas — with reduced checks and balances to protect civil liberties.

The government may now spy on any individual's Web surfing by merely telling a judge that the spying could lead to information that is "relevant" to an ongoing criminal investigation.

The person spied on does not have to be the target of the investigation. Moreover, the government is not obligated to report to the court or tell the person spied upon what it has done.

Another provision deals with roving wiretaps. The FBI and CIA can now trace from phone to phone, computer to computer, without demonstrating that each is even being used by a suspect or target of a surveillance order. In addition, the government is absolved of having to show to a court that the particular information or communication to be acquired is relevant to a criminal investigation.

Malenius, the press secretary, said the Patriot Act and Patriot Act II "are just modernizing crime-fighting techniques."

Miklautsch countered that

while he can understand the rush job in a time of emergency, that still doesn't make it right. "There is no evidence that our previous civil liberties posed a barrier to the effective tracking or prosecution of terrorists," he said.

Junior Kevin Buck, 21, is vice chairman of the UCF Young Republican and disagrees with Miklautsch's thinking. "The public was supportive of it being passed quickly; they understood then, and the public opinion was that people wanted to give up freedom for safety. Public opinion was a factor in it effectively going through." Only now do people feel that they were giving up some things, he said. "If you have nothing to hide, why do you care?"

Gordon Worley, 20, a senior and registered Libertarian, said the ideas behind the Patriot Act are good and seem necessary for better investigations and prevention. But the way the government is going about it is wrong. "These ideas go against the Constitution. They eliminate the checking-up element, which helps protect and creates fairness," he said.

Lanier said that in his classes, his students discuss what the Constitution permits the government to do. "It may regulate the time, place and manner of what you do, when you do it, where you do it and how you do it. It's not so much what the activists are saying but how they are doing it, who they're doing it with, and the time they are doing it."

He added: "No one has an absolute right to say anything they want to at any time. And I feel that some activists seem to believe that — that the First Amendment says there shall no law restricting freedom of speech. Well, not exactly. You can't yell 'fire' in a crowd, or threaten a president. That obviously disturbs public order. So, it's always a balance."

Worley doesn't feel that the current administration has an agenda. "If I were trying to solve this problem, I could make these choices. But in looking for the best solution, eliminating checks and balance portions is a mistake."

He added: "Laws don't discriminate. It's the people who impose the law — investigators and police officers — who have the potential to abuse without anyone checking up on them."

USA Today recently reported that federal probes of alleged civil rights violations by police rarely lead to prosecutions. From 1991 to 2001, the Justice department looked at 8,025 complaints of civil rights abuses by law enforcement. It filed charges in changes in just 3 percent of those cases.

Yet Buck is resolute in saying that he trusts and supports the government. "They have information and know more than the public," he said.

Said Lanier: "People fail to remember that Abe Lincoln, the great emancipator and civil libertarian, imprisoned newspaper editors in a time of war who wrote bad things about him. He restricted civil liberties. This type of act is not something without historic precedent."

"I haven't seen anything that tips that balance too far in favor of the government," he said. "You have to consider the context of the times."

He added "This is why we have courts. If there are constitutional problems, they can be addressed by the courts."



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Work visa costs deter employers from hiring international students

FROM PAGE 1

tion, they can apply for optional practical training which allows them to work for one full year after graduation. Past that, the only option is the H-1B visa."

Because employers are looking to hire applicants long-term, these restrictions cause employers to overlook international students when hiring interns, Parker said.

An unstable economy and stricter immigration laws also pose barriers for international students in an already challenging market, Parker said.

"It is a challenge to find internships and jobs today when the economy is down compared to several years ago," Parker said. "Also, there is a heightened concern in the U. S. about immigration status due to current events."

Bernardinez searched for internships throughout four years of college and found that internships are now scarcer due to recent world events.

"I had one internship before September 11 happened," said

Bernardinez. "Since then, many companies have changed their requirements to only hire U.S. residents."

Although internship opportunities are not readily available to international students, it doesn't mean they are any less important, said Nicole Howatt, marketing internship coordinator for the UCF College of Business.

"It's crucial for all students to get internships. Companies expect students to already have internship experience when they graduate," Howatt said.

Unless employers become more open to hiring international students, however, Bernardinez sees the necessity of internship experience as a never-ending cycle of rejection for international students.

"Many international students are turned away because companies say that we do not have enough experience," Bernardinez said. "But how can we get the experience if companies are not willing to hire international students? Someone has to give us that initial opportunity."

Virus cancels classes and study-abroad programs

FROM PAGE 3

forces to withdraw from the Iraqi territory immediately."

Mushirul Hasan, a history professor at Jamia Millia who has also taught at the University of Virginia, said the resolution, which was largely symbolic, was a way for faculty members to voice their opposition to the war.

He emphasized that the ban was not sanctioned by the university administration, but that most faculty members were in favor of it. Hasan called the resolution "morally binding."

The boycott is one of only a handful of protests against the U.S.-led war in Iraq by educational institutions in India, even though India has the second largest Muslim population in the world. Last week, about 50 students at the University of Kashmir, which is located in India's only Muslim-majority state, marched with antiwar placards and burned pictures of President Bush. Police officers, apparently wanting to contain the demonstration, locked the university gates to keep protesting students inside the campus.

In Calcutta, tens of thousands of students boycotted classes to stage a peaceful march on Friday. They carried signs that read, "No more blood for oil" and "Bush is a warmonger."

While the majority of Indians are against the war, student protests have generally been muted. Political organizers, who depend on young people to fill up stadium seats at their rallies, say it is difficult to pull in students these days. They blame the low turnouts on the crucial end-of-year examinations that have just begun across the country.

Hong Kong universities suspend classes, students evacuate

A highly contagious flu-like disease that is sweeping across much of China has prompted all of Hong Kong's universities to suspend classes this week.

Meanwhile, Syracuse University has shut down its exchange program in Hong Kong, and other American universities are reconsidering their study-abroad programs in the region.

The move to suspend classes for nine days, starting last Saturday, was made in agreement among the heads of Hong Kong's eight universities, in an effort to prevent the spread of the disease, known as severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS. The syndrome has infected more than 1,600 people worldwide and killed at least 60. Hong Kong has been considered the epicenter of the disease, with at least 610 cases and 15 deaths.

University officials are urging students to stay at home and use this week as a reading period. Libraries and other facilities at most universities will remain open. Several of the universities are disinfecting and cleaning campus buildings and posting information about the disease on their Web sites. Classes are scheduled to resume on Monday.


Programs of American universities in Hong Kong and China are beginning to be canceled or reconsidered because of the epidemic.

Syracuse University, which runs a study-abroad program based at City University of Hong Kong, has arranged for the 31 students in the program to return to the United States on Wednesday, said Kevin Morrow, a spokesman for Syracuse. The students have completed most of their course work for the semester, he said, and will be able to finish up through independent study or an internship.

Syracuse has also canceled two short programs that were scheduled to begin in May in mainland China, Morrow said.

Princeton University administrators are deliberating over whether to proceed with their summer language program in Beijing, scheduled to begin in June, said Perry Link, a professor of East Asian studies at Princeton.

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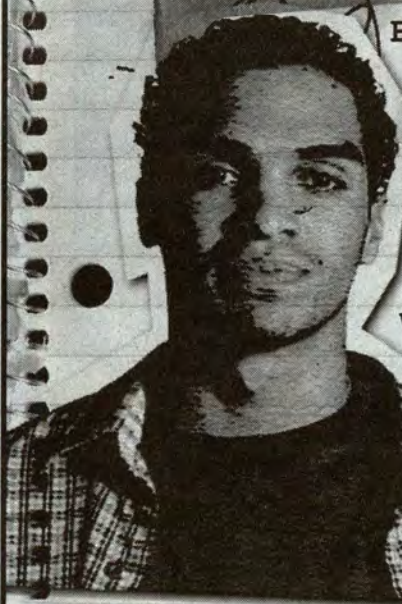


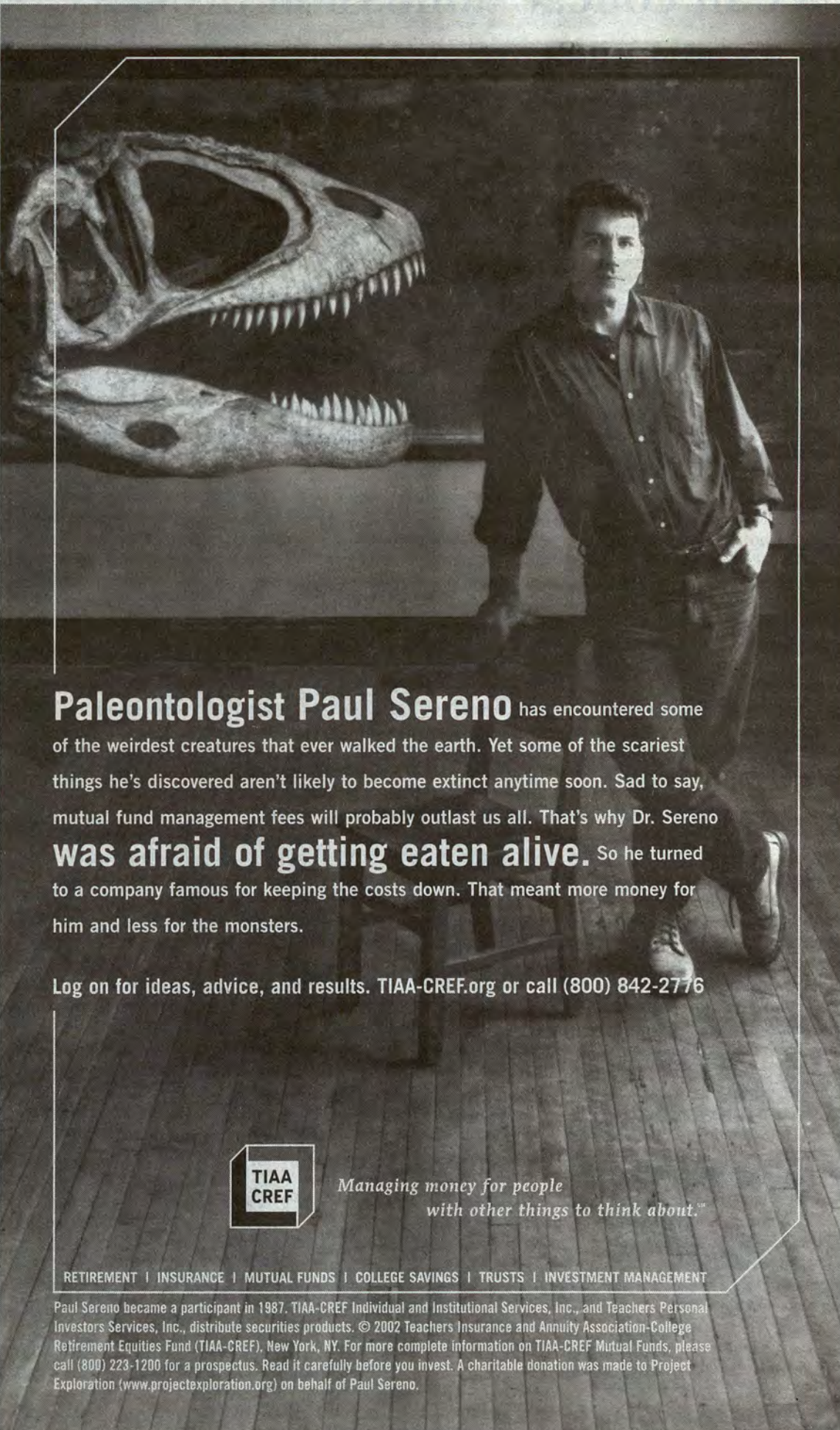
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OLIVIER DOULIERY / KRT CAMPUS

Supporters of affirmative action rally, above and below, outside the Supreme Court building Tuesday as arguments are heard inside.

Supreme Court hears the first challenge in generation to using race in college admission process

STEPHEN HENDERSON
KNIGHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court heard its first challenge in a generation to using race in the college admission process Tuesday as two of its centrist justices emerged as the most conflicted members of the high court.

Justices Anthony M. Kennedy and Sandra Day O'Connor expressed consternation about the role affirmative action should play in American life.

In a courtroom filled with cultural icons and political dignitaries who came to witness the historic arguments, both justices expressed strong doubts about the assertions — made by white students who were rejected by the University of Michigan — that race is an impermissible factor for colleges to consider.

But Kennedy and O'Connor also asked pointed questions of the university's attorneys about whether Michigan's programs go beyond legality and how long they might need to be in place.

O'Connor's varying points of view on the issue have been discussed almost since the suits were filed, and many have considered her to be the key vote in the court's decision.

Kennedy's past opinions suggest that he might be less on the fence about these issues but also open to changing his mind.

Many think the court's opinion might unfold around the pair's middle-ground positions because the other justices are so firmly divided. And some court watchers said Tuesday that Kennedy and O'Connor's struggle reflects a deeper tension on the court in its desire to deal with race discrimination, to ensure academic freedom and to practice judicial restraint.

"They've got to look at all of those principles and try to balance them in this decision," said Victor Bolden, a New Haven, Conn., lawyer who filed a brief supporting the university on behalf of several black mayors. "They need a way to be able to look at these policies without getting too entangled in the educational process or to be second-



VICKI VALERIO / KRT CAMPUS

guessing decisions made by educators."

Kennedy also seemed to be searching for a way to balance those interests late in the arguments. If the justices struck down Michigan's policies, he asked, would the responsibility for devising a better plan fall to the courts or the university?

The cases, which separately challenge Michigan's use of race in its undergraduate and law school admissions, mark the first time since 1978 that the high court has considered such an important affirmative action case. The justices will make their decision by July.

Kirk Kolbo, an attorney for plaintiffs Barbara Grutter and Jennifer Gratz, didn't get through more than a few paragraphs in his argument before O'Connor jumped in with several crucial questions. O'Connor first challenged Kolbo to establish how he could prove that race — and not some other factor — prevented his clients from being accepted to the university, and then moved to his claim that race can never be used in admissions.

"You have some precedents out there that you have to come to grips with, because the court obviously has upheld the use of race," in certain contexts, O'Connor said. "You're speaking in absolutes, and it isn't quite that."

Kennedy then broke in with several inquiries that questioned whether the small num-

ber of minorities on campus was a legitimate concern for universities to try to correct.

"So if year after year after year there's an under-representation, there is no cause for the state or the government or its educational experts to be concerned?" Kennedy asked incredulously. "I should think that's a very legitimate concern on the part of the state."

Kennedy was equally hard on Maureen Mahoney and John Payton, the attorneys for the university.

Kennedy suggested several times that there was a reasonable debate over whether Michigan's desire to produce a "critical mass" of minority students on its campus is a thinly disguised quota system, which would be illegal. Kennedy asked Mahoney if that were true, "you lose, correct?"

Mahoney said no, but Kennedy kept hammering the point, doubting whether the university's focus was anything beyond a quota, because its staff during admissions considerations is constantly checking "to see what the numbers are based on race."

O'Connor was less relenting with the university's attorneys, but she expressed reservations about how long the university might have to consider race.

"In all the programs which this court has upheld, you could see an end to it," O'Connor said. "There is none in this, is there. How do we deal with that?"

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Bush's references to Scripture in his speeches over the top, students say

FROM PAGE 3

himself," Caldwell said.

Time magazine reported, "Privately, Bush even talked of being chosen by the grace of God to lead at that moment."

On another occasion, Bush said, "I believe God wants me to be president, but if that doesn't happen, it's OK."

Warren Goldstein, an assistant professor of sociology at UCF, said the combination of religion and politics is always dangerous. He also said the idea that Bush believes he has been chosen by God to lead the country is scary.

"I don't feel comfortable with those statements," Goldstein said. "I would prefer when [leaders] are driven by more rational consideration."

"People justify all sorts of things when they have a God, [and] war is most often in the name of God," he said. "Some examples in history include the Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition. Political leaders often use religion for their political purposes. And if one believes his leadership is a divine prophecy, he can justify all sorts of human atrocities."

Freshmen Christopher Berryman agrees that leaders led by religious convictions may make decisions that may not benefit the nation as a whole.

"If someone believes they have a mission under God, they might be inclined to do something as foolish as ignore the United Nations, break alliances and put our soldiers at risk by putting them into a war they might not be able to win," Berryman said.

Harden said she believes UCF students support Bush if they do not want to live with the threat of terrorism.

"It seems to me that a lot of students respect Bush for his character and ability to make bold decisions," she said.

During a time of war, presidential addresses are meant to answer questions about precipitating world events. During these speeches, Bush's prolific use of Bible scripture has caught

the attention of many students.

Junior Carly Usdin said it makes her uncomfortable to hear the president cite Scriptures in his speeches.

"How can you stand before a unified group if not all of them believe in something you're basing your speech on?" Usdin asked.

Senior Erika Hefferman said Bush's use of Scripture does not offend her.

"Being at war is the right time to use the Bible," she said. "In order not to alienate other religions, he should keep it to a minimum, though."

"I believe God wants me to be president, but if that doesn't happen, it's OK."

—GEORGE W. BUSH
President

Senior Meredith Davidson believes Bush's religious connotations are over the top at times.

"Sometimes he gets carried away," she said. "I think it's hard for people who strongly hold to their faith to realize that other people have other beliefs."

But Harden believes Scripture brings healing to the American people.

"This country was founded by Christian men who were not afraid to proclaim their faith," she said. "I respect him for proclaiming his faith."

Goldstein said the real question is not what role Bush's religion plays in his decision-making process, but rather, how sincere is he in his speeches.

"The difference between sincere and cynical actors is that sincere actors are taken in by their own act," he said. "The question is: Is Bush cynical or sincere? What does he believe in?"

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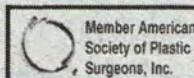


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Opinions

Thursday April 3, 2003

OUR STANCE:

Students deserve comfortable classrooms

UCF needs to heed the advice of classroom design experts more and upgrade all its classrooms to maximize the learning potential of UCF students.

The older buildings on campus have a certain charm, but their charm cannot supplant their shortcomings in terms of design and technology. The Math and Physics Building, for example, has poor lighting, which detracts from the learning experience of students who have classes there.

Other antiquated buildings also need upgrades. Buildings such as the Chemistry Building, Phillips Hall and Colbourn Hall, all built before the advent of the Internet, need to be brought into the 21st century. UCF should make it a priority to have all its buildings well lit, well insulated from weather conditions and external distractions, and wired.

While UCF constructs new edifices, it neglects its older ones. These buildings and classrooms need better designs. As long as the university uses older buildings for courses, students will continue to learn in less-than-desirable environments. Until these buildings get the long-overdue upgrades they need and deserve, students will suffer the consequences of learning in a poor environment.

Learning environment is but one of many

factors that contribute to the overall educational mission of universities such as UCF, but it absolutely matters. Students who face visual or audio distractions in their classes likely will not learn as much as students who do not face such distractions.

Visual barriers, such as poorly lit classrooms or obstructed views, and audio barriers, such as poor acoustics or external noise from construction, can have negative impacts. Additionally, students who are too hot or too cold when in class will not learn as well as students who attend classes in comfort.

UCF should not halt construction on the new buildings already under way, but, like it is doing with the Education Complex, it should improve upon its older buildings. UCF owes it to its students to provide the highest-quality learning environment it possibly can.

UCF should solicit the advice of students in the design process for classrooms. After all, who knows better what type of classroom works best to facilitate learning in college courses but college students? Students could provide quality insight into what types of classrooms work best and what types of classrooms do not work at all. As paying customers of the university, students deserve the best learning environment possible, in all buildings.



OUR STANCE:

Participate in event tonight at Universal

Tonight, Student Body President Marco Peña will host his \$125,000 going-away party at Islands of Adventure.

Universal Knights, as the Student Government Association has dubbed the festivities, will allow the first 7,000 UCF students who show up to enter the park for free.

If 7,000 students show up, the event would qualify as a success, considering the low turnout at so many UCF events. Hopefully 7,000 students will have the time and the willingness to make the trip out to Islands of Adventure, as they should have a good time.

We asked in an earlier editorial what would happen if more than 7,000 students showed up. As it turns out, the 7,001st student and beyond will not be turned away, but if he or she wants to get into the park, he or she will have to pay \$19.95 to join the otherwise free party.

After SGA has paid Islands of Adventure \$125,000 of the student body's money, the park's rental is paid for. The arbitrary \$19.95 charge for excess students would serve to further line Universal's pockets.

Regardless, since so much of students'

money is being spent tonight, students need to show up and participate in this event. If you are free from work and school, take full advantage and head down to Islands of Adventure.

SGA is providing four free buses for students. Since Islands of Adventure is so far away, SGA should have provided even more buses to transport students to the park. All UCF students are eligible for free admission, and they all paid for it. SGA should help them get there.

Peña could have used the \$125,000 that he is spending to throw this party on anything he wants. The money comes out of executive accounts, including his discretionary fund. He feels that the money would best be used so that 7,000 students can have fun in a theme park for free.

The many student groups who did not get funding, or who received far less than they asked for, probably feel that the money could have gone to better causes. Still, they should take advantage of the evening and show up in full force. Those groups deserve a night of fun. And hopefully, they'll get there in time to get in for free.

Letters to the Editor

Views expressed here are not necessarily those of *The Future*

We are a nation of selfish people

This is a response to Brandon Wilson's letter to the editor on March 31, "Reasons not to be in Iraq."

It amazes me how selfish and blind people choose to be when they voice their opinions. Brandon Wilson wrote, "we have so many problems right here in the United States that need to be fixed before we go liberating other countries."

Sure Brandon, 3,000 deaths must have been due to the number of disgruntled affirmative action supporters who chose to voice themselves in the form of holy war, and we can rest assured that the hostility behind North Korea is really funded by striking Detroit autoworkers.

Open your eyes. We are such a selfish nation sometimes. You complain because we can't offer more classes at UCF. Last week in Honduras, a baby girl died because her family couldn't afford \$22 for a simple antibiotic. Iraqis are being forced to fight, fearing government officials will retaliate against their families if they refuse. We complain about an

overcrowded Interstate 4. Iraqis can't even leave Baghdad on their highway and seek a safe haven from a madman who is their leader.

This war isn't about oil. Take note of a praying president, a man with morals who is bashed by Madonna, Michael Moore and the Dixie Chicks. Where were these bashers when Bill Clinton was having extramarital affairs and lying about real-estate scandals? I didn't hear much opposition to Clinton's antics, and yet we bash our praying president.

See, Brandon, our failing educational system (as you call it) took prayer out of schools in 1964, and they teach us now that safe sex requires a rubber suit, not a wedding ring.

So, given those conditions, how could I expect you to realize the greatness of having a praying president? After all, our pledge doesn't even acknowledge God anymore as constitutional.

—JEFF MCLAUGHLIN

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Correction

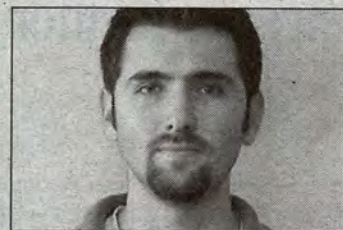
A March 31 article, "Student activists wage war to win public opinion," identified the Progressive Council as an "anti-war" club. Although the council's membership includes such groups as Campus Peace Action, the council itself has taken no position on the war with Iraq.

"We have a criminal jury system which is superior to any in the world; and its efficiency is only marred by the difficulty of finding twelve men every day who don't know anything and can't read."

—MARK TWAIN

Front-line reporters embedded in bias

INSIPID THOUGHTS



ADAM SHIVER
STAFF WRITER

Reporting from the front lines, this is Adam Shiver. Today we have come across refugees fleeing Basra. We have also experienced high winds kicking up blinding sandstorms and got to see firsthand as the 1st Marine Division laid down heavy ground fire. And also to note: I feel George W. Bush is a bumbling fool.

Opinionated? Yes. The job of a journalist? Never.

Peter Arnett has shown us exactly what not to do as a reporter, whether it is for a newspaper, television station, radio network or news magazine.

The television media has become inundated with reporters' biases and opinions, and the recent bad judgment of Arnett is just an extreme example of this trend.

The NBC News and MSNBC reporter recently agreed to an impromptu television interview on Iraqi TV. The only problem was, Arnett was on the wrong end of the microphone.

During his interview with the Iraqi television station, Arnett stated that the U.S. war plan "has failed because of Iraqi resistance." He also made mention of the fact that his war reporting "helps those who oppose the war."

NBC News was rightfully upset about the views Arnett expressed in the interview, and fired him early Monday morning.

Arnett has apologized for this misjudgment and the bad press he has brought to his former employer. He unfortunately forgot to apologize to all real reporters whose reputations that he has tarnished.

By real reporters, I mean those who present the news objectively every day in their stories and reports.

It is not the job of the media to give us their opinions — I'll look for those on the editorial page of any daily newspaper or turn on a television talk show such as Hannity and Colmes. I expect to have someone spouting off their opinion, whether I agree with it or not, in forums like those. I certainly do not expect to have my news laced with biases.

Jim Phillips of the Philips Phile on Real Radio 104.1FM was speaking just recently on embedded reporters. He, along with many callers to his show, felt that independent reporters are needed in Iraq, and I have to agree with this point.

Embedded journalists are governed by the military forces that they are covering, whether or not they realize it. If something unspeakable were to happen that placed the United States government or the military in a bad light, would these embedded reporters be able to report those details?

If they reported the truth, they might be expelled from the military unit they were embedded with, ending their career-making assignment. If they manipulated the coverage in favor of the military, they might sacrifice their own journalistic integrity, but their careers would continue undaunted.

An independent reporter can, for the most part, give us the actual happenings taking place in Iraq. But alas, not many are willing to face the war unprotected by military forces, just like they are unwilling to give up a career-making opportunity.

Most can sacrifice a little bit of journalistic integrity in exchange for the above.

A journalist's reports should be free of opinions and should give it to the public straight.

A reporter's position is to be on the backside of a microphone, not fielding questions from other reporters.

Columnist Christopher Arnold can be reached at chris@ucdfuture.com

Just another war opinion

MIKE RIEGEL
STAFF WRITER

The United States will not win this war. Iraq will not win this war. After the first American soldier fell, this country lost the war; the same holds true for Iraq. The fact is that there are no winners in war, only victors.

(Almost) everyone supports the troops. Even those who are against the war have respect for those who are putting their life on the line. It's dismissive and the mark of a simple mind to say that anti-war protesters are anti-American. Speaking your mind is one of the most American pastimes one can engage in.

There is a good reason to liberate Iraq — but it has nothing to do with U.N. resolutions. Sadaam Hussein is an evil dictator who has committed thousands of atrocities against innocent men, women and children. (Most) people who support the war aren't crazed death mongers who want to see innocent Iraqi civilians die. There is a great American tradition of defending the defenseless against tyrannical rulers in other countries.

War is not a joke. But it's not a reason to stop laughing. War is about hatred. But it's no reason to stop loving. War is always an option.

But it's never a good one.

This war will not be fought by the people who started it, or their children. The soldiers don't decide where to go and who to fight. The decision makers never see the front line, but if they did, would there be a war right now? Or ever?

Heroes will leave this country and go to Iraq. Most of them won't come back, because they will have died on an Iraqi battlefield thousands of miles from home. Iraq will lose its share of heroes too, although it's hard for some to imagine. They'll be closer to home, but they'll die just the same.

People do not like the United States for going to war with Iraq. Long after the war has ended, citizens of other countries will harbor rage against this country. That rage may one day manifest itself in the form of another war or terrorist attack.

War is full of rules. But neither side will follow them all of the time.

War is full of exploding smart bombs. But the smartest bomb is the one that's never used.

War is full of stories. But most of us won't hear them.

The American media does not know everything, and what they report may not be the truth. It may be dissension on my part to say so, but there are

times when reading, hearing, and even seeing might not necessarily constitute believing. Certain media outlets are even (gasp) biased toward one political ideology or another.

There is information about this war that we don't know. We will never know it, and that is how our government operates. Could this information sway public opinion one way or another regarding this war? It very well could, but our democratic society has entrusted certain people to make these decisions for us.

Iraq may be liberated by this war, but there will be no lasting democracy that will take the place of the current dictatorship. Democracy cannot be forced on a country, and it's historically an unsuccessful and difficult form of government. We might feel that our system is the best, and that we're always right, but that doesn't mean the Iraqi people will agree with us.

This war will be over soon, or at least I pray it will. The United States most likely will be victorious. When that happens, Iraq will no longer be our enemy, but a friend in desperate need of our resources. If we truly believe we are fighting to make the world a better, safer place, we won't leave our friends behind to pick up the pieces.



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For the GOOD OF THE TEAM



Adam Rosche / CFF
Ryan Bear has stolen six bases this year, good for third on the team.

Senior Ryan Bear has proven he's a team player

CHRIS BERNHARDT
STAFF WRITER

In the far too tangible world of sports, dominated by numbers and individual statistics, ways of measuring a player's commitment to a team are tough to come by. But during the UCF baseball team's final turn at bat in the second game of a double-header against Jacksonville State last Saturday, Ryan Bear proved just how much of a team player he truly is.

With the Knights behind 8-7 and down to their final two outs with no runners on base, the senior watched a 3-0 pitch go by and took a walk, placing the tying run on first.

It may not seem like much,

especially because the next batter hit into a game-ending double play. But consider that Bear came into the game with a 19-game hitting streak and had failed to prolong that stretch in his previous three at-bats. Rather than taking an ill-advised hack at the 3-0 pitch, he sacrificed his own accomplishments to give his team a better chance at winning the game.

"I just try to take the same approach every day, get good swings on balls," Bear said. "Just trying to get anything going that we could to help the team."

Such is the way of Bear. The Knights' first baseman just goes out and does his job every single game,

PLEASE SEE *Bear* ON 14

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

.592 Currently has highest slugging percentage of the Knights.

.347 Currently has third-highest batting average of the Knights.

23 Number of runs Bear has scored this year. Second highest on team.

Bulls hault Knights' rally for 8-5 win

KRISTY SHONKA
STAFF WRITER

The UCF baseball team rattled off four runs with two outs in the seventh inning, but it wasn't enough as South Florida won 8-5 Tuesday in Tampa. The loss is the second in a row for the Knights, the first time they've lost consecutive games this season.

Senior Ryan Bear sparked UCF's two-out rally in the seventh, knocking a bases-

loaded single up the middle to score Jon Cooper and David Mann. Cooper reached on a fielder's choice and Mann drew a walk. A passed ball scored Nathan Kragt and advanced Bear to second. Bear scored when Dee Brown knocked a double down the left-field line, making the score 7-4. The threat ended when Blaine Schulte grounded out to the pitcher for the third out.

The Bulls jumped out to

an early 5-0 lead in the fourth inning off UCF starter Von David Stertzbach. USF scored five runs on five hits. Stertzbach picked up the loss for the Knights dropping him to 1-3 on the year. The senior gave up five runs on eight hits in four innings.

South Florida added a run in the six off reliever Matt Fox and the Knights added one in the eighth, but it wasn't enough as UCF fell to 20-11 on the year.

Fox struck out a career-high six batters in his two innings of relief. One game after his 19-game hitting streak ended, Bear went three-for-four with two RBIs for the Knights.

The Knights return to Jay Bergman Field for a three-game series against the Atlantic Sun's Campbell. Friday's game starts at 7 p.m., while the first pitch for Saturday's double-header is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Tennis teams extend their streaks further

SADIE SHAM
STAFF WRITER

The UCF women's and men's tennis teams both won their matches this past week. The women's team won its sixth consecutive match Monday afternoon, holding off Memphis 4-3 at the UCF Tennis Complex. UCF (11-6) has not lost since March 14, while the Tigers (13-6) snapped a six-match win streak. Even more impressive was the No. 71 men's tennis team, which extended its winning streak to 17 on Sunday, easing past Florida Atlantic 6-1 in Atlantic Sun Conference action in Boca Raton. The Knights, who lost only two matches on the day, improved to 17-2, while the Owls dropped to 6-11.

In doubles action, the women's tennis team won two matches to pick up the first point of the day. At No. 2, Julie Pecastaing and Pamela Fernandez got past Sumitra Rao and Marlene Dirnstorfer, 8-4. Also winning for UCF was Marieke Gunawan and Kristina Lohmos at No. 3. The duo defeated Viktoria Gruber and Andrea Feichtinger, 8-4. Taking the lone loss for UCF was Ola Luchak and Anna Westin, who fell to Sabrina Lindemann and Monica Gonzalez-Gordo at the No. 1 spot, 8-2.

Pecastaing was solid in solo play, crushing Rao at No. 3, 6-2, 6-0. Lohmos held off a late comeback attempt from Gruber to earn a 6-0, 7-6 No. 4 win. The other UCF singles victor was Fernandez, who was a 6-3, 6-3 winner over Dirnstorfer at No. 5.

UCF's lone senior, Marieke Gunawan, played in her final match at the UCF Tennis Complex, losing to Sabrina Lindemann at No. 1, 6-2, 6-4. The stint was the Knights' last home event on the 2003 schedule.

Gonzalez-Gordo and Feichtinger also secured singles wins for Memphis, beating Westin at the No. 2, 3-6, 6-3 (10-5) and Luczak, 6-3, 6-0 at the No. 6, respectively.

With their home schedule now complete, the Knights travel to Tennessee for a pair of matches starting April 5 at Tennessee Tech. The trip concludes at Middle Tennessee State on April 6.

In men's play, UCF got off to a revving start, winning two of three doubles matches to secure the first point of the day. At No. 2, Simon Jaeger and Augusto Sanabria had little trouble with Oscar Plotnik and F.J. Schofield, winning 8-4. The other UCF tandem to pick up a victory was Ener Gursay and Gabriel Strangberg at No. 3. The pair blew past Ernest Diaz and Juan Todero, 8-2. The lone loss came from Catalin Bradu and Antonio Sierra as they lost 8-6 at the No. 1 spot to David Demers and Christian Paiz.

PLEASE SEE *Men's* ON 15



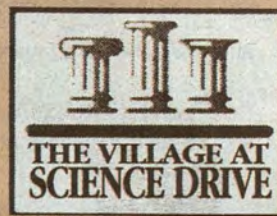
Adam Rosche / CFF
Julie Pecastaing won her match 6-2, 6-0 against Memphis.

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We would also like to say special thanks to Jonco, Inc. for the benefit night at McDonalds UCF.
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Bear made switch from right to first

FROM PAGE 12

trying to help the team as much as possible.

"He brings a lot of hardness to the baseball team," Coach Jay Bergman said. "He's a good student, a good person off the field. Real quiet person, very laid back. Very competitive."

That description also personifies his play this year, quiet but competitive. His numbers are solid but not spectacular. As of last Saturday he had a batting average of .347, third on the team behind Clay Timpner and David Mann. His six stolen bases are second to those same two. He has 21 runs batted in, tied with Dee Brown for second best. And his three home runs put him even with Blaine Schulte for tops among the Knights.

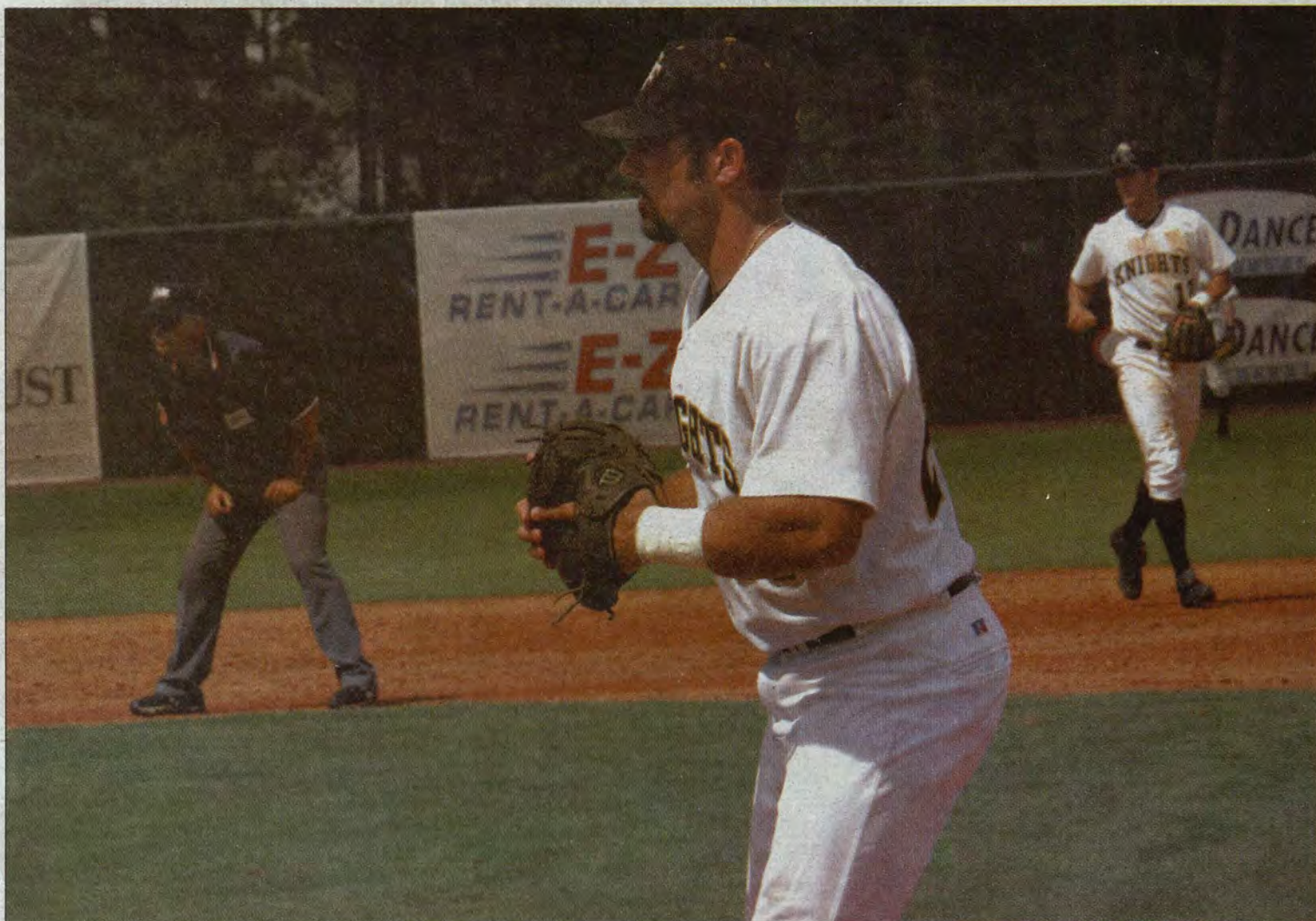
Overall the 6-foot-2, 220-pound right-hander has been UCF's best all-around hitter, topping the team in slugging percentage (.592) and walking (15) more than he strikes out (10). Yet Bear isn't fully satisfied.

"I'm still not 100 percent," Bear said. "My swing, where it needs to be, there's still definitely room for improvement. But it's an everyday thing working to improve that."

Though he began the year batting farther down in the lineup, his performance has turned him into the team's clean-up hitter. It's a role he enjoys because of the opportunities to drive in runs. His stepping up in the middle of the order has been vital as the rest of the Knight's power hitters have struggled to find consistency.

"He's done a great job for us offensively," Bergman said. "He's been batting at clean-up spot, and that's a hard place to bat because you're always going to get curveballs and a lot of hard pitches."

After spending two years at Gulf Coast Community College in Panama City, Bear transferred to



ADAM ROSCHE / CFF

After proving himself last year as a solid fielder with a strong arm, Bear was moved to first base this season when David Mann moved to the outfield.

UCF and started 26 games last season. He hit .283 in 39 games overall, with a home run, 16 RBIs and four stolen bases.

He played in the outfield in 2002, where he proved to be a solid fielder with a strong arm. He was originally penciled in as the starting right fielder this season, but once Mann proved himself capable of playing left field, a re-shifting of the defense became necessary. Brown moved from left field to right, Rich Wallace went from first base to third, and Bear took over at first.

"I just like playing the outfield," Bear said. "I like being able to throw the ball around a little bit more and just being out there and being able to roam around."

Still, Bear added that it doesn't matter which position he plays and he put the team ahead of himself by willingly making the move.

As a senior, Bear fills a natural leadership role. There are only two other seniors among the Knights everyday position players — Wallace and second baseman Nathan Kragt — further enhancing

the need for seniors to provide younger players with a model for success.

"We've got a bunch of younger guys that look up to us seniors, and I think it's good for us to come out and work hard every day," Bear said. "Have a good work ethic and show them how to work hard and how to come out and play hard every day."

Whether at the plate, in the field or in the dugout, Bear has been one of the most valuable players on the team. Though the Golden

haven't yet met the standards set by their most recent predecessors, they still have an above-average record and a healthy chance to win their third consecutive Atlantic Sun Conference title. For Bear, that's an important goal to reach.

"We've got a lot of potential on this team and we just haven't quite gelled on a consistent basis like we need to to go on, to go to the post-season and advance," Bear said. "But that's definitely our goal and that's what we work for every week in practice and every day."

FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Cupp and Best earn conference honors



ADAM ROSCHE / CFF

Shortstop Stephanie Best hit .429 last week with two home runs and five RBIs leading to her second consecutive Atlantic Sun player of the week honor.

The Atlantic Sun Conference announced Monday that UCF's Dottie Cupp has been named the women's softball league's Pitcher of the Week, while Stephanie Best took Player of the Week honors for the second consecutive week. It marks the second time this season that UCF players have captured both the pitcher and player of the week honor.

Cupp, the A-Sun's Preseason Player of the Year, made three appearances over the past week, pitching 20 innings, striking out 21 and allowing only one earned run. She finished the week with a 2-1 record, including two shutout wins. She had an impressive 0.35 ERA and pitched her second one-hitter of the year in a 3-0 win over Georgia State.

Best finished the week with a .429 batting average and a .782 on-base percentage. She slammed two home runs for the week, pushing her season total to 11. Best was 9-for-21 at the plate, hitting five RBIs with no errors in the field.

It is the third time Best has earned the player of the week honors this season, while Cupp is the second Knight to be named the pitcher of the week this year.

The Knights travel to

Nashville to play Lipscomb on Friday, followed by an Atlantic Sun game against Belmont on Saturday.

Larsen leads UCF at Florida Relays

Sophomore Ann Larsen highlighted the list of UCF women's track and field athletes at the Florida Relays on Friday.

Larsen placed 11th in the high jump with a mark of 5-feet, 5-inches — short the NCAA Regional qualifying mark of 5-7 that she has achieved on two previous occasions this season.

Other top-20 performances came in the 1500-meter event. Freshman Astrid Claessens placed 14th with a time of 4:45.38, followed by sophomore Amy Giles in 15th at 4:46.59.

Meanwhile, freshman Kim Wapph shaved time off her season best with a time of 14.63 in the 100-meter hurdles, while sophomore Valery Martinez erased a hundredth of a second of her season best in the 800-meters, finishing in 2:19.96.

Freshman Andrea Morrow

PLEASE SEE *Morrow* ON 15

Morrow broke own record in steeplechase

FROM PAGE 14

broke her own record as she placed fourth in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the Florida Relays on Thursday.

Morrow ran the event in 11:19.14 – shattering her previous record of 11:46.02, which she set at the UCF Invitational on March 8. That mark also stands as a UCF Stadium record.

Earlier in the day, senior Kelly Roloff earned 4,872 points to finish sixth in the heptathlon.

Entering the day with 3,018 points carrying over from day one, Roloff, the reigning Atlantic Sun Conference's Athlete of the Week, started the day in the long jump, where she placed eighth with a mark of 17 feet, 8.25 inches. She then took seventh in the javelin with a throw of 91-01, and capped the day with a time of 2:25.40 for a fifth-place showing in the 800-meter run.

Junior Sara Dillman ended the evening with a personal best of 18:01.98 for 15th place in the 5,000 meters.

Up next, the Golden Knights travel to the South Florida Invitational in Tampa on Friday and Saturday.

UCF Youth Sports Day a hit

The UCF Alumni Association and Athletics Department played host to 375 elementary students on Saturday for the annual UCF Youth Sports Festival.

"The youth sports festival is one of our best events. It gives us the chance to work with the alumni and their kids as well as the rest of the Orlando community. They get to see what UCF is about," said Tom Messina, assis-



ADAM ROSCHE / CFF
Dottie Cupp had a 0.35 ERA over 20 innings last week, earning Atlantic Sun Player of the Week.

tant vice president and executive director of the UCF Alumni Association.

Athletics Director Steve Orsini, whose daughter Angela was participating in the cheerleading clinic, also sees it as a neighborly gesture.

"This is really a special event because it is just one way of giving back to the Orlando community and it gives our athletes a chance to be role models."

During the two-hour event, athletes coached the kids in the

fundamentals of baseball, basketball, cheerleading, soccer and football in the style of a sports camp. The women's and men's basketball teams led a clinic in the UCF Arena, where LaShay King, a freshman guard on the women's team, gave participants pointers during passing drills.

"I love working with the kids," she said. "They're having so much fun."

Beyond Jay Bergman Stadium, 3-year-old Brandon Michael Sarria was taking advantage of his time with the men's soccer players as his mother, Cindy, documented the day with her camera. Of course, if the size of the smiles were any indication, it might be debatable who was having more fun — the Knights or the children. Still, freshman Ryan McIntosh understood the underlying message.

"It's really great to give back," said the goalkeeper, whose teammates were teaching the kids the best way to celebrate after scoring. "I remember being a kid and coming to an event like this. It really helped build my confidence."

On an adjacent field, senior wide receiver Doug Gabriel was teaching budding football players how to catch one of his passes, while Assistant Head Coach Alan Gooch looked on.

"The players love to be the coaches and work the kids," said Gooch, a long-time participant in the program. "This event is a great opportunity for UCF to show the community what we're about."

—COMPILED FROM
STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Men's tennis ends season April 12

FROM PAGE 12

On the singles courts, the Knights won all but one match. Bradu was a 6-3, 6-2 winner over Demers at No. 1. Sanabria defeated Schofield, 6-2, 6-0 at No. 3. At the No. 4 spot, Sierra was victorious, holding off Jeremy Perez, 6-4, 6-0. Jaeger was also a speedy victor, beating Diaz, 7-6, 6-3 at No. 6. In a fiery No. 5 match, Gursoy recovered for a 5-7, 6-3, (11-9) win over Plotnik. Paiz was the only Owl to win in solo play.

The match was the final conference stint for UCF, which boosted its A-Sun record to a perfect 5-0. Since losing to Alabama-Birmingham on Jan. 25, the Golden have won all 17 of their matches.

On noon on April 12, the men's team will conclude its 2003 regular-season schedule with a home match against South Florida at the UCF Tennis Complex.



ADAM ROSCHE / CFF
Augusto Sanabria won in straight sets at No. 3 in UCF's win over FAU Sunday.

Crew earns third consecutive Petrakis Cup

JON KUTILEK
STAFF WRITER

The UCF women's rowing team earned nine first-place finishes out of 10 last Saturday on the way to their third consecutive Petrakis Cup.

The Knights faced stiff competition from such colleges as Stetson University, the Florida Institute of Technology, University of Florida and Jacksonville University, although the winner of the Petrakis Cup was determined by the overall points between UCF and Jacksonville.

The varsity 8+ boat, consisting of rowers Kristen Larson, Anne Cooper, Amy Price, Crystal Weiss, Tanya Kessler, Maya Fluharty, Natalie

Blades, Becky Meale and coxswain Sheila Marti, came in first out of six entries with a time of 7:15.9.

UCF took first and second in the Novice 8+ and the Varsity 4+ races, as well as finishing first place in the Novice Lightweight 4+, Novice 4+, Varsity Lightweight 4+, Junior Varsity 8+ and Novice Lightweight 8+. The Junior Varsity 4+ came up just short of first, finishing second and third.

The next event for the UCF rowers is this weekend's Florida Intercollegiate Rowing Association Championship. The Knights have taken the previous five consecutive FIRAs, and hope to make this year No. 6. The competition runs Friday through Saturday in Tampa.

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Lifestyles

Thursday April 3, 2003



8 Days a week

Highlights of the cultural calendar

LINNEA BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Thursday, April 3

"Universal Knights"

Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park will offer free admission to the first 7,000 UCF students with valid student ID, compliments of SGA. Admission for all other UCF students is \$19.95. Participating CityWalk venues will also offer free admission to all UCF students. IOA will be open from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. 21 and up at The Groove and Pat O'Brien's; 18 and up at all other CityWalk venues. Guests are not allowed; 407-823-2191.

Friday, April 4

Downtown block party

Wall Street Plaza hosts "Rock the Block," an outdoor/indoor fiesta that will include live entertainment by local band The Legendary Joint Chiefs, as well as beer and margarita drink specials. Beginning at 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, the \$5 cover charge includes admission to Slingapour's, Wall Street Cantina, The Globe, Tuk Tuk Room, One Eyed Jack's and The Loaded Hog in downtown Orlando. 21 and up; 407-420-1515.

Saturday, April 5

Belly dancing classes

The Zebra Room offers its weekly beginner belly/gypsy dance class, taught by Middle-Eastern dance instructor Brigha. Classes focus on proper technique, alignment and traditional rhythms, as well as incorporating Indian, African, Brazilian and flamenco dance styles. Classes are from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 2609 Gowen St.; \$15 per class; 407-341-0817.

Sunday, April 6

"The Used" at House of Blues

Punk rock band The Used will perform at Downtown Disney's House of Blues. The Used gained recent rock radio success with their hit "Buried myself alive," and are known for their intense stage shows. Bands Cohed and Cambria, Stun and The Start will also perform. Doors open at 6 p.m., show at 7 p.m.; tickets are \$12 in advance and \$14 the day of the show; 407-934-2583.

Monday, April 7

"Vocalization" at Will's Pub

Will's Pub hosts a night of open-mic hip-hop with a live band. The weekly event is organized/emceed by hip-hop artist Swamburger. Doors open at 9 p.m. at 1850 N. Mills Ave; \$4 cover; 18 and up; 407-898-5070.

Tuesday, April 8

Learn to cook

Chamberlin's Market and Café in Winter Park hosts a "Foods for the Casual Cook" class every Tuesday. The event teaches participants to make easy, wholesome meals that can be prepared in minutes. Class runs from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 430 N. Orlando Ave; \$6; 407-647-6661, ext. 269.

Wednesday, April 9

"Seven Mary Three" at Stripped Down

Kashmir at Slingapour's hosts an acoustic show by former local rock band Seven Mary Three for "Stripped Down," a weekly unplugged music event. The group, best known for their 1995 hit "Cumbersome," is touring to promote their latest release, "The Hi-Lo." Bloom will also perform. Doors open at 9 p.m. at 25 Wall St; \$10; 21 and up; 407-849-9904.

Thursday, April 10

"Chrome and Leather" art exhibit

Oval hosts a biker-themed art exhibit of classic motorcycle sculptures and images, focusing on Harley Davidson bikes. The exhibit is open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday and 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday at 29 S. Orange Ave.; free; 407-648-1819.

Living Life by the Stars

Astrology, Tarot card enthusiasts look to unorthodox methods for understanding

BECKA KULCHAK
STAFF WRITER

For Colleen Datz, astrology means more than checking her daily horoscope. Datz believes in numerology and reading the positions of the stars as a way to better interpret herself and the world around her.

"The best part about astrology is that it really helps you understand other people," the 22-year-old senior said. "It

is insight into the inner, more secret sides of their personality."

Astrology existed long before Christianity, dating to 5,000 B.C. as a Hindu tool to determine which karmic stage a person's soul had reached. It was first developed by ancient cultures as a way of examining the relationship between people on Earth and orbiting bodies in outer space.

Today's pop culture mostly regards astrology as mere entertainment. Some associate zodiac symbols with psyche-

delic revivals of the 1960s and '70s, or even with cheesy pick-up lines ("What's your sign?"). Followers of sun-signs and tarot card readings, however, view astrology as a helpful tool in discerning daily trials and tribulations. As recently as the presidency of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, First Lady Nancy Reagan famously consulted an astrologer to advise her husband on the timing of his actions and pronouncements.

PLEASE SEE *Tarot* ON 19



“With astrology all the planets share in shaping your personality.”

—COLLEEN DATZ
Senior



PHOTOS BY TREVOR LONGINO / CFF

8 minutes and counting down to true love

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED



LINNEA BROWN
STAFF WRITER

I need a drink...fast.

That was my first thought as I barged apprehensively into Ybor's Martini Bar last Tuesday evening for "8-Minute Dating," a speed-dating event where young, single hopefuls congregate to pair up with eight eligible "dates" for eight minutes each.

"Are you here for the event?" a muscular hottie asked, smiling disarmingly. "I'm Ezra Simmons, the event organizer."

Hey, baby. Unfortunately, Simmons then introduced me to the other event organizer — his girlfriend.

Oh, well. I just hoped my "dates" of the evening would be that hot.

I glanced quickly into the crowded bar area, where a crowd of co-ed, nametag-toting twentysomethings sipped Martinis, struggling to appear sophisticated as they sized up their prospects.

Well, the guys sized up their prospects. The cleavage-baring women, on the other hand, sized up their competition — as females usually do.

I suddenly felt like I was at a middle-school dance...or a mid-twenties cattle call.

"I can't believe I'm doing this," I confessed to Simmons, laughing, as he handed me a nametag and a dating card with my 3-digit code name: "Linnea 313."

"Now, no one is allowed to ask for your phone number, last name or for a second date," Simmons explained. "If you want to see the person again, you mark them down on your scorecard as either 'dating,' 'friendship' or 'business,' and then enter your choices on the Web site afterwards. You only receive each other's information if they also pick you for the same category."

I thanked Simmons and made a beeline for the bar, joining the expectant crowd of 39 soon-to-be

serial daters.

I ordered the strongest-looking \$8 citrus martini on the menu, hoping its alcohol content would ease my pre-date jitters. A few sips later, I was bonding with two girls standing next to me.

"Looks like there's a dress code for the guys tonight," one of them muttered, giggling, as we noted that most of the men had donned exactly the same classic 'guy' outfit — a blue long-sleeved, button-down shirt, tucked into khakis with a brown belt and brown shoes.

A bell sounded, signaling the start of the event. Fired up with the liquid encouragement of the martini, I confidently bopped over to table

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Love across the ocean

How one student deals with her fiancé serving in the war

ALEX BABCOCK
STAFF WRITER

Heather Smith met her fiancé at their church about a year ago through a mutual friend. Though they plan to wed in the summer of 2004, Smith knows she will spend this month's anniversary alone, while John Beamer serves overseas in Iraq.

Beamer, 25, and a senior at UCF, was called to active duty in early January, destined to serve in Kuwait as a corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps reserve.

Near the old Orlando Naval Training Center, Beamer's reservist base spent two weeks preparing trucks to be shipped overseas. The trucks are Beamer's passion, Smith says. He always wanted to know how Humvees, tanks and other heavy machinery worked.

Spending little time together in the days before Beamer's departure, the two said good-bye on Jan. 27.

"At the reserves center, I saw him walk away through the gate, and I drove away," the 21-year-old junior said. "It was kind of tough."

This is not the first time their relationship has been long-distance — Smith moved to Washington, D.C. for the summer of 2002 — but it definitely will be the most challenging.

"I think we pretty much fell in love over the phone and through letters," she said. "He's a good man. He's intelligent. He's respectful. He's just wonderful."

Smith has tracked Beamer's location as best she can.

From Orlando, Beamer flew to Camp Pendleton in California for a refresher course. He flew to Kuwait in early February. Assigned to Camp Coyote, 30 miles south of the Iraqi border, he was involved in more training, more practice loading the trucks and more combat preparation. He spent the cool desert nights in a tent, a thin canvas his only separation from the harsh sandstorms.

Their phone conversations were fairly frequent until the second weekend of March, when Beamer's superiors cut communication because of the impending war. "He told me not to worry if I didn't hear from him, that he was OK."

Smith continues to write letters almost every day, even though Beamer can't write back. "I ask him if he's sleeping OK, is he warm at night, how're they treating him, what the weather's like," she said. "A lot of 'I love you' [and] 'I miss you.'"

Because of a military policy that discourages mail from non-family members, Smith said she writes "Heather Beamer" on her return address, and also has sent mail through Beamer's mother, to get around the rule.

In preparation for their upcoming anniversary, Smith said, she bought a gift for the two to share — a star registered with the International Star



ALEX BABCOCK / CFF

Heather Smith holds a picture of her fiancé John Beamer, a Marine stationed in Kuwait.

Register. "He always writes at the end of his letters, 'No matter where we are, we're always looking at the same stars,'" she said. "This way, we both have something over the distance."

John is Charlene Beamer's only child. Since Beamer left for Kuwait, Smith has paid weekly visits to his mother. Smith said those visits have brought the two closer and given Smith more insight into John's younger years.

"At the reserves center, I saw him walk away through the gate, and I drove away. It was kind of tough."

—HEATHER SMITH
Junior

"I get to hear all of his childhood stories, and she broke out all of the baby-picture boxes ... a lot of stuff I probably wouldn't be allowed to see if he were here," Smith said.

Charlene Beamer is glad the visits have allowed her to get to know Smith better. She delights in Smith's involvement as president of the campus organization ROCK, or Rebuilding on a Conservative Cornerstone, through which Smith has led several pro-war, pro-America rallies.

"It's wonderful that she's involved in that, that she's willing to stand up for what she believes in," Charlene Beamer said.

At a recent gathering of

families hosted by the Marine reserve center, one soldier's mother told Smith of a letter she'd received from her son. "He said, 'Does anyone over there support us? All I see is anti-war,'" Smith said. "That's the saddest thing I've ever heard."

Smith says the argument used by those who say they support the troops, but not the war, is senseless. "That's like saying I'm for the carpenter, but not for making the house," she said. "There's just not an occupation out there where you don't support what the whole point of their job is."

The reserve center has suggested that families can help their loved ones by making care packages. Smith says she's currently working with other families to get desert scarves to the troops.

Writing letters, sending gifts and organizing rallies has kept Smith active and her anxiety to a minimum, but she says the news coverage still makes her nervous. She routinely sees coverage of Marines shot and killed. "You just pray that it's not him," she said.

Beamer's deployment order ends a year from his departure, which means he could be back in January. Smith says orders from the president have extended that commitment, though, and soldiers may be kept for up to two years.

"He said he had a feeling that they'd be able to come home before Christmas," Smith said. "He said he'd let me know as soon as he found out."

Until then, Smith lives with photographs, memories and a set of dog tags the two share. She gave him a tag with her name on it made before he left, and she wears one of his while they are apart.

She'll keep writing him letters, she said, and watching their star at night.

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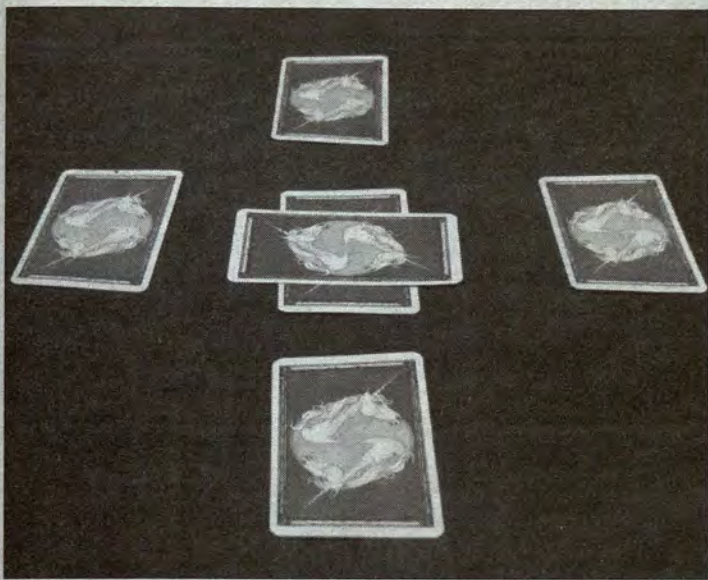
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TREVOR LONGINO / CFF
The spread, or placement of cards, can change the interpretation of their meaning.

Tarot cards used for centuries to explain present, future events

FROM PAGE 16

"I've been into astrology since I was in high school. My friend Angie and I used to have all the books, and we spent most of our time in class casting each other's charts," Datz said.

Casting a chart involves determining the positions of the planets as they relate to the time, date and location of a person's birth. Those positions translate into a person's astrological signs.

Datz says the positions of the planets in your chart play a huge role in your identity because certain planets have particular influences attributed to them.

"I'm an Aquarius but I have a Capricorn moon, which means that I'm really free-thinking and open but at the same time I can be serious-minded," she said.

A third factor, known as the "ascendant" sign, represents the sign of the zodiac that was rising in the Eastern sky at the time of a person's birth.

"Your sun sign is how other people see you and your moon sign is how you see yourself, but your ascendant is how you really are," Datz said. "With astrology, all the planets share in shaping your personality."

In addition to planetary birth charts, those interested in astrology often perform tarot card readings.

After much convincing by her friend, freshman Kate Wilhoit, 18, had her tarot fortune read to her.

"I didn't know what to think, but after much persuasion on her part, I was finally convinced to let her do it," she said. "It was so cool."

Tarot cards are an early form of today's playing cards, and emerged in Italy and France in the 14th century. Originally

used for a fortune-telling card game called tarocchi, the cards today are associated with describing the present and future events in a person's life.

"Perhaps there is something going on in your life that you are not aware of," Wilhoit said. "Tarot can help you discover your hidden emotions and give you new ways of looking at the world."

Each card in the deck of 78 depicts a story or idea that is used for interpretation in imaginative ways. The cards can be viewed upside down or right side up for either positive or negative readings in a variety of different patterns, known as spreads.

When reading the cards, it is important to know their placement for interpretation purposes, Wilhoit said.

Oftentimes, becoming involved with astrology and tarot readings means overcoming personal stereotypes or the judgments of others.

Wilhoit remembers her first tarot experience.

"It wasn't at all like I expected, but I think it was because it was my friend who did it. I associate psychics and fortune tellers with thick-accented gypsies in the movies, and my friend is just a normal girl — I didn't even know she was into that kind of stuff."

Even though she realizes few people take astrology seriously, Datz said that it doesn't bother her. Usually when given the opportunity to see their birth charts, most people remark positively about the astonishing accuracy of astrology, she said.

Said Datz: "If you don't believe in astrology that's fine but you don't have to knock it. I don't believe in God but I don't spend my time making fun of Christians."

I spent years growing up in church, but that was less of what I wanted and more of a glorified production event.

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LINNEA BROWN / CFF

'8-Minute Dating' organizer Ezra Simmons fills in for a male 'date' who didn't make it.

8 minutes can seem like eternity with some dates

FROM PAGE 16

eight (labeled with a place card) to meet my first date, "Sean 914."

Sean was cool. A 25-year-old lawyer, he was tall and cute, in an intellectual, basketball player sort of way. He talked fast, smiled a lot and had great teeth. Definitely a good catch. But ... no sparks. When the bell chimed at the end of eight minutes, we smiled, shook hands and walked off to meet our next matches.

I headed over to table 12, where 24-year-old "Luis 606" was waiting on a couch seat. Dark-haired, laid-back and Colombian, I immediately liked the relaxed style, untucked shirt and goatee. However, his interests were another story.

"I'm into guns," Luis declared airily. "I've been taking a few semesters off from Valencia."

Whoa. Next.

"Brian 506" and "Chad 813" were both wearing the typical 'guy' uniform, had typical jobs, were typically sweet — and completely, typically unmemorable.

I was starting to realize just how long eight minutes could be.

When we had finished the first four dates, Simmons announced a 20-minute break. I grabbed my drink and retreated to the ladies' room, where girls were already comparing stories about their retrospective dates.

Gratefully, I heard one girl saying that she had hit it off with both Brian and Chad, which made me feel a little better about not liking either of them.

After the break, I met with "Geno 258," a 29-year-old pharmaceutical sales representative from Deland.

Geno was a big flirt who liked to ask questions.

"So, what do you like to do when you come home from a long day at work to relax?" he asked, looking deeply into my eyes. "What was your first impression of me?"

I immediately understood why he was a salesman. For some reason, I also couldn't seem to stop yawning.

"Sorry," I apologized, as my jaws opened, lion-style, for the fourth time in eight minutes.

My next date, with "Mark 719," was probably the weirdest eight minutes of my life. Soft-spoken and shy, Mark had glasses and suspiciously thick hair. He was the only person I met all night who admitted to previously participating in speed dating.

However, Mark seemed a little older than the pre-set event age range of 22 to 28.

"Um, how old are you?" I asked.

"Late thirties," he replied sheepishly, offering no explanation.

Right ... perhaps he didn't get the memo about the age specifics.

My seventh and eighth dates were actually both really fun, interesting guys; people that I'd love to hang out with sometime as friends, although I still didn't really feel any fireworks.

I talked about traveling with Chris, a 28-year-old archeologist who told me all about contracting typhoid fever in Peru ... and I talked about music with Dave, a 25-year-old who shared my passion for the man himself, Prince.

It's amazing how much you can talk about in eight minutes.

As a grand finale, Simmons also announced a surprise 'bonus date,' which I shared with Kevin, a young, hot Winter Springs high school teacher.

Much like Chris and Dave, Kevin was great — warm, funny, good-looking and easy to talk to. But as far as touching my animalistic, "date me, date me," side...none of the '8-Minute Dating' guys had really done it.

Or so I thought. As I stood around afterward chatting with Simmons, a gorgeous guy approached us, wearing an event nametag.

I suddenly envied the nine girls who'd gotten eight minutes with this guy.

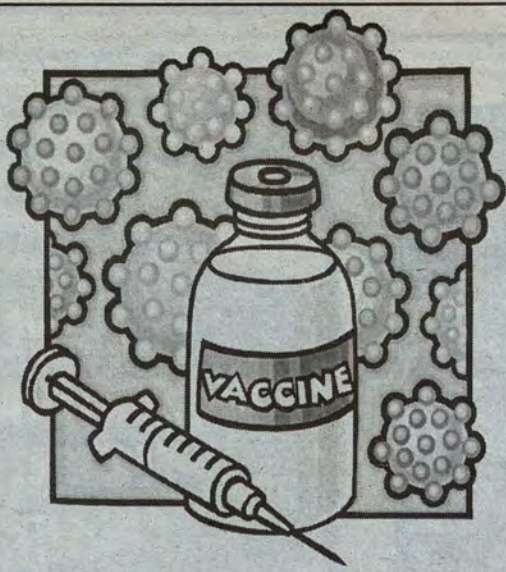
He introduced himself as Ryan, a web designer and UCF graduate. We talked easily for a few minutes and he gave me his card. I haven't contacted him yet, but who knows — maybe I'll have a '8-Minute Dating' success story after all. Sort of.

Regardless of the results, however, '8-Minute Dating' truly was an enjoyable event. It was well organized and creative, and most of the participants seemed like fun-loving, decent, successful people.

In fact, I would highly recommend it to anyone single and adventurous enough to try it.

As for me, I think maybe I'll try the '3-Minute dating' scene sometime. Or maybe '6-Minute dating' or '7-Minute dating' (actual local speed-dating events) ... or maybe just the good ol' Orlando bar scene.

In the meantime ... I'm calling Ryan.



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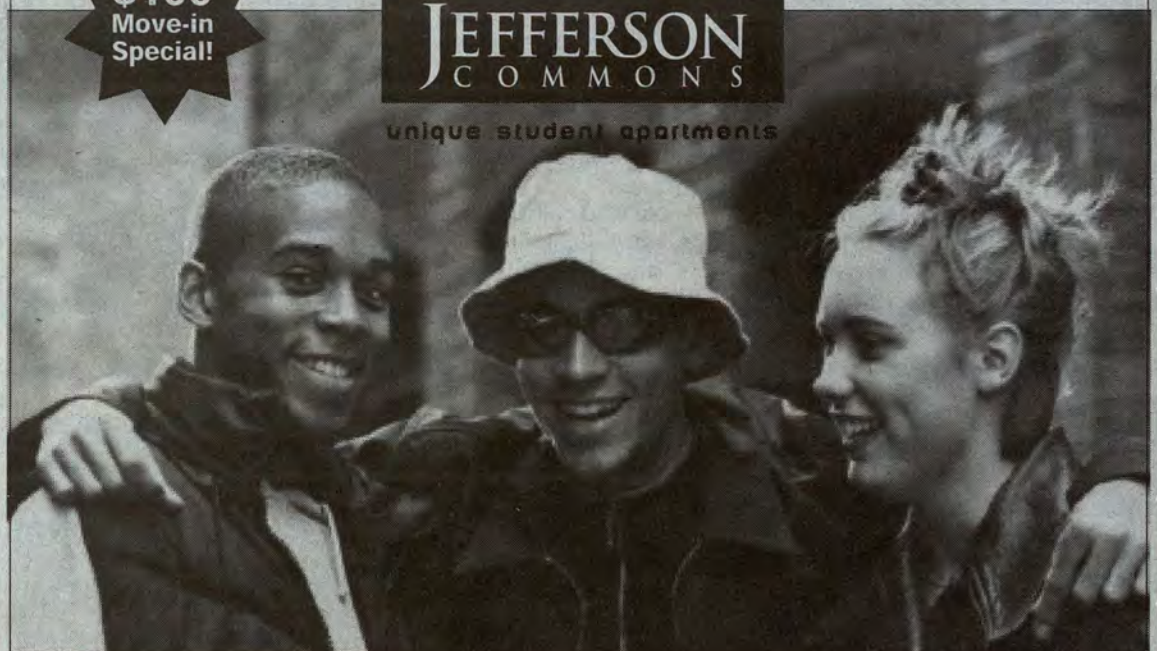
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LUCIAN PERKINS / WASHINGTON POST

The Marine convoy carrying a U.S. humanitarian aid team to and from the city of Umm Qasr throw out candy and MREs to Iraqi children as they travel to the port to assess whether it is capable of receiving aid.

Military rations becoming tastier

GORDON DILLOW
ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER (KRT)

Veterans who remember the canned C-rations of earlier wars may not believe it. But the U.S. military has finally come up with standard-issue field rations that actually taste pretty good — assuming you don't mind eating your meals out of brown plastic bags.

"MREs? They're OK, I guess," says Lance Cpl. Charlie Valle, 19, with the 1st Marine Division at Camp Matilda, Kuwait. "But you get tired of them pretty fast."

MRE is short for "Meals Ready-to-Eat," and most of the Marines in the Kuwaiti desert eat them at least once a day while they're in base camp. And while combat Marines are on the move, MREs are their breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The meals come in 24 different menus, ranging from "Thai Chicken" to "Meatloaf With Gravy" to "Vegetarian Bean & Rice Burrito" to "Beefsteak, Grilled, Chunked and Formed."

The menu slowly changes over time, with some of the less popular items being phased out. For example, the ham and egg omelet entree, known to Marines as "Dead Man in a Bag" because of an unpleasant aroma and greenish hue to the eggs, is no more. The so-called "Four Fingers of Death" — four hot-dogs in a bag with beans — is also on its way out.

Each entree comes with a side dish — rice pilaf, potato sticks, Mexican rice, etc. Snacks such as M&Ms, and cheese or peanut butter that can be spread on a vegetable cracker for fiber are also included. Lack of fiber apparently was a problem with earlier versions of MREs, earning them the nickname "Meals Refusing to Exit." (Poor quality in the earlier versions of MREs also resulted in them being dubbed "Meals Refused by Ethiopians" and other, even less tasteful names.)

Each MRE also comes with an accessory packet: plastic spoon, moist towelette, packets of salt, sugar, cocoa or Tasters Choice instant coffee, powdered

creamer, a small packet of toilet paper, Chicklets gum and matches. Unlike in the old days, the new health-conscious military no longer includes mini-packs of cigarettes with field rations.

Heating the MRE entrees and side dishes is simple, since each MRE comes with a disposable "Flameless Ration Heater." Put the entree bag in the heater bag, add a little water and a chemical reaction produces heat to warm the food. Virtually every Marine agrees that without heating, the MREs are awful — and even when heated, the popularity of any given MRE varies from Marine to Marine.

"I like the chicken and salsa," says Lance Cpl. Nena Shaw, 22, with the 1st Marine Division at Camp Matilda. "It's the one that tastes most like real food."

"A lot of people like the beef patty," says Lance Cpl. Ben Wilder, 23, of Murietta, with the 1st Battalion of the 5th Marine Regiment at Camp Grizzly. "The least preferred is the pork chow mein. I got that three days in a row once."

Music with a message



LINNEA BROWN / CFF

Ani DiFranco visited Orlando's Bob Carr Performing Arts Centre Sunday. Along with playing new songs and old favorites, DiFranco also spoke out against the war in Iraq, and showed her dislike for President George W. Bush.

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No exp. necessary but always a plus. Bilingual a plus. Must be able to type @ ample speed. Located near Orlando Int Airport. Flexible Schedule + great pay. AM/PM positions available. Call 407-243-6150 x 2118.

Sitter near UCF wanted for 2 children. Prefer Early Childhood Education major or lots of exp. with young children. Avail. for full days T/Th. Ref. req. 407-977-4882.

Computer Engineering/Science Students Needed.
Knowledge of MFC and/or Visual Basic. Call Zac @ 407-696-6958

UCF Professor needs kind, part time female to feed and care for wheelchair wife, dishes, laundry, beds, and feed dogs. Rouse Rd near UCF. 407-673-9203

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Varsity Marketing Group seeks current college students to work as P/T reps to sell promotional items on/around the campus. Post-graduate opportunities avail. Motivated Reps can earn a commission of \$200-\$800 wkly. Send your resume to Tikisha@varsitymarketing.com.

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make \$6-\$14/hr easy. Relaxed environment. Exp. preferred. Leave message before 5 P.M. otherwise call 407-677-4560 after 5 PM.

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(We will be moving to a new facility next to UCF this summer)

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Enterprise Rent-A-Car Management Open House. Entry-Level Management Trainee Program. Filling positions in the Orlando, Daytona, Melbourne, Leesburg & Eustis area. The Open House is Sat. April 5, 10am-4pm @ Enterprise Rent-A-Car (Administration Office) 130 University Park Dr., Ste. 235 Winter Park, FL 32792 Directions 407-670-1733 Fax/Email resume to 801-607-7222 or orl@selfopportunity.com Questions 800-594-7036 x 110 Minimum requ: 1 Year Customer Service, 6 Months Sales, 4 Year Degree

Nanny Needed (Exp only) - Live-in. Must have car. Start in August. Must be avail after 1pm each day Longwood Area. \$1600/mo. School Age Kids. Call 407-925-5218.

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*SEVEN WEEKS
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*ROOM AND BOARD INCLUDED
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GET PAID TO PLAY!!
The Florida Elks Youth Camp (FEYC) needs male and female Summer Camp Counselors ages 18 and up. FEYC is an overnight camp located off of highway 450 in Umatilla, Florida. The camp runs from June 9-July 26. Please contact Kry's Ragland at 1-800-523-1673 ext 251 or 352-669-9443 ext 251.

Vegetarians Needed
Local Research Firm is looking to interview you. It's fun, and you'll be paid for your time and insights. Call 407-774-6165 for details.

ENTERPRISE
Seeking success oriented individuals to fill Entry-Level Sales/Marketing/Management positions in the Central Florida area. 4 year College degree with a good driving record is req. Sales and customer service exp. a plus. Fax resume to: 407-670-1744 EOE

Work from home selling quality vacation pkgs. All you need is high speed internet access, live within local calling distance from UCF and PC Windows. Very comp. commissions and bonuses + paid training. Fax resume to 407-669-1768 or e-mail ett-etourandtravel.com or call 407-658-8285 x 15.

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Lochrane Engineering, Inc. has an opportunity for a part time CADD technician to assist our Orlando Survey Division. Some experience with Micro Station and/or Auto Cadd is necessary. Flexible hours from Monday through Friday are possible. Position may expand to a full time position during the summer. Inquire at www.lochrane.com or fax resume to Jessica Porter at 407-896-9167 or email to jessica.porter@lochrane.com.

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3 yr. old and 8 mo. old in Altamonte Springs area. Laundry and light housekeeping. Early childhood edu. major preferred. Exp. necessary. References req. Contact @ 407-522-9803.

Assistant Needed: Female in Wheel Chair needs assistance for daily living activities. Various Hours & Good Pay. Must be very dependable, some light lifting required. Call Karyn @ 407-835-8190.

Part Time Leasing Position Available in Sanford Apartment Community. Weekends Only. Please Call 407-322-5955

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Intelligent Vibrant P/T Babysitter needed. With exp. and ref. if possible. 10 min from UCF. Two children (4 and 1 year old). Flexible hours. Weekdays and possible weekends. Willing to pay up to \$8/hr. 407-595-7006.

Swim Instructors wanted to teach summer swim classes F/T, P/T \$10.50-\$12.50/hr + bonuses. Come work for Sharks & Minnows and change the quality of a child's life. Call 407-699-1992 www.sharksandminnows.net

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Full time or Part time. Commission and bonuses. Serious people only call 888-701-9209.

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No Exp. Nec. Seeking 5-10 students for 11pm to 6am setup on April 15. Also seeking exp. camera, audio, lighting, announcing, directing, editing and stage assistants for audio/visual prod., April 16-17. Please Visit: www.thinkcbybis.com/april2003 for details or call Jeff @ 407-737-6690.

Photographer Assistants Needed
Bob Knight Photo is currently hiring P/T Photographer assistants for local graduations. \$35 per event. Must own a business suit, and have a conservative appearance. Mandatory training on April 24th @ 5:30pm. All applicants must be available to work P/T April - June. Check out our web site www.bobknightphoto.com Qualified applicants call Rick @ 407-328-9574

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2 door Coupe. Manual, cd player, rear spoiler, P/W, P/S, cruise control, good condition! \$5000. Call Scott @ 321-271-1012.

1993 Mercury Tracer - 4 Doors Make Me an Offer! Call 407-695-3308

300 FOR RENT

Sublease room May-July 31st. \$375/mnth. All util. + phone incl. Furn. and free shuttle to UCF. M or F. Call Michelle @ 407-926-5908.

300 FOR RENT

****GREAT SUBLEASE @ BOARDWALK****
Avail. May 1-July 31! .8 of a mile from UCF. FREE shuttle avail. Large private Bd & Bth. Fully furn. W/D incl. Rent = \$475/mnth obo. Incl. util., ethernet, and cable tv with HBO. Call Molly @ 407-497-0000 or e-mail MHB1006@hotmail.com.

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UCF area. Room for rent in 4bd/4bth. All inclusive w/ ethernet, cable, local phone, util., and all appliances incl. W/D. Free shuttle to UCF. \$465/mnth. April 1st-July 31st. Call Denise @ 407-362-4423.

2bed/2bath condo. 1/2 mile from UCF in Hunter's Reserve. Water & Appliances incl. Can be furnished. \$800/mnth. Avail immed. Call 407-222-3488.

Brand new 4bed/2bath home in Waterford Lakes. Quiet neigh. All appl. incl. except W/D. \$450/mnth. per person. Call RE/MAX at 407-657-8645.

Spacious 2bd/1bth unfurn CONDO FOR RENT in gated community. No Pets. Pool, laundry room access. Only 15 mins from campus. (two people pref) \$900/mnth for entire condo, negotiable. Call 407-810-0052

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Room avail ASAP in 3/2 Home! Less than 15 mins from UCF. Only \$400 + 1/3 util. Incl. cable, w/d, high speed internet. Must be non-smoker. Call 407-247-6152

Sublease Needed
Apartment available for sublease May-July 31st. \$460/mo all util. included. Call Hedayah @ 407-313-2420. Cell: 407-234-7643

M/F to sublease furn. bdrm in 4/2 @ Pegasus Pointe from 5/1-7/31. \$475/mnth. All util. incl., W/D, alarm, Ethernet + free UCF shuttle. Call Erin @ 407-926-2825.

Sublease in Northgate Lakes Apt. avail. asap. 4 bed/2 bath. All util. incl. \$400/mnth. Call Sarah at 850-543-3352 or e-mail Skloyd@aol.com.

*****Summer Sublease*****
F needed for May 1st-July 31st for The Village at Science Drive. UCF area. Gated complex. All amen. incl. \$480/mo. Robyn 407-313-9550.

Room avail. for Female in Northgate Lakes, across from UCF. Fully furn. 4bd/4bth, all util. incl. \$399/mo. 5/1/03 to 8/4/03 w/ option of renting for next year. Call Kristina @ 941-685-3457.

TWO ROOMS AVAIL. FOR SUBLEASE
4bd/4bth @ Pegasus Landing. Free UCF shuttle. Fully furnished. All util. incl. HUGE bed/bath with W/D. Cable + HBO. 3 pools and more. \$480 each room. Call Lauren @ 407-362-4922 and 321-277-7890.

Summer sublease @ College Station. May 1st-July 31st. \$460/mnth obo. Furnished, private bed and bath, free shuttle to UCF, W/D. Rent incl. ethernet, cable w/ HBO, phone service, and all util. Call Michelle @ 407-313-2427.

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3 M/F wanted for HUGE 6BR/4Bth house in Waterford Lks East, fully furnished w/ empty rooms, hi-speed internet, walk-in closets, gated comm., on a lake, rent equal to an apt., Best bank for Buck at UCF!! call Tony @ 407-701-8669

350 ROOMMATES

M/F wanted for furnished BDRM in new 3 bdrm home on lake, gated comm, 6 mins from UCF, \$475/mo inclu util, n/s, no pets, sec sys, pool & tennis. Call 407-482-3202 or 239-461-5101 or 239-633-9400.

SWF NS Needed for fully furnished 3/2 condo near UCF. Comm Pool, W/D Only \$380/mo + 1/2 util and deposit. For more info call: Diana 407-657-9217

F Roommate wanted to sublease a bedroom in 2Bd/2Bth @ Pegasus Landings. Rent from June-July. Fully Furnished. W/D and all util. incl. Call Nelinda @ 407.362.2212

1bd/1 private bath avail. in HOUSE
located on University and Goldenrod. \$450/mnth which includes utilities! \$100 deposit. Split plan, quiet house, large patio, 2 car gar., even have your own living room! Call Lynn @ 407-687-9562.

2 ROOMMATES WANTED! M/F, NON-SMOKER. 3BD/2BTH HOUSE. 10 MIN. FROM UCF. FURN. ROOMS OPTIONAL. EVERYTHING INCL. IN RENT. \$450/MNTH. STEFF @ 407-971-9245.

Roommates wanted to rent in 4bd/2ba, pool, cable modem, and cable t.v. Located 3 mi. from UCF through back roads. \$425 INCLUDES ALL!!! Contact Ken @ 407-658-7904

2 roommates needed. \$475/MONTH incl. rent, power, water, cable, phone, high speed internet, lawn service. Both rooms avail. in May. 4/2 house in Autumn Glenn, near Lake Howell HS, 15 min. from UCF
3 bdrms get rented out. House furnished, 2 empty bdrms not. Flexible indiv. leases. Females only. NO PETS. Plz call Jennifer- at 407-677-4782 or 407-923-1484.

Male/female roommate wanted for furnished and remodeled 2bd/1ba. \$350/month + util. No lease. Contact Dennis @ 407-592-1201

Grad student looking for someone to move into 2/2 close to UCF. Fenced in yard, W/D, cable tv, DSL, appl. incl., must like dogs, rent is \$450 + 1/2 util. Call Gillian @ 407-482-4098 or e-mail geckhardt@hotmail.com

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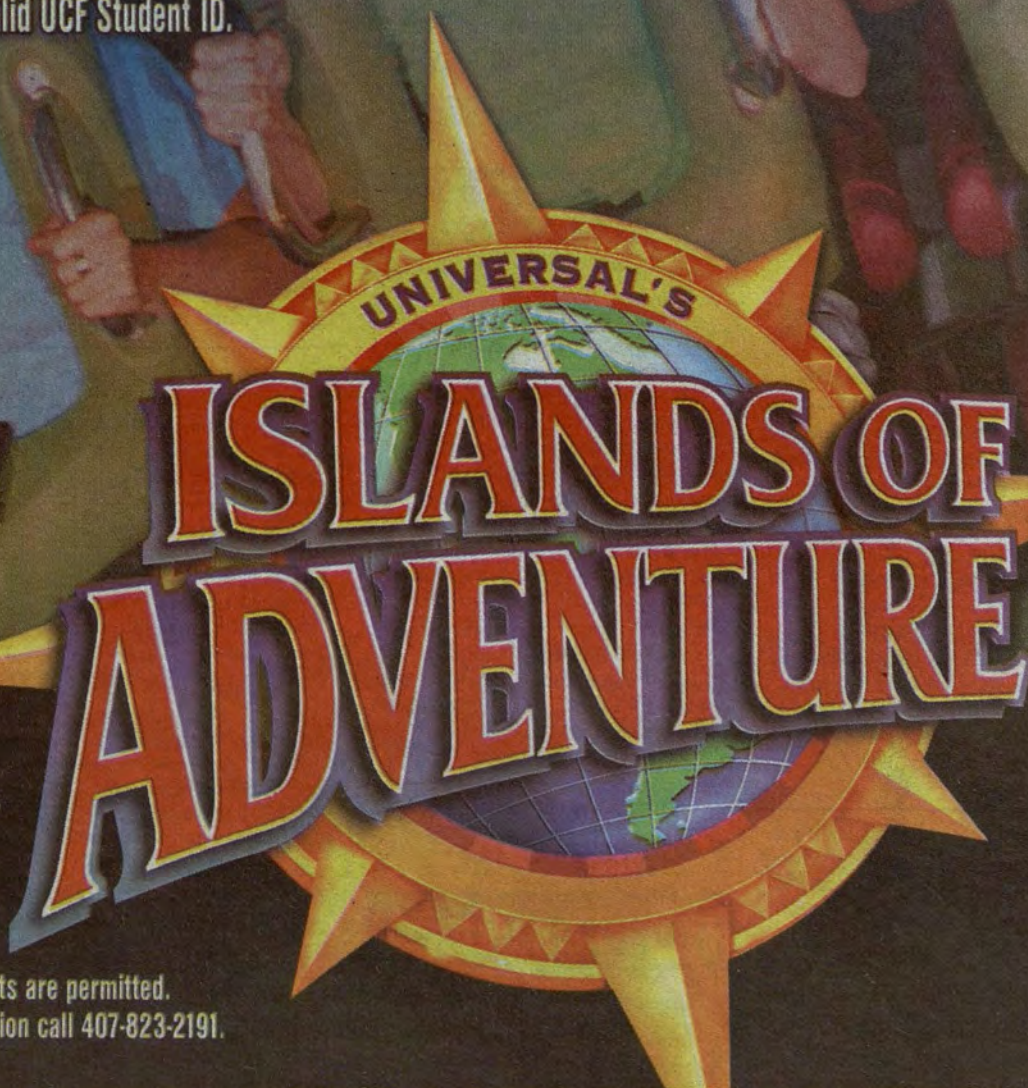
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