SGA's new cabinet coming together

By LINDSAY J. MALANGA
News Editor

With an eventful fall on the way, Student Government has been spending the summer building its cabinet and preparing for another memorable year.

As President Keith McDonald and Vice President Karen Montague head the crew into the 97'-98' school year, positions are still waiting to be filled to complete the staff.

Spirit Coordinator Chris Gonzalez plans to "do all we can to boost student morale, spirit days, and other activities that are going on to show how much fun it is to be a Knight." Gonzalez said being a spirited person with a lot of energy and leadership positions helped him earn the spirit coordinator position. "I think Student Government persuades student enthusiasm by leading by example. All Student Government members love UCF and show it on a daily basis," he said.

Gonzalez is anticipating many new activities to elevate student enthusiasm. "A few of the things we have planned for the fall are monthly spirit days, a UCF billboard to be put up, bus rides to all home football games, a trip to Nebraska, making homecoming bigger and better than ever, and a lot of other fun stuff to make the students happy," he said.

Some of Student Government's goals include spreading enthusiasm and coordinating student events, but another aspect is not all fun and games.

Chad Hastings understands what it is like to be on the practical side of UCF's SGA, as he now holds the Comptroller position. Hastings advises the President on finance matters, keeps track of account balances and

See CABINET, PAGE 3

Ski rope invention pulls students toward success

By SEAN CLAEYS
Staff Writer

UCF student Markham Gross, 23, and recent graduate Michael Lintzner, 22, met at college three years ago and now own a lucrative business. Gross, from Huntsville, Ala., and Lintzner, from Hartford, Conn., came to UCF, "To ski in a warmer climate and get a great education," said Lintzner.

"Training for barefoot skiing with Rick Powell [previous barefooting world champion] was one main purpose for coming to UCF. But after blowing out both knees, I decided to join SAE to meet other people until I recuperated," Gross said.

Months after their initial meeting through their fraternity, Gross and Lintzner became skiing partners. Gross joined the ski team as a trick skier. "That was just for fun," Gross said. "Barefooting was still my main priority."

Since then, the two have built a strong friendship as well as an exceptional business, Hardline.

Water skiers give the Hardline the thumbs up.

Lintzner explained Hardline was started as just another random idea out in the boat while taking the everyday ski set. Gross said he felt all the ropes he had skied with were very elastic. This stretchability resulted in slack and a feeling of no control while he practiced the precise maneuvers involved in barefooting.

The next day, Gross and Lintzner stepped into something new, the UCF library, and researched on what fiber would create the perfect rope. A few weeks later, their first ski rope was developed, made of 100 percent spectra.

"Spectra has no stretch so you have more control, and the individual fibers have a considerably large tensile strength compared to all other rope fibers. This allows for a much smaller diameter, yet stronger

See STUDENTS, PAGE 3

New course to examine 'isms'

By OLIVIA K. CURNOW
Staff Writer

The Institute for Public Media Arts has chosen UCF as one of seven colleges in the United States to implement a new class in their curriculums.

"Exploring ISMS: Ethnicity, Gender and Visual Communication" (SYP 4932) will begin this fall and continue through next spring, giving students eight credit hours for the year.

"It's so intense that we might give them an incomplete at the end of the fall so they come back in the spring," said Dr. Maria Cristina Santana, an associate professor in the School of Communication. She will be co-teaching the class with Dr. Lin Huff-Corzine of the sociology department.

The students will begin the semester by shooting color photography and making a photo diary of themselves. The spring project will involve shooting a video of themselves and their own "ism," whether it be racism, sexism, ageism, classism, feminism or individualism.

"This is the way they can explore their own ism," Santana said. "I'd like to create more exposure to these isms in general."

This is one of the Institute's many projects. It is being sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Time-Warner, Levi-Strauss, Lotus, Philip/Morris, and the Johnson Foundation.

"I would definitely like to create in the future a class like this at UCF without the sponsorship," Santana said.

See UCF, PAGE 3

Ebonic flu
UCF gives the controversial topic a spin.

No 'Contact'
New release would be better suited in space.

Muscling up
Deaubrey Devine heads a new line-backing corps into battle for UCF this season.

Postseason hope
Women's soccer team now has the opportunity to play in NCAAs.

Page 5
Page 8
Page 12
UCFPD discovers illegal aliens

By DAN TUCKER
Staff Writer

On June 22, according to UCFPD reports, a white Ford pick-up was pulled over after failing to stop at a stop sign. Malagón Rigoberta, the truck’s driver, was arrested on a Seminole County warrant. The other two occupants of the vehicle, Alfredo Garcia and Louis Hernandez, were detained for being illegal aliens from Mexico and turned over to the Border Patrol.

In other campus crime news reported by the UCFPD:

- An estimated $500 worth of damage was done to Jennifer Walkley’s 1997 Saturn while parked in the back lot of the Pi Beta Phi house. Walkley parked her vehicle on June 23 around 10 p.m. When she returned to her car the next morning, she noticed several dents, scratches and shattered glass on the hood of her car.

- Michael Brunaker reported the Alpha Tau Omega volleyball net was stolen on June 24. The net was last seen on June 23 at the court.

- Elena Feliciano’s bike was stolen from the bike rack at the Administration Building on June 24. Feliciano put her bike in the rack at 11:45 a.m. and returned 30 minutes later to find it missing.

- On June 25, Dr. John Leeson notified police that six homework assignments were stolen from under his office desk between June 11-13. Dr. Leeson told police he may know of a few suspects since several of the papers were identical.

THE Crossword

ACROSS
1 US president 9 Norweigian saint
2 Norwich 10 Sleek order 14 Cobbler’s
3 Child of three 12 Child and fever 15 Stein
4 Chart of Alan 13 Old 16 Cheer for Juan
5 Anti quadratic 14 Coat 17 Queen
6 Long time 15 Kind of cover 18 Door
7 Theater award 16 Chords 19 Coat of arms
8 Gloria 17 Thor 20 Coat of arms
9 Elsa 18 Coat of arms 21 Coat of arms


down
10 1997 art school 22 Long time
23 Long time 24 Long time
25 Long time 26 Long time
27 Long time 28 Long time 29 Long time
30 Long time 31 Long time 32 Long time
33 Long time 34 Long time 35 Long time
36 Long time 37 Long time 38 Long time
39 Long time 40 Long time

ANSWERS

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

Life as a team sport: an interview edge extra

COLLEGE PRESS SERVICE

From intramural athletics and extracurricular activities to group or case study classes and in-class team projects, it seems everywhere you turn you’re asked to interact with other students. The truth is, more than ever, life is a team sport. Whether it be in college or the world of work, it is the way of the 90’s and will most certainly be the way of the 21st century. Given this, recruiters today are looking for candidates with group skills for their organizations. It’s one of the “winning characteristics” upon which interviewers make hiring decisions, so you’ll want to be able to prove to them that you are strong in this area.

To be extra-sprightly is an excellent way to develop and sharpen your group skills. They almost always involve teams of students working together over a number of months to complete large, complex projects. The key here is that if you’re going to develop and be able to demonstrate that you have group skills, you’ll need to go a step beyond just joining the organization. You’re going to actually get involved after you do.

Fortunately, if you pick an activity that you are genuinely interested in, you’ll enjoy the experience rather than considering it work. You’ll learn from the interaction with the more experienced members who will be managing the projects. And, if you do a good job, you’ll earn the respect of the others in the group, giving yourself the opportunity to take a leadership role in the organization. So, get involved and get a head start toward getting the job you want.

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Students find success making ski ropes

and lighter rope that doesn’t snap. It responds like no other out on the market,” Lintzner said. “We originally made one [rope] for ourselves, but when we used it to our tournaments, all those skiers thought it was awesome and wanted to buy it,” Gross said. “Realizing that we needed to do something besides both of us majoring in psychology, Mike and I started Hardline.”

After talking with several business professors at UCF, Gross and Lintzner obtained a business license and officially started Hardline out of their house last February. Since then, they have sold hundreds of ropes, to not only barefooters but wake boarders and slalom skiers as well.

Hardline has persuaded more than 23 professional skiers to switch to their product. Top names such as Shannon Best, Thomas Horrell, Cobe Mikacich, Randy Harris, and UCF students Todd Brendel and K.C. Martin, all use the Hardline “shoe lace” ski rope.

“It is definitely the best rope I have used. It allows me to load the line so I can shoot across the wake to reach my next buoy,” said Brian McDonald, tournament slalom skier and owner of Blue Dot, a new wake boarding clothes line.

It’s like a real cable so it doesn’t stretch when I’m trying serious tricks,” knee boarder and barefooter Bill Collins said.

Hardline is an official sponsor of Boardstock ’97, a large two week wake boarding competition. Also, it was used in the ’97 Xtreme-Games for barefoot jumping, partly due to other ski ropes breaking under the high resistance landings, Gross said.

Gross and Lintzner said they plan to expand Hardline in other areas of the water-ski industry. The two innovative ski pioneers plan to design and manufacture ski handles for wake boarding, barefoot trick skiing, and barefoot jumping.

“Plus,” Gross said, “we have in-the-closet projects that we shall not divulge at the time.”

“We were never looking for a big money maker, just something to pay the bills,” Lintzner said with a smile. “I have caught a glimpse of the real world, and I’ll do whatever it takes to avoid living with that stress. My goal is to keep Hardline producing the best quality ski merchandise, and to retire as soon as possible.”

They appear to be off to a good start for a successful future, considering they already have their product in many ski stores in the United States, and are expanding to Australia. In addition, Hardline is close to merchandising their rope in Overton’s ski catalogue, which reaches more than 800,000 potential buyers.

Gross and Lintzner agreed, without the knowledge acquired from schooling at UCF and the drive toward excellence so many of their teachers instilled in them, they would never be able to live the life they do.

“We have it so hard now,” Gross said jokingly. “We wake up at 7:30 and barefoot in the glassy water. Then we go to the gym to work out. A little before noon, we get back and return business calls, and then make some ropes outside. After the hectic part of the day is over, Mike swings on the hammock and finish making our daily quota of ropes.

“We’re off to the best day possible. If we can’t fall asleep in the hammock and finish making our daily quota of ropes, they know we have to curb wasteful spending,” he said.

Knowing there are dedicated members holding cabinet offices should ease student apprehension toward Student Government preload into a good start for a successful future, considering they already have their product in many ski stores in the United States, and are expanding to Australia. In addition, Hardline is close to merchandising their rope in Overton’s ski catalogue, which reaches more than 800,000 potential buyers.

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Currently, the positions still waiting to be filled are: Internal Auditor, Clubs and Organizations Advocate, Attorney General, Judicial Advisor, and Multicultural and Nontraditional Advocate. Applications are available at the Student Government office on the second floor of the Student Union.
Q: Of all the classes you have taken at UCF so far, which has been your favorite? 

1.) Of all the classes you have taken at UCF so far, which has been your favorite? 

2.) Why is this one your favorite class?

BY PETER KUNDIS

1.) Human Nutrition.

2.) Aside from just being a very interesting subject for me, Stephanie Norris was both quite approachable and genuinely concerned about her students.

—Stephanie Smith, Senior, Organizational Communication, West Palm Beach.

1.) Digital Circuits.

2.) I have always enjoyed hands-on electrical circuits, and this particular class provided me with the best training. My professor was quite through, fair, and also very professional in every aspect, which enabled me to enjoy this course even more.


1.) Of all the classes you have taken at UCF so far, which has been your favorite?

2.) Why is this one your favorite class?

1.) Humanities I.

2.) It was very interesting for me to learn how the Arts and Literature helped to influence the social patterns of cultures, from the different periods of history.

—Joe Liguori, Sophomore, Business, Orlando.

1.) I would have to say American History 2020.

2.) Although it was a three-hour course, Professor Johnson really did make it very interesting. He helped me to look at history from a very different perspective, and the class was very entertaining too!

—Camil Reyes, Sophomore, Communicative Disorders, St. Petersburg.

1.) Interpersonal Communication, with Mrs. Johnson.

2.) Mrs. Johnson was an incredible professor. The class was based on the interaction and communication between the students. The class gave us the opportunity to develop some lasting relationships with our fellow students, along with learning about the fundamentals of interpersonal communication.

—Amy Atchison, Senior, Liberal Studies, Boyton Beach.

1.) Most of the classes have been very informative for me. The most interesting class was Women and Politics.

2.) Because it is interesting to learn that, although women comprise over 50% of the US population, there are less than 5% in the legislature. This great imbalance of representation in government means women's issues and problems don't receive the amount of attention that they deserve. I was very impressed with both the intellect of Dr. T.S. Fine and her insights.

—Wajiha R. Khan, Junior, Political Science, Lahore, Pakistan.

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Ebonic plague sweeps across nation

By JASON HEIRONIMUS
Editorial Page

There are very few things Americans can agree on. Apple pie. Uncle Sam. The United States of America. These are all things that may put a bad taste in our mouths, but ideally they are fairly good things. I haven't seen anyone protesting apple pie, at least not yet. However, like I said, there are far too many things America can agree on.

We are nation with an identity crisis. While diversity is always a good thing and should be applauded as one of our strengths, perhaps too much diversity encourages anarchy. It seems as if little, benign "hot topics" get in the way of our progression as a country and as human beings. Almost everyone has a unique perspective on the latest issue of the day. With so many different views it is nearly impossible to find a middle ground. A middle ground is what our country needs, a middle ground is what our country lacks. Perhaps one of the most controversial topics of the day is the "ebonic plague" as Oprah likes to call it. To the non-talk-show-watch­ing world, there is one, it is called ebonic.

The word was invented by linguist Robert L. Williams, which is a combination of the words ebony and ivory. I mean, ebony and phonics. For those familiar with this "language" it is technically called "black English" or African-Americans Vernacular English. The continuing argument was spawned by the Oakland, Calif., Board of Education's Dec. 18, 1996, resolution recognizing ebonic as the official language for African-Americans. This decision resulted in a nation-wide debate over the ebonic issue. Once again the line was clearly drawn between black and white. Once again the subject of race reared its ugly head when ebonic had absolutely nothing to do with skin pigment. This is an issue which is solely rooted in the education system.

Believe it or not this issue has close to two professors at UCF are engaged in a study concerning children who speak ebonic and the likelihood that they be placed in Special Education classes. The hope is that the study will help to explain the dispropor­tionate number of African-Americans in these classes. The belief is that the problem is language. They are afraid that these children are being placed in classes well below their potential just because they happen to speak a broken version of what is being taught. English. That they will find is that it is just as hard for an ebonic-speaking child to achieve in an English classroom as it is for one who only speaks Cantonese.

The question as to what is the official lan­guage of the United States has been largely debated for years. In states such as Florida, California and Texas the issue is obscured by the overwhelming immigration crisis. Every year Spanish-speaking immigrants come to this country seeking a better life. The prob­lem, however, is that it is very difficult for them to make a smooth transition into a country which relies so heavily upon English as its main language.

Now the issue is no longer a language with roots to a foreign country, but rather a new language which seems to have its roots plant­ed firmly in ignorance. Ebonic was first originated when African-Americans were brought to the United States through the slave trade, probably this country's saddest period in history. Because the slaves almost never spoke any English their language became a broken mix between their native tongue and English. At this time they were ignorant of the native speech patterns, so they did what they had to to survive. Today ebonic is no longer a matter of survival. It is only proof that there is a breakdown in the American educational system.

However, I can understand someone wanting to speak in every-day life the way they do with their friends. It is a more relaxed tone. It is much more poetic and fluent than our bor­ing, straight English.

So I have decided that for the rest of my life I am going to speak strictly pig latin, or Funny Lazy Vernacular English, as the experts like to call it. I feel more comfortable in that dialect, it is how I grew up. In my fam­ily's house we were strictly pig latin. Sure it made it tougher for me in school, and it will be much tougher for me to get a job when my interviewer is trying to figure out what I am saying. But hopefully people will catch on and eventually pig latin will be recognized by some school so that my children will be able speak their native tongue in class. I can see it now, "Hey shavy an estongue."

I believe that ebonic-speaking children should be placed in Special Education class­es. They are starting school with a decided advantage against them; they don't speak the language. Special Education students have disadvantages which tend to impair their learning ability, an inability to speak English seems to be one of these disadvantages. These students will undoubtedly need special attention in class and most likely will need attention outside of the class as well, assisting the student to properly learn and understand English for his/her benefit.

Parents of these children should feel no shame in placing their children in Special Education. It is not an indication of how intelligent the individual may be, they may be the smartest in the school, it only indicates that they have a small roadblock in their path to getting a quality education.

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Feeling 'left' out? Not any more for these lefties

COLLEGE PRESS SERVICE

To all left-handed college students across the nation, Mike Rose has a simple message: "I feel your pain." The 20-year-old college sophomore describes himself as a "whale, middle-class male" who "doesn't have a lot of political gifts."

Nevertheless, in an imperfect world, it's okay to talk to Rose when you don't have a job. For Rose, it was the "crud" reality left-handed students face on a typical college campus. Classrooms in lecture halls and bathhouses for right-handed students in mind, he explains.

Rather than simply complain about such rampant exclusivity, Rose, who attends the University of California at Davis, set out to improve life for lefties.

"Last year we always joked about putting left-handed desks in. So this year, we decided that if we really want this to be a serious issue," he says.

The result is The Lefties' Rights Association, an official student organization at UCD formed in November 1996. Rose, along with classmate Mark Thomas, set up a table on campus, seeking signatures for a "petition of friends of left-handed students." In all, the two obtained 140 signatures from students who said they would like to see the university install desks to accommodate this historically overlooked "minority" of southpaws.

"People would come up and say, 'We're supposed to have this problem all four years,'" Rose recalls.

Petitions in hand, Rose and Thomas approached Neal Press, a senior political science major who was running for a student government senate seat. A lefty, Press was sympathetic and signed the request.

"We knew the election was coming up, and we told Neal this was a way he could reach the whole left-handed [student] population," Rose says, which he estimates to be about 8 percent of the school's 18,000 students.

Supporting left-handed desks on campus "helped me with the election," admits Press. "But don't write in your article that I used it to win the election, and cast it aside. I didn't!"

After the election, Press says he made the concerns of his left-handed constituents his top priority.

"Tuition increases and the lack ofcommons are more popular issues, but getting left-handed desks was the easiest one [to do something about]. It was the one that got my attention right away," he says.

The left-handers narrowed their request for new seats to three halls on campus that do not have a single left-handed desk. The reason?

"There's really no established building code that says 'Thou shalt make 15 percent [of desks for] the left-handed. Left-handed people aren't exactly disabled," says UCD architect Chris Adumson, in reference to government and business compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Accommodating lefties, he says, "is more of a social consideration."

At a cost of about $7,000, the university will replace seats at two of the halls with 36 left-handed desks, according to Dr. Evelyn R. Babey, the university registrar. A third hall was already set to undergo renovation this summer, and construction workers will add left-handed desks there, too.

"There was no controversy over this one," says Babey. "I laughed [about the formation of the Lefties Rights Association] because I'm right-handed," she says.

The university's willingness to add new chairs "does show we try to meet the things that people ask for," Babey says.

So what challenges yet lie ahead for the left-handed students on campus?

"It's not really a multi-faceted movement," says Rose. "There's not a whole lot of things that affect left-handed people besides desks on campus.

The group will continue to sponsor parties that ban right-handed activities. At the parties, everything from a handshake to picking up a glass must be done with one's left hand.

Not wishing to discriminate, Rose says, "We're an equal opportunity organization. We accept right-handed members."

Business etiquette class covers finer points of dining

COLLEGE PRESS SERVICE

Holly Jones polishes her resume. Her cover letter looks good. She's settled on what to wear. Then the universities come in and find out the job interview will be over lunch.

"Ugh," says Jones, a student at Widener University, in Chester, Penn. "What do I do?"

Fear was sufficient motivation for Jones, who signed up for a university-sponsored seminar on business dining etiquette.

The instructor: Lynne Tully, owner of The Professional Edge, based in York, Penn. Her skills in the etiquette arena played no small role in helping her to catch the Miss Pennsylvania title in 1997.

But these days, Tully runs seminars to teach students proper table manners. "I'm afraid, of that," she says.

"So, assume that you have to do something for your lap," says Tully. "A common mistake is not using utensils at all, six utensils [at a business lunch]. Let's face it: it's not going to be your comfort level."

"To ease student's worry, Tully advises them to remember that business, not food, is the primary purpose of the meeting."

"The conversation is primary, the food is secondary," says Tully. "If you have food that's not cooked to your liking, it may be best in this situation, to avoid the impulse to send it back. The potential employee could think you're a person that can't be pleased."

Tully says students usually know they should order within the price range of those they're trying to impress, "but verbally they don't know how to execute that."

"The easy solution: 'Ask, 'What do you recommend? I've never been here before,'" she says. "Whatever they recommend, that's your price range."

"Order foods that would be easy to eat, and don't overdo it, Tully adds. "Don't assume that you have to order any appetizers. Don't take a second roll. Never use more than two packets of sugar in your coffee. I also wouldn't expect them to wash their hands before or after eating."

"You certainly don't want to sit there eating a dessert when everybody's watching you," she says.

"So, does one have to be denied a job for grabbing a second dinner roll too ridiculous?"

Don't laugh, warns Tully.

"You certainly don't want to sit there eating a dessert when everybody's watching you," she says.

"You come across as desperate, it makes you look cheap," Tully adds.

"It may sound far-fetched, but you never know how overindulgence is going to be perceived," Tully said.

For Jones, the seminar could not have come at a better time. "I learned a lot more about business etiquette that I didn't know before. Like how to use silverware, how to wait for everyone to sit down and be served to eat," she says.

Jones had the chance to test what she learned at a Business Administration Banquet held a few days after Tully's seminar.

"Remembering the cardinal rule to take only one bread roll, Jones grabbed a roll and put down the bucket. That was a mistake, she says, "I remembered, 'Oh, my god, you're supposed to ask the person next to you if they want a roll,' she recalls.

"So I did. And then it got passed around to everyone at the table," adds Jones, laughing.

Here are some additional tips Tully offers would-be hires:

- Remember to put the napkin on your lap. A common mistake is not getting in the habit of putting your napkin in the lap. That's one of the first things that gets noticed," Tully says.

- When sitting at a large table, how do you determine which glass is your glass? If you're not sure which glass is yours, pass the bread rolls? Tully offers a useful method to remember this rule of etiquette: F-O-D-D has four let- ters, whereas L-E-F-T does E-F-T-T. Meanwhile, D-R-I-N-K has five letters as does R-I-G-H-T. "Drinks on the right, solid foods on the left," she says.

- "Should you use a fork or a spoon for fruit cups?" It depends on the fruit. If it's big chunks of fruit, you use a fork. If it's more liquid, you might use your spoon, Tully advises.

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‘Contact’: Marooned in space

By DEAN G. LEWIS
Entertainment editor

Trying to follow director Robert Zemeckis is much like tailing an unpredictable hurricane. You don’t know which way it will turn, how far it will go, or how strong it will become. In other words, the track record of Zemeckis is anything but proven. Having won an Oscar in 1994 for “Forrest Gump,” Zemeckis returns with “Contact,” a sci-fi drama tailor-made for grown-ups. Adapted from the 1985 novel by the late Carl Sagan, “Contact” is a dull hybrid between “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” and “Communion” (the little-seen sleeper that starred Christopher Walken as author Whitney Streiber whose accounts of alien abduction were widely documented). Yet it is Zemeckis’ undoing that undoes the picture. Thinking it’s safe to retools a few and spits them out intermittently during “Contact’s” lengthy endeavor.

Jodie Foster (in her first screen role since “Nell”) stars as Dr. Eleanor Arroway, an astronomically obsessed scientist who closes shop on her Puerto Rico outpost to set up station at a new, federally-funded New Mexico observatory. There she receives the sound waves from outer space that will change everyone’s ways of thinking. From a suspicious national security adviser (James Woods) to Foster’s sexist mentor (Tom Skerrit) to a writer (Matthew McConaughey), making contact with these math-crazy terrestrials proves to be a labyrinth involving Jake Busey (Gary’s son) as a crazed terrorist hits the skids. It just doesn’t mesh with the rest of the picture. Above all else, it’s the film’s anachronistic undercurrents that send Zemeckis’ tale way off the track.

Particularly in trouble are McConaughey whose long locks and southern drawl are off-line with his Christian-author alter ego. Angela Bassett (“What’s Love Got To Do With It”) is entirely unbelievable in her usual small, post-Tina Turner role, this time hardly breaking waves as a White House aide. An unnecessary subplot of spiritual renewal and faith, could get spaced out from the heavy casting decisions.

Continued on next page

Rolling the Dice

“Vegas Vacation”

Chevy Chase and Beverly D’Angelo reprise their roles for the fourth time in “Vegas Vacation,” an insipid third sequel to the 1983 original. National Lampoon has its stamp of approval on the first three, making the middle adventures, “European Vacation” and “Christmas Vacation,” entertainingly enjoyable. But its comic name-sake is nowhere in sight this time around. Low dice numbers strand the cast on the playing table. Chase is up to his old antics as usual, yet age and weight have taken its toll. What he seriously needs is fresh material. Ethan Embry (“That Thing You Do”) plays little son Rusty, bringing his boyhood, corny charm to the role. Dry comedy goes damp at the Hoover Dam. The City of Lights has received better PR before. Skip the desert heat and book your flight to a more meaningful, worthwhile destination. (D-)

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"Honeymoon in Vegas"

Before he left Vegas for frequent flyer mileage on board this summer's "Con Air," Nicolas Cage had a memorable blast in Andrew Bergman's "Honeymoon in Vegas." Cage plays a newlywed whose rookie wife (Sarah Jessica Parker) runs off with billionaire James Caan. Cage, garbed in an Elvis outfit, drops in on their plans from a plane. Having sneaked his way into a travelling sky-diving troupe called the Flying Elvises, Cage makes for a hilarious, if passable, impersonation. Bergman's comic hijinks are even better when there's a Presley tune blaring on the soundtrack. This is the first film Bergman did after "The Freshman." Since then he's given us "It Could Happen To You" and "Simplestis." Bet safe on Vegas and rent this Bergman jewel. (B+)

"Casino"

Martin Scorsese, America's best and most consistent filmmaker, took an unfair whipping from some critics for what they called a rehash of his earlier classic "Goodfellas." Aside from De Niro and Pesci, screenwriter Nicholas Pileggi, and the usual mafia mayhem, this one's a winner. High rollers De Niro and Pesci cruise the strip while overseeing the ops of a dozen or so gambling meccas. Sharon Stone plays a local moll who falls under the watchful wings of De Niro. Too bad her pimp (a gruesome James Woods) wants her back. Scorsese again uses violence as a tool, not a weapon. A hoodlum gets the squeeze put on him via a vice. Pesci gets it in the head at bloody batting practice. Longtime Scorsese editor Thelma Schoonmaker provides the rapid cuts, most notably in the film's action and gambling sequences. Like most of Marty's other flicks, this one made my 1995 Top Ten. (A–)

"Leaving Las Vegas"

Writer-director Mike Figgis, the author behind the hideous "Mr. Jones" (the Richard Gere drama from 1993), managed a 360-degree turn—around when he adapted this semi-autobiographical novel for the big screen. A stirring, dark portrait of a drunk committed to drinking himself to death in the course of several weeks, "Leaving Las Vegas" gave Nicolas Cage a well-deserved Oscar. He finds some range in a role that's been played all too often in Hollywood. Cage's suffering soul is at the end of his rope. Just dumped by his screenwriting firm, he departs for the City of Lights where he meets a young hooker named Sera (Oscar nom­inee Elisabeth Shue). Figgis' unsentimen­tal writing will have you touched, while Shue's intimate interviews on camera might lead some to recall Jane Fonda's "Klute" (1971). Never has redemption, love, and addiction been this hard to swallow. Meditative, perceptive work. Film requires patience on part of the viewer. This 1995 release also made my Top Ten. (A–)
Lead Stories

- The New York Times, describing several civil sub-wars now raging in Zaire as President Mobutu's 30-year reign ends, reported in April on the "quixotic on-and-off conflict waged by Mai-Mai guerrillas, who hide in the jungle and smoke large quantities of marijuana." People fear the Mai-Mai because it is believed that bullets turn to water before hitting them, and stories circulate about how the mere threat of the Mai-Mai's appearance causes forces to retreat and surrender. However, the Times reported, "When the Mai-Mai were killed in a recent battle, it was speculated that they might recently have had sex, which, some Zairians say, destroys the Mai-Mai's protection from bullets for a day or two."

- Sony Pictures Studios sought a court order in April to keep Raymond R. Taylor off the set of the TV show "Wheel of Fortune." He had been a contestant in 1993, but keeps coming to the tapings, sneaking onto the set, and annoying the audience and staff (and four times has managed to get his face shown on the air).

- The Associated Press reported in April that the United Arab Emirates' National Avian Research Center, funded at a generous level by ruler Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, has hired scientists from around the world to use state-of-the-art tracking to save the endangered houbara bustard bird. However, the only reason for the sheik's concern appears to be to assure that they are plentiful enough for rich Arab hunters.

Great Art!

- The Tokyo-based theatrical company OMI2, in a performance at the Kitchen in New York City in October, set up 11 mobile pens inside which the audience sat while 20 cast members stared at them and moved the cages from place to place. The goals, said the New York Times, were "blurring the line between artist and audience, and the ever-popular audience dis-comfort."

- South Korean artist Bul Lee's display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in March, which consisted only of notting fish in sealed bags and glass cabinets, was abruptly pulled by officials after only several hours' display because the ventilation equipment failed. The show was titled "Majestic Splendor."

- In April, Russian performance artist Oleg Kulik opened a two-week show, "I Bite America and America Bites Me," in which he stayed in character as a dog from the time his plane landed in New York City until the time he left town. Kulik holstered in a gallery cage wearing only a dog collar and exhibiting the gamut of dog behaviors and emotions, and visitors could enter the cage to play with him only after putting on protective padding in case Kulik bit them. Kulik has been arrested in three countries for biting his audience.

- In a February show at San Francisco's Capp Street Project building, artist Glen Seator reproduced to exact scale the outside of the Capp Street Project building and the street that abuts it. Seator used 115 tons of gravel, 30 tons of asphalt, and 100 tons of sand and re-created details down to the placement of poster staples on a telephone pole. And sculptor Lowell Davis, who made News of the Weird in 1993 when he burned down his studio because he was dissatisfied with his career, was apparently reborn this winter when he finished constructing a 50-acre town — of old buildings he had bought elsewhere and moved — in the middle of a Missouri cornfield.

- In March, University of Pittsburgh art history teacher Jack Shepherd put three tons of Hostess cupcakes and Sno Balls into 113 square feet in the school's library gallery to make the point, of course, of the similarity between ancient architecture and pop art. And last winter, the Institute of Visual Art in New York City toured six cities with its Yugo Art show featuring non-car uses (e.g., a piano, a fireplace, a church confessional, and a car wash with working shower) of discarded models of the very unpopular 1985-1992 car.

- In May, at a SoHo gallery in New York City, Bill Scanga showed "taxidermized" dead mice propped up in tiny chairs or on the floor, gazing at artwork in miniature rooms that were exact replicas of rooms at the Metropoitan Museum of Art, and watching a small TV set that plays "Tom and Jerry" cartoons, and observing live mice in small cages in a zoo-like setting.

- In March at a Penn State University gallery, student Christine Enedy's "25 Years of Virginity ... A Self-Portrait," supposedly a monument to the importance of Catholicism in her life, was hung, to the consternation of at least one state senator. The work consists of 25 pairs of underpants with red crosses sewn into the crotches.

Can't Possibly be True

- In November, a jury in Dallas awarded about $15 million to two men who were badly injured when their car rear-ended another vehicle that had stopped in a traffic lane to read American Airlines' flight information signs at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. The jury said the crash was only 2 percent the fault of the driver of the men's car for following too closely, 32 percent the fault of the driver who stopped his car, and 66 percent the fault of American for putting the signs up (and American was assessed an additional $10 million in punitive damages).

- The Chicago Tribune reported in December that local convicted felon Frank Evans had fraudulently obtained a credit card under the name and Social Security number of Richard F. Johnson about 20 years ago and had used it regularly without detection since then because he always borrowed modestly and made the minimum monthly payment. A few weeks before the Tribune story was published, Evans shot himself to death with a gun registered in the name of Richard F. Johnson.

- Former magazine editor Jean-Dominique Bauby, 44, passed away unexpectedly in March, about a week after his memoir went on sale. Bauby had been paralyzed since 1995 (as the result of a stroke) and dictated the entire 137-page book by blinking his left eye according to a code that was the only part of his body that he could move.

Inexplicable

The New York Times reported in December that Odell Sheppard, a "mid-aged handyman," had just passed his ninth consecutive year of incarceration in Cook County Jail in Chicago, even though he has not been charged with a crime. He was sent to jail for failing to reveal the whereabouts of his daughter Deborah, who was the subject of a child-custody dispute between Sheppard and Deborah's mother, but Sheppard maintains he has no idea where the girl is.

Bottom of the Gene Pool

Toby L. Sanders, 34, was charged with aggravated battery in Carmi, Ill., in January for chopping off the right middle finger of Lester E. Massey, 35. According to police, each man agreed to let the other chop off a finger, but apparently Sanders reneged after he saw how bad Massey's hand looked. (Police said alcohol was involved in the original agreement.)

(See your Weird News to Chuck Shepherd, P.O. Box 8306, St. Petersburg, 33738, or Weird@compuserve.com. Chuck Shepherd's latest paperback, 'The Concrete Enema and Other News of the Weird Classics,' is now available at bookstores everywhere. To order it direct, call 1-800-642-6480 and mention this newspaper. The price is $6.95 plus $2 shipping.)
UCF linebacker Mike Palmer, left, and defensive coordinator Brian Van Gorder will have a huge challenge to tackle this season.

Linebackers looking forward to answering call this season

From PAGE 12

The three agree that preparedness is something the outgoing trio taught them last year. Another quality they say they learned was tenacity.

"They went 100 percent all four quarters, and we see ourselves that way," Palmer said.

"We have to be tenacious," Green said.

"The first three games set the pace for the season, and we'll have to show a lot of character and tenacity." Those three opponents, Mississippi, South Carolina and Nebraska, will show the fledgling I-A Knights no mercy. The linebackers will have to rely on their tenacity and ability to help avoid an 0-3 start to a season that includes other tough matchups.

But the newcomers to the starting lineup will back down to no one.

"We play with a big heart, and we fight until the end," Palmer said. "I feel that nobody is going to blow us out."

Schedule to challenge women

From PAGE 12

the veterans that have been through our current run in conference can bring the younger players along."

Outside of the NCAA play-in, the 1997 schedule includes a challenging opener against perennial powerhouses Duke and Georgia in the UCF Soccer Classic on Aug. 30. The Knights travel to Gainesville on Oct. 3 for a match with Florida. The longest road trip of the year comes when UCF flies to the west coast for games against UC Irvine and San Diego State in late October. The regular season ends at home with Auburn on Nov. 2.

Even with these high-caliber teams, Richter still considers the two regular-season games with TAAC nemesis Florida International, the only team to hold a share of a conference title with UCF (1993), as the Knights' priority during the preseason.

"It gets harder and harder every year to win the conference," she said. "Every game a conference opponent plays against us is their best game of the year."


Summer sweatin'

UCF football players have been putting in the extra work during summer. Below left, Mike Grant enters fall as the No 1 tailback. Below, quarterback Daunte Culpepper has been named a preseason All-American. UCF opens its season Aug. 30 at Ole Miss.
linebackers geared up to fill the gaps

By KEN JACKSON
Staff Writer

A message to Golden Knight football fans: unless you’re real familiar with last year’s squad, be prepared to buy a program. You probably won’t recognize the faces at all three linebacker positions.

Gene are John Bryant, Kendrick Thomas, and Nakia Reddick, last year’s starters who leave big shoes to fill. They combined for more than 300 tackles and nearly a third of the team’s sacks last year.

The Knights rely on their linebacking corps this year with sophomore Deaubrey Devine, junior Mike Palmer, and senior Emory Green. Each saw limited playing time last year serving as understudies to “JB,” “K-Tom” and “The Ballhawk.”

“All three are capable to hold starting roles,” defensive coordinator Brian Van Gorder said. “Catching Deaubrey’s weight down is a concern, but they have the capabilities to do what we expect our linebackers to do.”

While their ability is not in question, Van Gorder expressed concern about their experience.

“They have to make the transition to certain situations,” Van Gorder said. “They weren’t in the game [last year] when we were trying to get the ball back with two minutes left. They haven’t faced every situation that comes up in a game and there are so many.

“There will be a lot of firsts for them this year and that is the concern,” he said.

The Knights were aware before last season ended they would shoulder a lion’s share of the defensive load.

“We knew going into this year would be a major responsibility in the defense with the role the linebackers play,” Green said.

“We know we have big shoes to fill,” Palmer said. “But we should be able to fill them. I don’t think the position is the question mark it says it is. Our depth is a problem, but we’ve become real close as a unit.”

Depth also concerns Van Gorder. Despite having junior college players Chris Guin and Rich Butkovski signed, Van Gorder said they are behind in learning the team’s defensive schemes.

“Our main goal is to try to be better that last year’s linebacking corps,” Devine said. “As far as watching more film than they did, they were keying into game situations and on top of our assignments.”

See LINEBACKERS, PAGE 11

NCAA play-in gives women’s soccer hope

By DEREK GONSOULIN
Sports Editor

After years of dominance in the Trans America Athletic Conference, UCF women’s soccer may finally get a chance at the NCAA tournament.

For four consecutive years, UCF has won the TAAC championship. But because their conference lacks an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament, the Knights have had to plan for next year rather than play for a national championship.

“One year we beat N.C. State and it came down to us or them for the final bid,” UCF coach Karen Richter said. “The selection committee took them and I still can’t explain it. We could have won a couple of close games we didn’t, but I don’t know if it would have made a difference.”

In 1997, UCF may not need explanations: an NCAA-play-in game between Conference USA and the TAAC will be played Nov. 11. Richter said the team is excited about the opportunity, but she wants it to first focus on qualifying for the conference tournament.

“I wish we had not put the NCAA championship dates on our schedule,” she said. “We have a young team and I want the kids to focus on the present. I think we have to earn the conference title before we worry about the NCAA.”

Sixteen of the 23 players on the 1997 roster are freshmen or sophomores. Richter feels the return of junior goalkeeper Alyssa O’Brien (82 saves, 0.89 goals against average), who played every minute at the position in 1996, and seniors Sara Kone (third team All-TAAC selection at forward) and Karen Plizga (coming off knee surgery) have the experience to match last season’s 13-7-1 record.

“We’ll see how the team gels in the preseason,” said Richter, who is currently playing for a women’s professional team in Tampa. “We are hopeful we would have a major responsibility in the defense with the role the linebackers play.”

“We know we have big shoes to fill,” Palmer said. “But we should be able to fill them. I don’t think the position is the question mark it says it is. Our depth is a problem, but we’ve become real close as a unit.”

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FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Football season tickets to surpass 1996 total

The UCF athletic ticket office said more than 7,000 season tickets have been sold for the 1997, four-game football season. Alyson Barnes, manager of the athletic ticket office, said the 1996 total of just over 7,000 should be surpassed before the end of July.

“The fans are getting excited about Division I-A football,” Barnes said. “They just want to get involved in the future of a growing program.”

The 1997 season ticket package is $60, $15 cheaper than 1996 because there are four games instead of five.

Last season, UCF averaged 15,433 fans with a year-high of 18,013 attending the first game in Division I-A for the Knights, a 39-33 victory against William and Mary.

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