Bush blocks travel to Cuba

PATRICIA XAVIER  CONTRIBUTING WRITER

UCF junior Christina Morejon is going to Cuba this summer. She plans to spend her week indoors taking a course at the University of Havana and exploring the capital city. Though her trip is legal, a recently enacted Bush administration travel policy will revoke educational trips to the communist island nation illegal for most Americans.

Morejon joins an exclusive group of about 28,000 American citizens who traveled to Cuba every year on a special educational license. The U.S. government prohibits travel to Cuba for tourism, but educational trips get a special exception.

This fall, the new travel policy will face a new limit barring all trips except those that offer academic credit. The Bush administration imposed the new limit to curb perceived abuses of the license by Americans who visit Cuba for play rather than enlightenment.

Renowned cigars, tropical beaches and events such as the Havana Jazz Festival have attracted American tourists, some of whom misrepresented the purpose of their travel to Cuba, a federal offense.

In a New York Times interview, Treasury Department spokesman Taylor Griffin said, "The license was being abused. It needed not last forever. But the law said it could save writers' wrists."

... Senior Jackie Carr was able to resolve her grade dispute directly with her teacher via e-mail.

Don’t like that grade? An appeal can change it

TRINA PRIORE  CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Approached with almost as much fear and dread as final exam week is the one following it, when students’ grades are posted.

While many assume that disappointing grades are written in stone, a few people at UCF have been able to improve them through a little-known, process called grade appeal. Senior Jahmaal Yetes knows after one successful appeal that he made. And one pending appeal that had grade-need not last forever. But the process has left him frustrated.

Yetes, a molecular biology major, got a D in a speech class two years ago. He said the campus visitor gave him the D for making a speech on affirmative action, that the professor said divided the class.

Yetes appealed the grade and ended up with an A. Yetes didn’t contact his test or beg his teacher for a change of heart; he booked it to the dean.

UCF offers a detailed, formal grade-appeal process that can officially make bad grades better.

Any student can apply for an appeal when they think an instructor failed to follow the grading policy, made errors, or graded so harshly or leniently that the grade is unfair. But the process has left him frustrated.

Yetes appealed the grade and ended up with an A. Yetes didn’t contact his test or beg his teacher for a change of heart; he booked it to the dean.

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Company boycotts MTV’s Greek reality programming

SHELDON MARMOR  STAFF WRITER

While some viewers may question the authenticity of today’s reality television programs, Fred Radun has decided to actively boycott two shows in particular because of the false images he believes they portray.

Radun, co-founder of Greek010.com, a New York-based company that sells merchandise to Greek organizations throughout the nation—has decided to sever ties with MTV after several people complained that the company’s involvement with “Fraternity Life” supports an unrealistic depiction of Greek life.

Radun’s company initially struck a “unprofitable product placement” deal with MTV prior to the filming of “Secretory Life” in December 2003. Radun said he decided to sever ties with the university’s board of trustees since the group’s involvement with “Fraternity Life” supports an unrealistic depiction of Greek life.

Radkin’s company initially struck a “unprofitable product placement” deal with MTV prior to the filming of “Secretory Life” in December 2003. Radun said the deal consisted of Greek010.com sending merchandise.

UCF graduate invents keyless keyboard

BRANDON HARDIN  STAFF WRITER

Ten years ago Peter McAlindon had a vision while studying on the first floor of UCF’s library. He imagined inventing a computer keyboard that would work with any PC, would compare in size to a standard keyboard and would offer users the same 128-key functionality most keyboards do.

But his keyboard would be distinct in one very obvious way—his keyboard would be keyless.

The goal of the UCF industrial engineering grad wasn’t simply to produce an awesome piece of technology, but to offer a solution to victims of carpal-tunnel syndrome. His vision also has transformed the former UCF student into the CEO of Keytone Inc.

Using two sculpted domes instead of keys, users move the domes onto corresponding keys.

Tablet class seat posted on eBay draws $225 bid

BECKA KULCHAK  STAFF WRITER

These days a person can sell just about anything on eBay—even a seat for a Constitutional Law class.

Former UCF student Ryan Vescio could have earned $225 after the first-year law student put his seat in Bruce Rogov’s class at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale on the Internet auction site.

"At some point in UCF’s Constitutional Law course, a professor will capture the attention of 200 students by saying, 'If you want to get the classes I want, you need to be able to type,' " he said.

So Vescio decided to find a buyer who was worth it. He told the professor, "I have a dozen e-mails from students who are prepared to do 10 bids for a spot in the class.

He also received several complaints from faculty and students, which finally captured the attention of the university’s administrators.

While he was not punished, Vescio did lose money on the deal.
Most students drop grade complaints early

FROM PAGE 1

with the teacher who assigned the D, Yeates filed a written appeal with the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Through the Academic Grade Appeals Committee, Yeates gets a hearing to discuss whether or not more people agreed with him. On the committee were faculty members from each college and students from the Student Government Association and other student organizations.

The committee considered and evaluated the written appeal, statements of the teacher and any other relevant information from Yeates and his instructor. By a majority vote, the committee made a recommendation to the dean.

"I did not think the committee was just," Yeates said. "They let the teacher's vote; even cussed at me. They were trying to get me to respond, to give a reaction, but I didn't.

Within 10 days, the dean made a final decision to raise Yeates' grade. If Yeates wanted to press the matter further, he could have sent a final appeal to the provost, but he grudgingly accepted the verdict.

Yeates may need to undergo the process again in order to off-campus status.

This time around, Yeates received an F in a core requirement class. "It was in an unbelievable difficult situation this semester, and I have court dates and legal documents to prove it," he said.

If the F remains, Yeates cannot receive his diploma, although he already walked at graduation. He went to Academic Services and then set up an appointment with Glenn Cunningham, a chemistry professor and department chairman.

"The process better not take that long this time, because I need to get out of Florida immediately," Yeates said. "I just hope they gave me a D instead of an F.

While the college reviews an appeal, students can consult with the director of Judicial Services to hear their rights and responsibilities, such as having legal counsel present. The university provides the faculty member legal counsel without charge if the student already has retained a lawyer.

Under general policy, students have access to published materials that can help them understand the complaint procedures, and has access to materials and staff that can help them better defend the charges against them. According to CCF's student handbook, the student has a right to request appeals should be made as quickly and informally as possible.

CF's appeal system provides multiple chances for students to redeem their grade; as long as the reason is valid and the suspension is pursued. Yet, most students on campus grumble about their grades without objecting to take advantage of their appeal process.

Taylor Ellis, associate dean of undergraduate programs in the College of Business Administration, said the number of appeals filed in that college has gone down last fall.

Said Nicole Peuro, 19, a junior: "There are three types of students who receive bad grades. First, there are those students who get bad grades, complaints are never dug about it. Second, students who white to their professor in attempt to get them to change the grade to one they didn't rightfully earn. And finally those who honestly believe they deserve a higher grade, present a valid argument, and then take it to the proper authority in order to rectify it.

Peuro falls into the third category. When her grade seemed insecure, she discussed it with her professor and had it changed. "The reason grade appeals are so scarce on this campus is because in most cases, the process ends with the individual professor," Peuro said she knew several people who had experiences similar to hers, and none of them needed to go over an instructor's head.

Senior Jackie Carr, 22, got her grade changed without going to the college dean, but had to fight for it. "I didn't know why I was getting a D," said Carr. "I didn't have much of a chance in the class, I had no concept of the material.

I was so mad I was going to get a grade I didn't deserve," Carr continued.

After repeated e-mails to the professor, he finally responded, saying he had contacted Carr for another student. "He didn't even apologize for the mistake," she said. "If I hadn't kept nagging him about it, he would have dropped the whole thing.

Key chain tells drinkers when they are drunk

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ STAFF WRITER

When a police officer suspects someone of being drunk, a quick blow into a Breathalyzer, a blood-alcohol measurement device, will give them all the proof they need to make an arrest. Without such a device, people have to guess for themselves how drunk they are.

With new key-chain-sized Breathalyzers selling for as low as $35, drinkers finally may have more than friends and their own unfettered minds to help them to decide whether to get behind the wheel.

The portable versions of the police-officer test may give an approximate blood-alcohol level, but they're no substitute for the real thing, said Breathalyzer.net owner Keith Nothacker.

"Our key-chain Breathalyzer is really for novelty, entertainment purposes," he said. "It is not very accurate." Breathalyzer.net specializes in professional breath-alcohol testers mostly bought by law enforcement agencies and hospitals.

Not many UCF students have heard of a key-chain Breathalyzer, including senior Amy Marcus, 21.

"It would probably be something else drive," she said. She said she wouldn't buy one.

Junior Monique Zapata

Senior Mac Sheridan was successful in getting his professor to change his grade in Western Civilization II from an incomplete to C.

FROM PAGE 5

was told by administrators to remove the seal from escort.

"I personally thought it was ridiculous that people would pay on top of tuition to take a certain professor," he said. "Thinking how ridiculous this entire concept is, I decided to set up the auction as a joke.

"Since I was doing nothing more than selling my stake in the class, there was nothing fraudulent about the auction," he said. "I don't state that I guaranteed a spot in the class, only that I was willing to sell my interest in the class. What I did was entirely within the student conduct code and computer use policy.

Veneto's family was not so amused by the prank initially, worried their son could face disciplinary action.

"When my family heard about it, at first they were worried about me getting in trouble," he said. "I didn't tell them about what I did, and [instead] sent them a copy of the newspaper article in the Miami Herald. After I assured them I did nothing outside the rules of the school, they laughed."
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ECB/DFWP
Non-traditional methods better suited for some

allow many of the situations encountered in films makes them pay attention and eventually learn more."

The idea is to instruct a physics class using an electronic-response system created by a Harvard professor. Effthimiou and a student were eager to test out the system.

But the experimental class demoralizes more than just watching movies. The students are also required to read "The Science of Superheroes," a book that answers questions such as whether evolution can really produce X-Men or if a human would ever be capable of breathing water like a fish. The book also explains how "tech-nobable" occurs in comic books to create seemingly credible explanations of improbable superpowers and bizarre events.

No quizzes are given in the class - just a midterm and final exam. Students can write reports on other books such as "The Science of Superman" and "The Science of X-Men" for extra credit.

Besides the unusual exam, the course also has a distinctive method of teacher-student interaction - electronic tunnels allow students to point a remote control toward a screen in the front of the classroom to answer Effthimiou's multiple-choice questions during class.

The personal clicker number on the screen turns a shade of blue if already pushed. No one is penalized for incorrect responses.

"The personal-response system tests the knowledge of students on real time and allows the instructor to see what the students understand from the lecture and what they don't," Effthimiou said.

Besides the immediate feedback professors receive from the remote-control response system, Effthimiou said it also provides a more inviting atmosphere in the classroom.

"Some of the students are shy or just scared to make comments in front of the class, so they would never raise their hands if the questions were asked orally," he said.

Effthimiou says feedback clearly demonstrates that students are performing better in this class than most do in a typical physics class because the material is more interesting to them. Although the class is unique and strives to be straightforward, some students aren't sufficiently prepared.

"It's true that this course doesn't feel like a science class - it feels like a film class," said senior Jackie Sands. "However, it's still very confusing when it comes down to the stuff you have to know, because I hate any kind of science."

Sophomore Carla Corwell, 20, does not mind being part of the experimental course.

"It's a good learning experience because when you learn in different ways, you find out how you learn best," she said. "The interaction between the students and teachers is another reason why the class is so interesting."

MTV show not a true portrayal of Greek life

Ten years in the making, orbiTouch is in Union

Effects 6.4 million people and cost $11.2 billion in lost productivity. It's 2001 in the United States.

The keyless system, which McNamara calls the orbilTouch, will not cause tunnel syndrome due to its ergonomic design. So while it may slow some people down, they will be able to type for longer periods of time, increasing their productivity.

Matt Wilson, chief operating officer of Keybow, Inc., said the orbilTouch is also targeted to people with disabilities, or who are unable to use standard keyboards. He cited the examples of Shawn Grasney and John Williams. Shawn Grasney has cerebral palsy, and has limited movement of his fingers. Unable to use a traditional keyboard, he was able to type for the first time with the orbilTouch.

John Williams, an author, suffers from a muscular tunnel syndrome and cannot use a traditional keyboard for more than 10 minutes. With the orbilTouch he can type for hours with no discomfort.

Susan Muller, technical support for the Career Resource Center, studied the device for its potential to allow more students access to computers.

"We like to explore all options - seeing what we can do to be more inclusive and more user-friendly for students," Muller said.

The orbilTouch keyboard has been a long time in the making. It has been worked on for the past 10 years and gone through various incarnations. Some of the older prototypes had only 40 keys; another used domes that moved in 32 directions.

Instead of the eight used in McNamara says that over the past six years, 12 prototypes were developed. The "touch doesn't include the ones that went up in smoke," he said.

Currently, the device holds two patients with more memory. Over 8 million was raised and invested in research and development and production startup. Faculty and students can order the orbilTouch from the computer store in the Student Union. While it retails for $90, it can be purchased for educational purposes for $300.

We like to explore all options - seeing what we can do to be more inclusive and more user-friendly for students.

—ROSS MILLER (very near)

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Despite convenience, professors doubt handy breath tester

FROM PAGE 4
expressed a similar doubt about the device, which she said is use-
less to the sensible drinker: “If you need to give yourself a Breathalyzer test, you shouldn’t be driving,” said Zapata, 23. Instead she said, “have a party at your home, or take a cab or have a designated driver.”

REACH coordinator Brooke Williams said such a device has costs and benefits, but ultimately agreed with Zapata’s assessment. “A pro is that maybe a key chain Breathalyzer would deter a person from driving, and a con is that it creates a false sense of securi-
ty.” She said she wouldn’t advoca-
te using the key-chain Breathalizers on campus. “If you’re drinking, you shouldn’t be driving at all,” she said. Williams said students who do use the Breathalyzer should combine it with other methods to check their impairment, “If it’s the only method, then I don’t think it’s fair,” she said.

Williams said the device is a positive sign for personal responsibility, however, “I’d least if it shows there’s more aware-
ness in drinking and driving,” she said.

Some students do see good in the pocket-sized Breathalizer, despite the un-
sophisticated nature of the device. “Key-chain Breathalizers would make people more aware of their intake of alcohol hopefully,” said senior Adria Martin, 25.

“I would recommend it because it’s a good safety precau-
tion,” said junior Jonathan Waters, 22.

He said the device could do more than help people who need to know if they’re safe to drive—
it could even help people learn to control their alcoholism. “If the key chain said they shouldn’t drink, they might take it serious-
ly,” Waters said.

Through senior Rafael Rodriguez said he might buy a key-chai n Breathalyzer, he said a blood test ultimately should determine if you can drive safely.

Jay Corzine, a sociology and anthropology professor, does not recommend the device to anyone without knowing the
accuracy and the quality of the product. He said relying on legal limits to decide safety is a mis-
take. “People have different lev-
els of tolerance,” he said.

The best approach to drink-
ing and driving is to have a de-
signated driver, Corzine said. Waters said a big advan-
tage of the device is its compact, portable size. “People can keep it on them,” he said.

Breathalyzer.net sells the majority of its Breathalizers to consumers. They offer a key-
chain device for $22.

The first full-sized Breathalyzer was invented in 1954 by Dr. Robert Berkinestein of the Indiana State Police. It measured the effect of breath on color-changing chemicals to determine blood-alcohol level.

The Breathalyzer.net key chain uses infrared sensors to detect alcohol.
Blocked groups want return of Cuban exchange

From Page 1

undermined the intentions of the U.S. sanctions against Cuba, which are to deprive the [President] Fidel Castro regime of the financial wherewithal to continue to oppress its people.

The administration has reached up to this point in Cuba, a U.S. policy that started during the Kennedy administration with a trade embargo. The intention of the embargo, imposed after Castro took power in 1959, was to force the Cuban government to implement reforms to promote democracy and higher human rights standards. The Bush administration wants to see new policy reflects this goal.

For removed but indefinitely aware of the tension between America and Cuba, 27-year-old Morejon plans to enjoy her stay on the island despite its limits. She will attend a course on Cuban culture at the University of Havana five days a week, spending her free time exploring old churches and traditional songs.

"I want to travel as much as I can on the island, see the history and culture, talk with people and enjoy the nightlife," she said.

Moving study and cultural trips is nothing new for American students. Like other universities, UCF offers study-abroad programs allowing students to experience Cuban culture firsthand. Unlike travel to Spain or Japan, though, trips to Cuba are governed by strict guidelines enforced by both the American and Cuban governments. UCF doesn't offer a study-abroad program in Cuba.

Morejon arranged her trip through an organization called the Center for Cross Cultural Studies, which offers pre-credit programs that are exempted by the tourist ban. Even with help from an organization such as the Center, travel to Cuba face several hurdles not present for travel to other nations.

Morejon is one of many students who are trying to schedule trips to Cuba and are rushing to schedule trips to Cuba. There is no time to lose. American citizens who wish to visit Cuba must get authorization from their academic advisor to ensure proper credit.

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Another country to get to Cuba, which is really annoying and expensive," Morejon said. "I was looking to fly to Mexico and then taking a plane to Havana."

The new policy will limit travel to the most important cities with a ban on licenses to educational groups outside academic settings. This includes the American University, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Harvard University Art Museum — the new legislation, which they say is to prevent people-to-people educational exchange expanded in 1999 by President Bill Clinton to be valuable to lose.

Criminal justice major Robert Wilson, 20, said eliminating the license will not cause a cultural gap between Cubans and Americans. "Last year 35,000 people traveled to the country on an educational license," he said. "This is not a huge amount of people. So having the licenses won't be going to widen the cultural gap."

Political science professor Bruce Wilson disagrees. "Outside Florida there's a different view of U.S. policies toward Cuba," Wilson said. "There's currently a movement of Republicans and Democrats to have the embargo lifted, never mind the travel restrictions. I think increasing restrictions is not going to achieve anything. We have constructed engagements with China and a whole bunch of other even more repressive regimes. It would only help to have contact there."

The cultural organizations argue restrictions will limit Americans access to firsthand knowledge of the island. Though they have until May 3 to voice concerns to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the policy has already been implemented.

Winebell said the administration has good reasons for the elimination of the license. "I believe the restriction was a wise choice if it is true that people are going there to have fun rather than researching," he said. "Study abroad is a good program for some, but some just do it to have fun, and that is not what the program is supposed to be about."

Morejon says experiences such as going to the beach and the Cuban cuisine are all part of the Cuban cultural experience. "What a person does after returning to Cuba should not be an issue," she said. "As students we are interested and knowledgeable about the world around us."

Time to expand your business?"
believed all along.

In a written response to the AAUP's committee report, July 1, Gemma, the president of the university and David Stamps, the provost, denied that there had been any violation of the professor's academic freedom.

The committee has scheduled the case next week to make a report to AAUP members at the organization's annual meeting in June. At that time, the group's members will vote on whether to consider South Florida for its handling of the case.

Counseling—a serious black mark against a university's commitment to academic freedom—could make it difficult for the university to attract top-notch scholars and administrators, some faculty members fear.

Laid off profs offered enrollment discounts

With its enrollment growth slowed by military cutbacks, National University is reaching out to a new pool of potential students that could be as large as 40,000. California teachers who lost their jobs this year as a result of the state's budget crisis. University officials say the program, which will cover classes taken from this July through June 2004, could be worth more than $8,000 per student.

Jerry C. Lee, the university's chancellor, says the institution will cover the costs of the program from its own $300-million operating budget and from its $200-million endowment. He says the program makes sense because his institution is now operating below capacity. Class sizes, which usually average about 20, are now at about 17. Lee said, military cutbacks account for some of that, he said. And while enrollment next year is projected to increase, Lee said he expects it will grow by only about 6 percent.

There are no limits on what courses the teachers in the tuition program can take. Those who decide to take courses that will help them make a career change are free to do so, Lee said. He hopes the participants will use it to gain new skills and credentials that will be useful to them if they return to teaching.

Government mutes on Sallie Mae error

Are government officials letting Sallie Mae off easy? That's what college lobbyists, student advocates and compilers of the company are asking after the student-loan giant admitted last month that it had understated the number of borrowers who had made more than $8,790 in payments during 2004.

Sallie Mae officials say it was just a mistake and that they were working to correct it. The company says it was just a mistake and that the error had been corrected.

Sallie Mae officials say they learned of the problem last fall when some borrowers, who were nearing the end of their 10-year repayment term, contacted the company questioning why they still had not paid enough to close out their loans.

The borrowers noted that they had made every payment on Sallie Mae's 10-year schedule, but their statements showed that they still needed to pay more to clear their debts.

The borrowers who have been affected are those who had agreed to pay back their loans over the standard 10-year term. Sallie Mae officials emphasized that 90 percent of the affected borrowers face a payment increase of $50 or less per month.

About 2 percent of the borrowers will see their payments grow by $100 or more. lobbyists say because by extending their repayment periods, the borrowers are increasing the total amount of interest that they owe.

Sallie Mae officials insist that they are not being asked to pay more than they agreed to pay when they took out their loans.

But college lobbyists and advocates for students say that some borrowers are taking on more debt to make up for Sallie Mae's mistake.

That is because the company is encouraging borrowers who have difficulty managing their new monthly payments to switch to a more flexible repayment plan that would give them more time to repay their loans.

Such a solution is nothing that lobbyists say because by extending their repayment periods, the borrowers are increasing the total amount of interest that they owe.

Sallie Mae officials insist that they are paying for their mistake. But that is not the case. Sallie Mae's return to borrowers in interest costs is a small hit for a company that had more than $8.2 billion in total revenues in 2002.

"There's no question that we messed up," adding that it was "a genuine mistake and it isn't happening again."

But to many college officials and advocates for students, such reassurances are not enough. Some believe that instead of changing borrowers the extra payments, Sallie Mae should have picked up the tab.

Some lobbyists and lenders also wonder why the U.S. Education Department or Congress has not taken a more active role to determine whether Sallie Mae acted properly and whether the remedy it came up with was appropriate.

The installation error, Sallie Mae officials say, dates to 1992. However, they say the glitch had "minimal impact" on the calculation of payments until 2001, when the interest rate dropped precipitously and the company began to offer extended-repayment options mandated by Congress in 1998.

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President George W. Bush recently unveiled a policy designed to restrict educational travel to Cuba, an increase in pressure that administration officials say will promote reform in Cuba’s decades-old communist government.

The immediate effect, though, will be the end of legal travel to Cuba for all American scholars not obtaining college credit for their visits. This policy is rationalized as a means to ending abuse of previously available licenses for Americans to travel to Cuba if the trip was for education, rather than for tourism, which is banned altogether.

The administration says Americans feel about their intentions so they could visit the country for pleasure. Their actions, those officials contend, thwart efforts to share the government of income by limiting monetary transactions between the United States and Cuba.

The idea that only non–students will share this policy makes little sense. The administration likely would have banned students as well, if it didn’t fear a public outcry.

Former President Bill Clinton’s policy of increasing interaction between U.S. and Cuban citizens was the right track. This Clinton administration believed that more people-to-people contacts ultimately would topple Cuban President Fidel Castro’s regime by exposing the Cuban people to enlightened and successful American influences, something the Cuban people would choose for themselves.

The Bush plan likely will worsen conditions in Cuba by reducing this cross-cultural interaction, while at the same time preventing legitimate educational visits by American institutions, such as museums, and regular individuals who want to learn about a mysterious and unique nation just 90 miles from Florida’s coast.

If what some Republicans and Democratic legislators now believe is true, Bush’s policy shift signals a gradual increase in tensions between the two countries, which detractors say will lead to a toppling of the Castro regime by force.

The Bush administration policy, though well meaning in its intention of freeing the oppressed Cuban people from a failed regime, is misguided.

Increased interaction between the United States and Cuba is the best solution. By allowing a free cultural exchange, the Cuban people will see a better life, and the income this exchange provides will benefit them, ultimately giving them the strength to topple Castro’s regime.

The free flow of knowledge between cultures should never be inhibited. Through this exchange the best ideas, be they Cuban or American, will spread, inevitably leading to a better life for the Cuban people, and enlightenment for countrymen on both shores.

Our Stand:

Cuban travel restriction misguided

Congressman’s questions deserve answers

Letters to the Editor

Missing the point again

SEND YOUR LETTERS

Got an opinion about The Future or UCF in general?

Tell us!

Send letters to editor@ucffuture.com or submit online at www.ucffuture.com
Simple ways to spend Florida's pocket change

M I K E R I E G L
STAFF WRITER

What's that old saying? If you want something done right, hire a bunch of rich guys that spend most of their time trying to decide how much they should increase their salaries.

I'll concede that I may have transposed a word or two, but there is good reason why that particular saying has endured while others have kicked the bucket and shuffled off this mortal coil to dicker heaven. We have the Florida Legislature to thank for that.

The actual issues at hand, however, are even more significant than those clever self-drink companies would have us believe. UCF, along with the rest of the institutions of higher learning in Florida, may or may not have their budgets restored considerably as a result of what our lawmakers decide in the next few days.

One problem — they can't seem to decide anything. I thought this would all blow over as soon as those guys started missing their scheduled tax revenues, but for the second time in my life, I was wrong.

There is no Santa Claus, and Florida's golf industry is in dire straits. Life is cruel.

But instead of just griping and not having the brass to do anything about it, I've decided to step up to the proverbial teo and start knocking some legislative balls right down the fairway.

I've taken it upon myself to break this Democratic deadlock, because if I know anything, it's how to spend large amounts of money on frivolous stuff while managing to ignore what is so crucial to Florida's economic and cultural well-being.

In my infinite (infantile) wisdom, I've developed several solutions to the budget-related crises in Tallahassee.

If you're a lawmaker, then you must copy each of them down and follow them. If you're not, then you're allowed to read at your own leisurely pace and enjoy them.

First, if the budget is such a problem, let's make a few simple sacrifices and be done with it. Let's begin with Florida's money-hungry school teachers.

Where do they get off demanding $21,000 a year? So what if they have to buy some supplies for their students every now and then? I did the math, and it turns out you can buy something like four million glue-sticks with $21,000. I mean, what's so wrong with the way things are now? I learned basic math at a public school — and look how well I turned out.

Next on the list are these whiny emergency rooms. Are they making cuts out of 52 billion dollars these days? I'm definitely no doctor, but I know that money does not heal wounds — it makes you president.

What we need are more lawyers in these hospitals, making sure none of those doctors are making human errors.

Lastly — and this one's a no-brainer — quit with all the construction and restoration of Florida's roads. Who hasn't been stopping along one of this great state's highways at nearly 6 mph thinking, "Why can't it be like this all the time?"

I, for one, think we should replace all those extra lanes with large pictures of car crashes and people changing tires. This way, drivers will finally have the chance to slow down and look out their windows for absolutely no reason.

Without roads, schools or hospitals dragging the economy down, Florida can finally begin to prosper and the budget problems will be solved. We can spend the $32 billion on the important stuff — like beans dip and the special edition DVD of Dawson's Creek. Most importantly, the struggling golf industry will begin to thrive once again.

After all, who needs a population made up of smart, healthy people with safe and spacious roads to drive on? Not me — and I think I'll forward this column to my congressman and let him know.

FREE WEIGHT TRAINING

The Exercise Physiology Lab at UCF is looking for healthy, male and female volunteers (ages 18-35), to participate in a research study to examine how genetics affects the way a person responds to weight training.

Participants will receive:
- 24 supervised training sessions
- MRI scans of the upper arms
- $125

Call Today
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UCF Card Services

As of May 16, 2003, UCF Card Services is issuing a new ID card to incoming students. There is a $15 charge for current students who wish to have the new, more attractive look. However, both styles of the UCF Card will continue to be valid.

The office is located in the John T. Washington Center, Room 104 across from the UCF Bookstore.

Hours of operation are Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Fri. from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 407-823-2100 for more info.
**Sports**

**Wednesday May 21, 2003**

**Men's tennis caps outstanding season**

Mikael Foster

Finishing in third place last season, the Knights knew they were close to earning a piece of the proverbial brass ring. The road to this year's Atlantic Sun title began in Tallahassee against some of the Southeastern United States' best tennis competition. The men's team stormed the tournament field, snatching two singles draw championships and one doubles draw. Freshman Jacob Acuerbach beat teammate Ehsit Rosen (6-3, 6-3) to win the singles draw C, while senior Augusto Sanabria defeated Rolando Vargas of Troy State, 6-2, 7-6 in singles draw B. The duo of Ener Gursoy and Rosen won the doubles draw B over Troy State's Daniel Quiceno and Robert Van Swelm, 8-4. The Knights then followed up their good fortune during the USF and the Omni Indoor Regional tournaments to close out the fall season. UCF began spring play being swept by fifth-ranked powerhouse University of Florida, followed by a slight stumble against the University of Alabama-Birmingham. The losing streak would be short lived, however, as the men quickly followed up by taking intensity rival Rollins 6-1, Atlantic Sun foe Stetson 7-5, and higher ranked Colorado State 5-2.

The victories snowballed for the Knights. During a 17-match win streak, UCF took wins from Georgia State, Mercer, Navy and Belfast College. The victories were all decisive and the men were proving to be an unshakable force.

**COMMENTS**

**Lost in the shuffle**

Ashley Burns

By now, anyone with a television and interested in college sports knows that the Atlantic Coast Conference has invited the University of Miami, Boston College and Syracuse University to join starting with the 2004-05 campaign. The hands of NCAA Division 1-A are absolutely drooling over this idea as it would make the ACC into another monster conference in both football and basketball.

While meetings between all of the Athletic Directors of the Big East schools apparently went well in Ponte Vedra this past weekend, the ACC's ability to raise the necessary funds will answer all questions. If the ACC can raise the money to make those major changes, then there really is no question other than who will replace the hole.

The conference would be monstrous as it would put the Hurricanes and Seminoles together, basically promising fans of the rivalry two, and maybe, even three, matchups per season. More than anything thought, it gives the ACC a championship bowl game. The bottom line? Millions of dollars in revenue are going to be made by the conference and all teams for this incredibly wise investment.

Nothing could be better for the ACC. However, just like any hostile takeover someone gets destroyed. In this case, those conferences are going to be manhandled by this potential marriage.

The Big East is losing arguably the best football team in the nation. Miami also isn't any slouch in basketball and baseball. Boston College is well above average in both major college sports, and Syracuse's national basketball championship doesn't make them the ugliest girl at the dance. It also doesn't hurt that they've proven themselves to be manhandled by this potential marriage.

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**Knights lose two of three to end season**

Ashley Burns

UCF baseball ended its season Saturday as the team failed to win its most important series of the season against Jacksonville University. The Knights showed great inconsistency as they took only one of three games from the Dolphins.

With the loss, the Knights (28-15, 14-16) failed to make the Atlantic Sun Conference tournament and instead helped the Dolphins (28-27, 17-16) clinch their fourth outright conference title.

Three one of the series showed a Knights' team understanding the immediacy of a series sweep. UCF jumped all over Jacksonville starting pitcher Dennis Robinson (4-7), driving in eight first inning runs. UCF set a team record with nine hits in the first inning.

After Jacksonville scored three runs in the top of the first, freshman first baseman Dave Lambert hit a two-run double to left center, starting the Knights' rally.

The eight-run inning was highlighted by David Mann's and Nathan Kragt's hitting two singles and each driving in a run.

These eight runs were all the Knights would need as the defense held the Dolphins to only three more runs through eight innings. UCF added its insurance in the second when Ryan Robinson (4-7) finished off the game.

**PLEASE SEE Brada on 13**
Big East must fill holes

FROM PAGE 12

over the last three years that their football program can be surprising, notably that... - well, at least against UCF.

So which schools are going to fill the void left by Miami, Connecticut, South Florida, and Pittsburgh? It would be difficult to fill all of those spots, and other conferences will allow themselves to be torn apart. Unfortunately it is already pretty obvious who the unfortunate loser conferences are.

Conference USA is already on the verge of folding. One of the luckiest moments in football history was CUSA looking past a three-way tie between East Carolina, UAB, and University of Alabama-Birmingham don't have enough horses to win the Big East. However, Memphis and Cincinnati both have the water cooler sitting in the lucky moments in college football. To make sure that the MAC doesn't have another lucky team is the Big East. It's a matter of which conference can fill the void in the Big East once conference...

FROM PAGE 12

Bradu named player of the year

Rosen soundly defeating their opponents. Luca Bernaschi of GISI... UCF's Sierra, but it was in vain, as Jagger and Gursoy fought hard and won their singles matches, claiming the victory for the team. Following their dominant performance in the championship tournament, the Atlantic Sun bestowed UCF with even more honors, as Bobby Cashman, in his fourth year at UCF, was named Coach of the Year. Bradu received Player of the Year, and Gursoy was selected as Freshman of the Year.

UCF finishes 8th in Atlantic Sun

Now that everyone has... on some time to reflect back on what happened this year. The Knights have a handful of leagues that are single-season in nature, and the Intramural Sports program... any other conference. Including the Big East, only one conference has been mentioned because they're spending the next six... The schedule for the 2003-2004 season, the fourth years puts the Knights up against UCF, Georgia... who their football teams are too inconsistent to carry the weight of even Boston College.

Intramural Sports heats up for summer

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RateUCF.com receives high marks

Web site lets users view and rate UCF students’ pictures

MIKE RIEGEL
STAFF WRITER

When the small Web design and development group at Mighty Ventures launched RateUCF on April 17, they didn’t expect it to receive a great deal of attention. Three days later, the site had collected more than 15,000 votes from the 2,000 Internet visitors people made to the URL address. So much for low expectations.

RateUCF is a Web site devoted to UCF students who’ve registered for free with the site and posted their picture, enabling anyone who visits to rate their physical appearance. The scale ranges from one to 10, with a score of 10 being the “hottest.”

Aaron Mighty, a 25-year-old UCF graduate student and founder of Mighty Ventures, calls the site a way for college students to “have fun and meet new people.” As a former college student, Mighty says that when budgets and students collide, free activities like his Web site might be preferable to others that are less cost-effective.

“I just thought it would be fun to rate people and see what they thought about me,” sophomore Alex Comoy, 20, said. “I don’t take it too seriously, though. It’s not very official and anyone can leave a rating or a comment.”

Upon logging onto the site, the visitor can choose to rate males or females, or look at the lists of the highest-rated people from either sex. Mighty acknowledges that this site might be regarded by some as being too superficial or perpetuating stereotypes about the importance of looking good, but he doesn’t feel that these are the goals of RateUCF.

“RateUCF is not there to degrade people or find out who’s the hottest,” Mighty said. He called the site another method for UCF students to interact socially and freely. Apparently, students are responding to the site, and in large numbers.

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Surf’s up, dude...

At 11:30 a.m. last Wednesday, I sat in the backseat of my friend Dana’s Wrangler Jeep with our other friend, Erica, heading for Cocoa Beach. The top was down, and the hot summer sun kissed our bare shoulders as the wind whipped through our ponytails.

I was on a mission. After years of wearing board shorts and reading surfer magazines, I finally had signed up for my first surfing lesson at Cocoa Beach. I was an athlete, baby. And I felt tough.

I closed my eyes and imagined myself expertly maneuvering a surfboard through glistening waves, cutting past the swirling hue of seaweed and seasoned surfers… and was suddenly jerked back to reality by an unexpected scream from Dana.

Apparently, a huge gust of wind had whisked her fresh package of “Phyllis Bluhrs” eighers clear out of the car.

“I paid a lot for those,” Dana shrieked, pulling the jeep to a screeching halt along the side of Highway 50.

She then ran, Baywatch-style, into the middle of traffic, returning to the jeep triumphantly with her rescued prize.

OK, so maybe her pipe dreams were a little different from mine. But hey — at least we were both ambitious.

Pursuing pipe dreams on Cocoa Beach

LINNEA BROWN
STAFF WRITER

8 Days a week

Highlights of the cultural calendar

LINNEA BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Wednesday, May 21

Black woman singer

Scott Reer, chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union, will speak at a black women’s meeting sponsored by the NAACP and the women’s Coalition for Social Justice at 7:30 p.m. in the Student Union Ballroom (UCF; 407-823-6900).

Thursday, May 22

The Unsinkable “Iowa”

The Marine Corps Club welcomes historian Daniel Hutt, who will present a lecture and sell books about the famous Iowa-class battleship, at 7 p.m. in Memorial Union (UCF; 407-823-6900).

Friday, May 23

The Dawn of the Century

Legendary rock band The Doobie Brothers will perform at 8 p.m. at the Amway Arena (UCF; 407-925-2000).

Saturday, May 24

Chris McCarty Band

K Caroline’s hosts the Chris McCarty Band, highlighted by world-famous harmonica player and Bob Dylan collaborator for 16 years, at 9 p.m. at the club (407-925-2000).

Sunday, May 25

Church Street Strollin’ On Beach Street

High school band student Ray McCarty, who recently graduated from Stetson University, will play his guitar and sing his favorite beach songs at 11:30 a.m. on Beach Street (407-925-2000).

Monday, May 26

Womens’ Day of Pooh

Bowers Museum hosts “The World of Pooh,” featuring characters and original stories from A. A. Milne’s beloved creation, plus a special puppet show, and a “Pooh” tea party at noon in the Tea Room of the Museum (407-839-1300).

Tuesday, May 27

Space program exhibit

The UCF libraries host an exhibition of the space program in the Spencer Library, featuring satellite and rocket models and memorabilia from the Project Mercury and space-vehicle exhibits in the Space Age. Open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (407-823-2756).

Wednesday, May 28

Supermarket at Bank Street

Supermarket group Band Stand The Supermarket will perform at Bank Street with the 65 and Over Gang. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. (407-823-2756).

Please see Plans on 16
Why Choose Tivoli Apartments?
Here’s what residents have to say...

"Very spacious apartments and balconies"

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ASK FOR EXT. 54

Over 4 million Americans have Generalized Anxiety.

People with Anxiety can be highly functional, professional individuals. Their symptoms may include those such as:

- worrying
- trouble sleeping
- constant scared feelings
- a pessimistic outlook

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ORLANDO 407-644-1165
LEESBURG 352-728-4646
ASK FOR EXT. 64
Plans to create DateUCF
Web site may be in works

FROM PAGE 14

According to statistics from Mighty Ventures, the site had 150 members with over 300 different pictures on May 10, about a month after the venture began. They also claim the site has received over 10,000 hits.

"It actually got so big that we had to upgrade the bandwidth because of all the traffic," Mighty said. He added that upgrading the bandwidth means that the cost of maintaining the site will also increase. "We just had a meeting about putting ads from local businesses on the site to help pay for the cost. "This would, presumably, keep the site free from any charges related to posting pictures or leaving feedback.

But does this site enter exclusively to UCF students?

According to Mighty, the site is designed for UCF but anyone can submit pictures and be on the site. He estimates as many as 15 percent of the people on the site do not go to UCF but are most likely from the Orlando area.

That's not to say that Mighty and his crew haven't prepared for the possibility of fraudulent submissions. He says that every time someone sends in a picture they have people scrutinize the photos to make sure they're not fake or too revealing. They have a similar system for the descriptions that people include with their pictures.

"We keep the pictures family-oriented, just in case kids find the site," Mighty said, "but we have been sent a couple pictures that were pretty revealing.

There have also been some pretty outrageous fakes, including one person who submitted pictures of UCF President John Hill, which included a very unflattering description. Blatantly fictitious entries like these are never actually posted on the site, as they don't make it past the screeners.

Sophomore Tom May, 19, said that he visited the site and realizes the possibility that everyone is not who they say they are. "I don't think it would be too hard to send in some picture you've just downloaded and make up a name," he said. "UCF is a pretty big place, and it would be hard to check, but I'm sure most people are telling the truth."

The possibility of fraud or harassment originally led Mighty Ventures to outlaw any personal information such as e-mail addresses or Instant Messenger handles from being on the site. Reaction from the site's initial members, however, led Mighty and his fellow creators to allow people to include such information, if they so desire.

As Mighty Ventures is busy maintaining and upgrading the RateUCF site, Mighty says there are also talks of beginning a DateUCF site. It would, just like the name suggests, be the catalogue for setting up-minded UCF students up on dates. The site is still in the proposal phase, and the logistics of setting it up may present difficulties, but Mighty and his staff are intent on capitalizing on the success of RateUCF/Room.

Said May of the possibility of a DateUCF site: "I would definitely go check it out, but I doubt I'd use it. Dating someone and picking a number that judges how hot they are sounds like a pretty big jump."

Former UCF student Steve Chastain shows off two books that he has written, now available at UCF's library.

Engineering student turns author

Chastain's home foundry book is sold worldwide

PATRICIA XAVIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Having a book published before graduating from college is an unusual feat. Building an iron-molting furnace from scrap is rare. Doing both is unheard of. But that's exactly what Steve Chastain did — all by the time he was 17-years-old.

From a young age Chastain has been interested in science and chemistry.

"He almost blew up the house several times working with his chemistry set," Donald Chastain, Steve's father said. "Regular school bored him, but he enjoyed science as well as the arts. He always thought sports were a waste of time. He liked learning."

Upon entering UCF in 2000 as a mechanical engineering major, Chastain also published a how-to-guide, "Build an Oil Fired Tilting Furnace." In the same year, The Illustrated, 158-page book details engineering design and furnace construction of a heating system with the ability to melt 300 pounds of iron an hour.

Acknowledged as a breakthrough in home foundry design, Chastain's book has paid his way through college — up to his graduation in August — and is sold in over 30 countries including Australia, Canada, Sri Lanka, England and Saudi Arabia. It can be bought on Amazon.com, lindsaybls.com or in catalogues.

The mechanical engineering major became interested in building his own furnace when he needed auto parts for his pastime, restoring 1960 cars. "I could not buy [the parts] and had to make them myself," he said.

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22 oz Domestic Drafts: $2.25, you keep the cup!
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Sunday: Happy Hour All Day &
All U Can Eat Snow Crab $18.95

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Pucker up
Are lip balms addictive?
Some claim yes.

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ
STAFF WRITER

Taking out her Banana Boat SPF 30 lip balm from her bag, Ann Marie Calabrese applies the moisturizer to her lips.

The 21 year-old senior smears on this seemingly healthy dose of aloe vera and UV sunblock about five times a day.

"You don't need a mirror to apply it, and it does the job of protecting my lips," she said.

While Calabrese has never heard of lip balm addiction, some doctors and Kevin Crossman, the creator of the Lip Balm Anonymous Web site, claim that many people obsessionately surrender themselves to lip balm due to physiological dependency.

An addiction forms when a person suffers physical consequences without a particular thing, said Dr. A.J. Cook, an associate professor of sociology and interim associate director for the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning.

Yet the word is misused, Cook said. Lip balm is not an addiction, but it may be a psychological fixation; an obsession," she said.

"When a person feels the completion of applying lip balm, it may be the beginning symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder," she added.

Crossman, however, acknowledges his dependence on Chap Stick and says the addiction is real.

Crossman's Web site, www.kevinio.com/lipbalm, urges all consumers to stay away from lip balm and to help others fight the addiction. His site contains testimonies of those who consider themselves lip balm addicts, a self-evaluation test for lip-balm addiction, 12 "steps to recovery" and a myriad of news articles that report on lip-balm addiction.

"The Web site is extreme in creating victims," Cook said. "It's kind of dumb."

Disbelievers of this unusual addiction say that lip balm use is simply a habit.

Junior Jenn Heffernan, 20, considers lip balm a part of her everyday living, "It's part of my daily routine: brush my teeth, put lip balm on," she said.

She also admits to owning about 50 different types of lip balms from smeared sticks to glittered balms.

Sophomore James Jordan, 20, does not use lip balm but agrees with Heffernan. "Applying lip balm is just a habit of feeling dry lips," he said.

Junior Michael Barrancho, 20, keeps Chap Stick in his pocket to use for just that purpose, "Nobody wants to kiss dry lips, ... it's gross," he said.

Barranco, who began using lip balm in high school when he would spend a lot of time in the sun, says a lip-balm addiction is possibl. "Your lip becomes used to the lip balm, and absorbs it and will then want more [and] more," she said.

Crossman uses the lip balm brand Carmex about five times a day to cure dryness. "My sister is addicted to lip balm; she's actually the one that got me into it," she said with a grinning smile.

According to Lip Balm Anonymous, Carmex has the worst reputation of being addicting because "their product contains salicylic acid," an ingredient in aspirin.

"It's the official Carmex Web site, Paul Woebling, a spokesperson for the manufacturer, Carmex Labs, says addiction is just a myth. "Carmex contains no addictive ingredients. We are in full compliance with the Food and Drug Administration."

In regards to the ingredient salicylic acid, Carmex says that it serves as a pain reliever and an antiseptic; it also helps to dry cold sores.

Blistex, another popular lip balm brand, addresses the question of whether lip balm is addictive at www.blistex.com, with the help of Dr. Charles Zagerman, associate professor of clinical dermatology at Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago. "People do not become addicted to lip care products or the ingredients in them. Rather, they may become habituated to the soothing feeling of having a lip care product on their lips," he wrote.

There are those who argue that a chemical ingredient may be the root of lip-balm addiction, while others say the dependency is based in advertisements. Marketing may have a lot to do with lip balm's popularity, Cook said.

Junior Jill Grummel, 21, remembers using lip balm in middle school because she wasn't allowed to wear lipstick, Heffernan agrees that for young girls, Chapstick is a substitute for makeup. "Bonne Bell was cool back [when we were younger]," she said.

Without any scientific proof to convince lip balm users one way or the other, Calabrese says that of all the weird obsessions in the world, she would prefer lip balm.

Said Calabrese: "It's a safe addiction."
When the surf's up, shoot the tube, dude

FROM PAGE 14

Since we arrived at the shore a few minutes later than planned, I hurried breathlessly down the beach in search of the blue Nex Generation Surf School tent, where I had arranged a private lesson with instructor and owner Brian Gale, an aspiring pro surfer.

I charged straight up to the first blue tent I saw, where a tan man in bright green swim trunks was explaining the difference between manatees and man-tarayas to a portly teen-age boy.

"And this must be your girlfriend," the tan man said grandly, turning to me and extending his hand.

"Um, no," I countered, wondering if I had picked the wrong tent. "I'm here for my surfing lesson."

"Oh, fer sure," the guy said smoothly, pulling the ponytail holder from his hair and releasing a mass of sun-streaked dreadlocks. "So worries ... I'm Brian Gale."

Nice save, I thought, as the kid walked away and Gale launched into teaching mode. I signed a release form, paid him, and we began the class.

A brief, onshore rundown of ocean safety, Gale showed me how to "pop up," or stand up on the board I would be learning on.

"It's a lot like breakdancing," he explained as he did "the worm" on his surfboard, pushing himself powerfully from his stomach to a squatting position.

I am a conversing type. I thought to myself, practicing the pop-up in slow motion. I felt like I was doing Tai Chi.

"OK, now let's try it while we catch some waves," Gale said, handing me a rash guard (a thick, wetsuit-like surfing shirt) to put on.

Unfortunately, the rash guard was black, long-sleeved and a few sizes too big, causing me to bear a strong resemblance to Shaana. But since I didn't have much of a tan, I decided that I probably would resemble Motley Crue without it.

I fastened the surfboard leash to my ankle and awkwardly plunged into the waves after Gale, who told me that the female surfers had been dominating the surf scene lately.

"Ever since the movie 'Blue Crush,' it's been blowin' up," Gale said. "Anywhere you go now, there are 20 girls paddling around you."

So much for being a pioneer. Gale was too grateful that many beginners lack surfing etiquette, explaining that problems often arise when new surfers don't know their territorial manners.

"When you paddle in for a wave, and there's a surfer to your left, it's closest to the curb, it's their wave," Gale said. "If you try to take it, you'll be in their way, and they won't respect you."

Right on.

After a few more surfing pointers, Gale announced that I was ready. Treating his intuition and having no idea what to expect — I lay stomach-down on the board as a medium-sized wave approached.

Before I could think straight, the water rushed and swelled beneath me and Gale gave my surfboard a strong shove.

"Paddle, paddle," he shouted over the crushing wave, "Now stand up."

Using every ounce of adrenaline and strength in my body, I pushed up to my knees, and for a few uncertain, shaky seconds, struggled to shift my weight to my feet.

"Pop up," Gale cried — and I did. The next thing I knew, I was standing, and I gleefully surfed my first wave all the way in.

It was, by far, the coolest moment of my life.

Emerging from the water, I let out a triumphant battle cry and waved to my friends on the shore.

"So how much does one of these things cost, anyway?" I asked Gale, in awe.

"I'm into surfing," he replied nonchalantly. "Ouch. (Although I do love pawnshops ...)

Suddenly, the blond kid reappeared in the waves next to us.

"My name's Cashman," he announced in a thick, Southern accent. "I'm into hunting, wrestling and Stone Cold Steve Austin."

Right. My name's Shaana. I thought. I'm into surfing.

Although I only managed to stand up a few more times during the rest of my lesson (and almost surfed right into a fisherman on one of my more "successful" runs), I didn't mind.

After all ... I had surfed, man. Life just doesn't get gayer than that.

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Cashman Hammond watches as instructor Brian Gale demonstrates how to 'pop up,' or stand up, on a surfboard.

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A family member was diagnosed with Hypothyroidism. What is it, and how is it treated?

Hypothyroidism is a common disorder that affects more women than men. It is characterized by decreased production of thyroid hormones. Thyroid hormones are produced by the thyroid gland, which is located at the base of the front of the neck. Thyroid hormones are responsible for regulating the metabolism of the body. Therefore, not having enough thyroid hormones can make someone fatigued, gain weight and have cold intolerance amongst many other possible symptoms. At some point the gland may become hypo-functional, either by losing its stimulation by other glands of the body, or by degenerating itself, and having its cells become non-functional.

When that happens, the above-mentioned symptoms may become evident. The diagnosis can be easily made by a simple blood test. If a person is diagnosed with Hypothyroidism, treatment primarily consists of supplying thyroid hormone to the person. This is generally considered a lifelong treatment.

The prognosis is generally good, since most people regain their energy levels and are able to lead productive lives. The medicine may need to be adjusted from time to time, but overall most patients stabilize with a certain dose of thyroid hormone medication, and require no further extensive medical care.

E-mail your questions to: Askadoc@mail.ucf.edu
Furnace aids construction of artwork, pumps, trains

With no agent to assist him, Chastain contacted a printing company in Naples, Florida and invested all his finances in getting the book printed. “I was really scared,” he said “all we had, every dime we had, something like $2500 went into the first printing.”

He credits his publisher Tom Lindsey and author Lewis Gingery with assisting in the publication process. “I was very lucky to work with Tom. He guided me through the process,” Chastain said.

To advertise his work, he put together a press kit, wrote various articles for self-help publications and sought to have his book reviewed. “Less than a week later, the book had already sold enough copies — at about $20 each — to make back his investment and produce profit.”

Chastain says that everyone should write at some point in his or her life either to inform or entertain. “Writing has definitely changed my life for the better,” he said. “You instantly become an expert on your subject. People from all over the world want your advice. It is really cool to see all that work pay off when the book starts selling faster than you ever expected.”

Chastain’s father says the attention has not changed his son despite all his accomplishments. “He’s the same old guy,” Donald Chastain said. “We could not put him to work for the benefit of man, yet do not have much.”
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