



Ana Goni-Lessan / Alligator Staff

Turlington Page-Turner

While waiting for her Plants, Health and Spirituality class to start, 19-year-old Laura Hundersmarck, an anthropology and Portuguese major, reads the Alligator outside of Turlington Hall on Wednesday afternoon.

Local custodian featured in film

By **MORGAN WATKINS**
Alligator Contributing Writer

Melinda Augustus doesn't consider herself a particularly trusting person, but she opened her heart to the filmmakers who developed her story into a documentary.

The film, "The Philosopher Kings," follows Augustus, 48, a custodian at the Florida Museum of Natural History, and seven other custodians from universities across the nation as they tell their stories, showing audiences that wisdom can come from more than just textbooks and teachers.

Augustus traveled to New York twice for screenings of the film, which won or was nominated for awards at 10 film festivals. She said the chance to travel to such a beautiful area and get the red carpet treatment was amazing.

The Florida Museum of Natural History will host a free screening of the film for the public Feb. 16, said Kelly Donovan, a communications specialist at the museum.

Augustus, who lives in Alachua,

was approached during the summer of 2008 to be part of the film after her supervisor, Gloria Grant, suggested her to filmmakers who came to UF looking for potential participants. They returned to film her later that summer and spent a week shadowing Augustus at work and traveling with her to her childhood home and her mother's



Augustus

grave. Director Patrick Shen and producer Greg Bennick made her feel comfortable enough to open up for the camera about her experiences, she said.

The hardest part of the filming process for her was talking about her mother, who died more than a decade after a medical accident during the birth of her 15th child left her comatose, she said. Augustus was 9 years old.

"It's amazing how some things you'll never get over ever in your whole life," she said. "I'll always miss

SEE FILM, PAGE 5

ON CAMPUS

Teachers, friends remember telecom student as 'fighter'

By **CAROLYN TILLO**
Alligator Writer

Samantha Grosse was a curious, motivated student.

The UF telecommunications student worked in the WRUF newsroom for class. She liked international politics, loved animals and was in Alpha Omicron Pi sorority.

She didn't like to use her disease as an excuse.

That's why she didn't tell Tom Krynski, the news director of WRUF-AM and WRUF-FM, that she had cystic fibrosis until she started missing classes and shifts at the station.

"She didn't want that to slow her down," he said.

However, on Monday, Samantha succumbed to her disease, which affected her lungs and digestive system.

"I don't think she had any obstacles. She just did what she wanted to do."

Christine Eschenfelder
WUFT news assignment manager

Carlos Torres, who taught Samantha's Radio 1 class, said she possessed the qualities of a good broadcast journalist, including an ability to work as a team player and a willingness to help her classmates, even if it meant staying after class.

"Whether she would have chosen to do on-air or production, whether she would have chosen to do news, sports or entertainment, she would have excelled at it," Torres said.

Christine Eschenfelder, the WUFT news assignment manager, taught Samantha in her electronic news producing and management course.

Eschenfelder said Sam had a bubbly person-

SEE SAMANTHA, PAGE 4

Skeptical Dems give in to surge

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■ Callie Rivers (right) and the No. 14 UF volleyball team will begin NCAA Tournament play with a first-round match against College of Charleston in the O'Dome tonight. See Story, Page 18.



■ For a story on the upcoming film based on the Alice Sebold novel "The Lovely Bones," in select theaters Dec. 11, see the story in The Avenue, Page 8.

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Sunny
72/50

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News Today

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Hillel Hanukkah Extravaganza
Today, 7 p.m.
2020 W. University Ave.
Celebrate Hanukkah by cooking your own sufganiyot (jelly donuts), making a menorah, playing dreidel and participating in a Hanukkah-themed charades game and rap contest.

Sierra Club Program "Tread Lightly"
Today, 7:30 p.m.
Entomology Building, Room 3118
David Bruderly will describe the latest gas mileage achievements to reduce energy consumption and carbon footprints.

Wigilia Polish Holiday Celebration
Saturday, 8:30 p.m.
Keene Faculty Center, Dauer Hall
Traditional Polish party with games, singing, and fortune telling sponsored by the Polish Student Association, Student Government, and the Center for European Studies.

Floridance presents "Winter Waltz"
Sunday, 8 p.m.
Phillips Center for Performing Arts
The student-run dance company will hold its fall showcase of dance performances. This year's event is raising awareness for and benefiting Relay For Life. The event is free and open to the public.

Gator Citrus Club Citrus Sale
Dec. 9 to Dec. 11, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Fifield Hall
The Gator Citrus Club will be hosting its annual citrus sale. Grapefruit, oranges and gift baskets will be available for purchase. For more information, please visit the club's Web site at www.hos.ufl.edu/citrusclub/.

Food for Thought
Dec. 10, 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Plaza of the Americas
Hosted by the Freshman Leadership Council, food and fun activities will be provided on the Plaza of the Americas to help stu-

FORECAST

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
SUNNY 72/50	RAIN 61/50	RAIN 61/43	PARTLY CLOUDY 67/49	PARTLY CLOUDY 72/51

dents take a break from studying.

Got an event?
And want to post it in this space? Send an e-mail to bkelly@alligator.org with "What's Happening" in the subject line. Please include a one- to two-sentence synopsis of the event. Make sure all submissions are formatted properly. Space in this section is limited.

What's Happening
The student-run dance company will hold its fall showcase of dance performances. This year's event is raising awareness for and benefiting Relay For Life. The event is free and open to the public.

Winter Waltz
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Immunity sought for gay soldiers

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Memorial will be held Monday at AOPi house

SAMANTHA, from page 1

ality and was always smiling.

She would stay after class or come to Eschenfelder's office for help when practicing her news writing and was both considerate and outgoing, he said.

"I don't think she had any obstacles," Eschenfelder said. "She just did what she wanted to do."

Sara Sanner, who lived with Samantha for a year, said she also knew how to have a good time. She and Samantha always had people over to their poolside apartment at the Estates, including football players she met while living at Springs Residential Complex.

Sanner said Samantha was a fighter who didn't let her disease stop her from having a good time or helping others.

"She wanted to, you know, be normal, as normal as she could, and to encourage others who have the disease to do the same," Sanner said.

A memorial for Samantha will be held Monday at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpha Omicron Pi house.



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ON CAMPUS

Smathers Library gets new look

By ERIN ROBERTS

Alligator Contributing Writer

Smathers Library just got a makeover.

A ceremony was held Wednesday morning to recognize lobby renovations that began in August, said Barbara Hood, George A. Smathers Libraries spokeswoman.

The interior was painted, new lighting was installed in the lobby, and the woodwork was stripped and restained, Hood said.

"It was described as looking like a haunted house because of the dim lighting in the lobby before the renovation," Hood said.

The lobby now also features displays honoring George Smathers.

Bruce and John Smathers, sons of the late George Smathers, were joined by their wives along with Dean of University Libraries Judith Russell to cut an orange and blue ribbon at the ceremony commemorating the improved lobby and celebrating their father's contributions.

A black-and-white photograph of George Smathers and President Lyndon B. Johnson in the White House is illuminated in one of the three display cases dedicated to the philanthropist within the lobby.

Other photographs, medals and documents in the display cases also

highlight contributions he made to UF as a student and a benefactor and his contributions state and nationwide as a U.S. senator.

"As a research university, we acquire materials for scholarship and research, and we preserve the artifacts in such a manner so anyone can come in and use these items for education."

Judith Russell

Dean of University Libraries

"Many of the libraries are administered as George A. Smathers Libraries as a system, but this rededicates the renovations that were made due to his contributions," Russell said. "The bronze plaque outside, the portrait of Sen. Smathers, artifacts, documents and overall appearance of the lobby is a much more appropriate dedication to Sen. Smathers."

Hood said rare photographs, books, artifacts and documents that are also showcased in the lobby were chosen from the special and area study collections like Asian and Africana studies, The Price Library of Judaica and the Latin American Collection, which are housed within the library.

"As a research university, we acquire materials for scholarship and research, and we preserve the artifacts in such a manner so anyone can come in and use these items for education," Russell said. "You want people to come and feel like these materials are open to you."

The improvement of the lobby is expected to lead to more progress and renovations within Smathers Library as well as throughout the campus to meet the educational needs of the students, the public and scholars and researchers around the world.

Plans are being made for the renovation of the Special Collections Research Room on the second floor of Smathers Library to increase the amount of space in the study area and overall usefulness of the room.

Bruce Smathers said in order for UF to be ranked nationally in the top 10 universities, it is necessary to provide top 10 research libraries to the students.

"Everyone wants to contribute to the athletic program, but my father recognized that this is the future of the University of Florida as an academic institution, which greatly depends on the school, but really on an excellent library system," Bruce Smathers said. "Education is everybody's birthright, and hopefully UF will become one of the top 10 universities in the country."

Film will have local showing in February

FILM, from page 1

my mom."

The documentary became a platform for her to begin the healing process by finally talking about what happened to her mother.

"As a child, it's like a quietness — unspoken," she said. "I realize now that I have to talk about what's inside of me because if you hold onto it and it's never expressed, you carry that with you your whole life."

Augustus said she's not the type of person to sit behind a desk all day, and she loves her job at the museum because it keeps her on her toes. She enjoys seeing new faces every day as visitors come to see the exhibits.

National News

She works a second job in the afternoon at a daycare center, and before taking a job at the museum in 2004, she ran her own daycare for 18 years. Sometimes she even sees children from her previous daycare business at the museum. She loves working with children because they are nonjudgmental and love unconditionally, she said.

When she thinks back on her involvement with the film, Augustus said she remembers how friendly and reassuring Shen and Bennick were toward her. She still keeps in touch with them, as well as with several of the other custodians from the film.

Augustus, who first thought the film was just a college student project before realizing it was a much bigger undertaking, said she is proud of the film and that making it was ultimately a refreshing experience.

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Editorial

Indian Burn

American Indians need health care reform

The health care system that American Indians rely on is a patchwork of half measures and empty promises.

President Obama outlined many of the problems in a speech last month, stating that "Native Americans die of illnesses like tuberculosis, alcoholism, diabetes, pneumonia and influenza at far higher rates" than other Americans. According to The New York Times, diabetes causes three times as many deaths among American Indians than others, and alcohol accounts for up to five times as many deaths.

Much of this can be explained by the fact that American Indians face a shortage of doctors near reservations, inadequate medical equipment and hospitals that are miles of dirt and gravel road away.

But worst of all may be the issue of rationing. With limited federal dollars and little tribal revenue, members of some American Indian tribes wait months or even years for critical treatment.

At one reservation, home to 15,000 Apaches, there is a backlog of patients waiting for treatment that sometimes stretches into the hundreds. Overburdened doctors often add 10 additional patients a month to wait lists.

And these procedures are by no means minor. A Navajo man waiting for brain surgery in New Mexico suffered seizures while driving and nearly died when he passed out after leaving the stove on. Because his seizures and headaches (caused by a shifting metal plate in his head from a childhood injury) were not "life threatening," it was the back of the line for him.

Even women who find lumps in their breast or otherwise suspect a problem can face wait times of months to see specialists. This has led to breast cancer deaths that may have been preventable.

So when lawmakers included provisions to improve this failing system with the health care overhaul, conservatives opposed the expanded benefits and special exemptions granted to American Indians.

Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., argues that by exempting Indians from purchasing insurance, premiums will rise for insured people and further stress the American Indian health care system.

But with insurers that avoid or provide very limited coverage to American Indian territories, and with a full quarter of the American Indian population in poverty, exemptions make sense. At the very least they should not be used as an excuse to delay much needed improvements to the health care system for American Indians.

Conservatives also argue that because 1.9 million American Indians (of roughly 3 million total) already receive free health care through the Indian Health Service, additional spending is unnecessary.

Free health care is all well and good, but what's the point when you have to wait months or years to receive it?

Isn't this the kind of rationing that conservatives have been claiming to fight for years? They need not look to Canada for a "horror story" to justify their position — there's one in our backyard. One that they choose to ignore.

It's called Indian Country.

The notion that the free market — private insurance — will solve this problem is clearly a flawed one. The free market chooses to avoid these "high risk" populations. But the status quo obviously will not work. So what is the solution?

Comprehensive reform.

American Indians, along with the rest of the American people, need a fundamentally different health care system. More doctors and a greater emphasis on preventative care go hand-in-hand with broader health care coverage.

Because this case proves that you can't go halfway with health care reform.

the independent florida
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The Alligator encourages comments from readers. Letters to the editor should not exceed 150 words (about one letter-sized page). They must be typed, double-spaced and must include the author's name, classification and phone number. Names will be withheld if the writer shows just cause. We reserve the right to edit for length, grammar, style and libel. Send letters to letters@alligator.org, bring them to 1105 W. University Ave., or send them to P.O. Box 14257, Gainesville, FL 32604-2257. Columns of about 450 words about original topics and editorial cartoons are also welcome. Questions? Call 376-4458.

Opinions

ALLIGATOR
www.alligator.org/opinions



Column

Tiger's choice of mistress was subpar

True to his reputation as the hardest-hitting driver on the PGA Tour, Tiger Woods spent the majority of his Thanksgiving holiday entering a world of pain. The grimy details that are now oozing out of the celebrity guerrilla media sleaze machine only amplify the deliciousness of this sordid Tiger tale.

Tiger and the other residents of Isleworth Country Club live in palatial houses that start at \$2 million, but it is refreshing to see that nobody in this exclusive enclave has decided it would be a good idea to talk to the popo. Snitches get stitches, no matter if you live in Section 8 housing or on a snobbish golf course. Tiger "Stop Snitchin" Woods usually stays far away from political endorsements or social issues, so it is good to see him take a firm stand against assisting law enforcement officers. Everybody finds their voice sometime in their lives.

The worthless public relations vomit slopped down in front of us by the more established news outlets would be insulting if it weren't so comical. Tiger's hot Viking nursemaid of a wife was saving his life when she smashed his SUV with a golf club in the wee hours of the night, as the official pablum read last week. Honestly, I can hardly think of a better way to get someone out from behind the wheel than to smash out the back windows with a golf club.

With the staid news outlets sucking at the teat of outright lies and the rich neighbors making like a bunch of defiant dope boys, once again it was up to the Al-Qaida tactics of loosely-coordinated but ideologically similar celebrity news organizations to get the grubby facts about Tiger straightened out.

The saddest part of this whole ordeal is the revela-



Tommy Maple
letters@alligator.org

tion in US Weekly that Tiger was not only cheating on the Viking nursemaid with a skanky "cocktail waitress" but that said "cocktail waitress" was on the television show "Tool Academy." I use quotes around the term "cocktail waitress" because it is code for "stripper who can't dance."

For those of you who have not had the pleasure of witnessing this masterpiece, after filming the first episode, "Tool Academy" instantly rocketed into the pantheon of Greatest Achievements in American History along with the Apollo space missions and Pixy Stix. The show is a transcendent experience, and like fine wine, it only gets better with age.

Obviously, my problem lies not with the show itself but with the fact that the world's first billion-dollar athlete is sopping up sloppy seconds from a guy who willingly identifies himself before a national audience as "Loud Mouth Tool."

Tiger lost his Teflon coating this Thanksgiving weekend, but his mansions and money can surely salve most of his wounds. The stench of infidelity may be harder to wash off the formerly squeaky-clean pitchman — especially the "Tool Academy" love hexagon he has dragged his wife into — but America loves to build people back up after mercilessly tearing them down. Good thing Oprah is gonna be around for a couple more years, because Tiger may need a seat on her comfy couch sometime soon.

Tommy Maple is a graduate student in international communications. His column appears on Thursdays.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of the Alligator.

Reader response

Today's question: Have you ever watched 'Tool Academy'?

The results of Monday's poll question are unavailable due to technical error.

Vote or post a message at www.alligator.org

Letters to the Editor

Bible shouldn't be followed selectively

Thank God for the Bible.

I just want to thank Shaelyn McDaniel for enlightening everyone on the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is so nice to hear someone spread the word of Jesus to others, letting them know that their lifestyles are abominations, just like wearing clothing with two types of material is an abomination (Leviticus 19:19). And I hate it when people "cut the hair at the sides of your head or clip off the edges of your beard." Didn't they read Leviticus 19:27?

Thank you so much, Ms. McDaniel, for shaming these wicked, wicked homosexuals and people who are pro-choice. How dare they fall in love with someone, or decide what is best for their bodies? I'm just glad the Bible is so certain and proven and doesn't reside in the fiction section of Barnes & Noble.

Nicholas Smith
UF 3LS

■ ■ ■

Christians should preach love, not hate

This is in response to Shaelyn McDaniel's letter, "Author misinterprets the Bible's message."

The notion that Christians pretend that God's love is conditional and that he only loves you if you fit some type of "normal lifestyle" is insane. If this were true, then no one would fit the definition of a Christian.

Gay people are murdered, denied equal rights, denied housing, employment and talked about as if homosexuality were some kind of disease that they could "fix" if they were "true" Christians. This is a dangerous mentality and message that Christians hold. Gay people suffer while self-righteous Christians

set impossible standards and hide behind the Bible. I think that some Christians forget that only God is infallible. People need to stop preaching hate and start preaching love and acceptance of all people.

Nichole Newcome
UF animal biology senior

■ ■ ■

H1N1 vaccinations went smoothly

I would like to commend the UF Student Health Care Center for a very organized H1N1 flu shot procedure. The online sign-up system was very easy to find and use. I printed out the forms and had them with me. A tent was set up outside, and it took me exactly 30 seconds to check in. Arrows clearly directed me to the correct location in the infirmary, and the entire vaccination procedure took less than 5 minutes. Kudos to the staff who organized what could have been a madhouse with long lines into a very streamlined program.

Ginny Switt
UF alumna and OPS staff admissions

■ ■ ■

Drivers should consider feelings of fans when making bad decisions

A notice to the University Athletic Association:

I hereby appoint myself the official designated driver of the UF football team. Players can go out and get hammered during the week of the most important game of the season. It's okay. I will be on call, prepared to offer a ride to any player in need of my service.

The game against Alabama may not matter that much to the players, but it certainly

does to me. I will be happy to sacrifice my sleep schedule for the duration of my time at UF to ensure that the players remain eligible for games. My services will extend beyond chauffeuring. I will also throw myself in front of any player targeted by an officer's Taser, help work out late-night conflicts with sandwich shop employees, and retrieve from the impound lot the cars of players' girlfriends. I am fed up with these student athletes who jeopardize their careers and playing eligibility. Should they continue to misbehave, the players may lose scholarships or potential professional suitors, but I stand to lose more: my pride in my team.

Please, UF football players: Call me when in need.

Lars Rodriguez
UF 3LS

■ ■ ■

U.S. should withdraw from Afghanistan

The decision to send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan is irresponsible on the part of the administration I helped put in power. Granted, President Obama always said during the campaign that he wanted to focus on Afghanistan because it was the forgotten war during the Bush administration, but that doesn't make this a correct decision.

There's a point often made about Afghanistan that it is the deathbed of empires. The British failed, the Soviets failed, and now we, too, will fail. It is a modern-day Vietnam.

We have helped put in a corrupt regime, now backed by our government, and the people aren't happy about it. People who wouldn't have previously been anti-American are now changing their minds about our coun-

try. The area is now a breeding ground for anti-American mentalities, but only because we made it that way.

The only responsible thing to do at this point is to pull out of Afghanistan. Did Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon make good decisions when they increased the troops to Vietnam against the will of the people in both the United States and Vietnam? No, and history shows that we should never have been in Vietnam. It's amazing how much the American people know and how little the government listens to them in times of war.

I just read that the surge will cost about \$30 billion during the first year alone. Wouldn't that money be much better off given back to the people of this country, from the lower class to the middle class, and pumped back into the economy?

Only time will tell whether this surge will work in the end. Personally, I don't think it will, because military presence in the country has failed time and time again. All the signs of history are pointing toward the option that isn't talked about — pulling out of Afghanistan. The area will most likely crumble, but the area will probably crumble after we leave anyway. At least we can save countless American and Afghani lives in the process.

I have supported President Obama in everything he has done or has tried to do so far. I found little fault in what he said on the campaign, and I was ecstatic when, in the small hours of the morning in November of 2008, I was a part of history. But I have to differ with him in this decision. I will continue to support him, but I think he has made a huge mistake with this surge. I just hope I'm proven wrong.

Paul Murty
UF English sophomore

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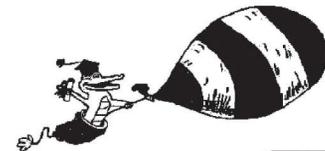
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'Lovely Bones' shows realm between life and death

By **MARY MANCHESS**
avenue writer

Saoirse Ronan isn't like her peers. She doesn't have a fragrance or clothing line, and she isn't among the teeny bopper, triple-threat, overnight sensations that Disney produces.

"I'll leave Miley Cyrus to that," the Irish actress said in a telephone conference call that The Avenue participated in on Oct. 15. "I don't think I'm really that kind of actor."

And she definitely isn't. Ronan was nominated for an Academy Award at the age of 12 for her role as Briony Tallis in "Atonement." And now at age 15, rumors of a second nomination are up in the air for her role as Susie Salmon in the upcoming film, "The Lovely Bones," based on the best-selling novel by Alice

Sebold.

The film is scheduled for limited release on Dec. 11. It will be officially released on Jan. 11.

The plot centers on Ronan's character, 14-year-old Susie, who is brutally murdered and watches her family deal with the aftermath of her death from the in-between. In order to move onto the afterlife she must accept her death, which is conflicted by the vengeance she feels toward her murderer and the desire to have her family heal from her devastating death.

Prior to filming, Ronan decided not to read the book because at the time she was only 13 years old.

"The book is little bit more visual and a bit more violent than the film, so it just made sense," she said. "But I read the book this year for the first time, and I absolutely loved it, and

I think because I had been through the whole experience of making the movie and living through the story, I think that helps me to really connect with the book."

In the book there is a very graphic rape scene that lasts for about two pages. Ronan said that this scene is not featured in the film, but she doesn't think it drastically changes the overall synopsis.

"It can make people uncomfortable, and it can make people too disturbed," she said. "And I find that if they do it the way that we did in 'The Lovely Bones,' which was a very tasteful way to do it, I think, is to just leave it up to the audience's imagination, and let them think of it for themselves, sometimes that can even be stronger."

With a star-studded cast that includes Mark Wahlberg, Susan Sarandon, Rachel Weisz and director Peter Jackson, there are high expectations looming by bloggers and film critics.

While Ronan sees it as a privilege to work with such high-profile people in the business, she said she has never felt intimidated but always respected.

"I've never really been starstruck; I've never been speechless or anything like that. I don't think I could do that anyway, I'm Irish," she said. "I usually get very excited when I meet people around my own age, whether they're well-known or not."

Excited and cheerful are characteristics of the actress outside of her dark characters.

"I'm not particularly attracted to dark roles. I suppose with 'Atonement' and 'The Lovely Bones' it just

kind of worked out that way," she said. "But I love the depth to them. I love just their thinking process, especially with 'Atonement.' And it just, you know, it takes a lot of thinking to really understand those kinds of characters. There's a lot of parts now where it's very easy to just be the happy girl, and you know, there are some great characters at the moment who are more than that, and who are also very uplifting, like Susie Salmon."

Ronan said she has also been looking at scripts that are comedic and a little bit more light-hearted. But she doesn't think that Susie Salmon's real story is dark.

She said, "I think that the message of this movie, although it may not seem like it to people who haven't seen it yet, is ultimately hope and how you get there."

New Movies



Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

Mark Wahlberg (who plays Jack Salmon) and Saoirse Ronan (who plays Susie Salmon) in the upcoming film "The Lovely Bones." Ronan plays the role of a young girl who is murdered and watches from heaven as her family tries to track down her killer. The movie will be released Dec. 11.

THIS WEEK:

PG 11: Column about crushing the spirit of Christmas and a review of the Gainesville Local Art Mart

PG 12: Q + A with indie band Cursive

ONLINE: Check out a list of easy Florida romantic getaways at www.alligator.org/avenue

REGULARS

SEX: The benefits of technology, page 12

FASHION: The Avenue speaks with the founders of Rent the Runway, page 9

A-LIST

Looking for quick gift ideas? The fifth season of *Lost* comes out on DVD Tuesday. You could also pick up Taylor Swift's new Holiday Collection EP with Christmas favorites. And if you still can't find a gift for someone, there is always Starbucks.

COMING UP

Don't be sad this is the last Avenue of fall. We'll be back in the spring with more stories on all of your entertainment favorites.

fashion

Runway offers alternative to buying designer clothing

By **TAWNA SOELDNER-DANGER**
avenue contributing writer

Even with a closet full of clothes, many women suffer from the age-old complaint: I don't have anything to wear.

Two recent Harvard Business School graduates aided the timeless plight by creating Renttherunway.com, a Web site that allows women to rent high-end dresses for one-tenth of what they cost.

For most women, the luxury of walking into a retail store and purchasing dresses from designers like Roberto Cavalli, Hervé Léger and Catherine Malandrino is, and probably always will be, a dream. But Renttherunway.com makes dreams a reality for women working on a budget with rentals ranging from \$50 to \$200 for a four-night loan.

The Web site makes renting a dress as easy as ordering a textbook. Customers browse the vast selection of designers, schedule a delivery date and the dress arrives the next day. Just to be safe, included with

the dress is a second back-up size, a custom garment bag and a fit kit, including double-sided tape, bra strap adjusters and deodorant stain removers. If the customer isn't sure what style she will be feeling that evening, for an additional \$25, she can rent a back-up dress.

After a night of looking fabulous, the customer places the dress in pre-paid packaging and drops it in the mail for a no-hassle return. Dry cleaning is included in the initial price, but a \$5 insurance fee covers most wardrobe mishaps, like a missing button, broken zipper or slight stain. If the dress is returned in complete disarray, the renter is responsible for the full retail price.

Jenna Rush, a UF advertising senior, stumbled upon Renttherunway.com on a Twitter feed from Glamour.com earlier this semester.

"I was instantly intrigued," she said. "The clothes are incredible, and the prices are reasonable, even for a college student like me."

With Christmas parties just around the corner, winter weddings on the

"Some girls may resist branching into new designers and styles, but our stylists walk you through the process. They help you find the perfect dress for your body type."

Jennifer Carter Fleiss
co-founder

mind and formals galore, Rush said Renttherunway.com is just what any recessionista needs to survive the holiday season.

The Web site also offers a hotline with stylists available to help with fittings.

"They offer girls reassurance," co-founder Jennifer Carter Fleiss said. "Some girls may resist branching into new designers and styles, but our stylists walk you through the process. They help you find the perfect dress for your body type."

Rush is one of Renttherunway.com's founding members. With the Web site being invitation-only, Rush had to request to be part of the exclu-

sive service. Now, more than 65,000 people are members, and 20,000 people are on the waitlist. Members receive e-mail updates of new dress arrivals and special discounts.

For New Year's Eve, Rush plans to rent a chic one-shoulder sequin Alice and Olivia cocktail dress that she said she wouldn't normally be able to afford. Co-founder Jennifer Hyman brainstormed the idea during a trip home to New York City. Hyman's younger and incredibly fashionable sister Becky was stumped on what to wear to a wedding. She hunted through her closet but found nothing that inspired her. Becky's meek salary as an accessories buyer for Bloomingdale's made the idea of purchasing a designer piece unrealistic.

"She felt guilty about buying something new, didn't want to borrow from a friend and wished there was a way to rent a dress that would have gotten her excited for the event," Carter Fleiss said.

Back at school, the Hymans and Carter Fleiss created many business plans and held a meeting with Diane

Von Furstenberg in hopes of getting Renttherunway.com off the ground.

After speaking to more than 1,000 women, Fleiss said that women's worries evolved into Rent the Runway.

"The Web site gives women the access to the Carrie Bradshaw club," she said. "Girls get to dress up and have fun with fashion. They don't have to go to Forever21 or H & M and get the knock-off. It's the best way for designers to get real girls in their clothing."

The co-founders plan to launch accessories in the spring. Carter Fleiss said it will show women how to dress up or down any of the items featured.

They also plan to dabble into profit sharing with the designers, bridesmaid's products and eventually become international.

"Renttherunway.com is great for girls who are conscious of cost," Carter Fleiss said. "It gives girls who never had the opportunity to wear designers like Just Cavalli, to test out the hot red dress and if she has a great experience in it she'll want to go out and buy it."

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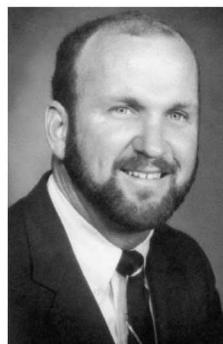
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AMERICAN

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LATIN CHINESE

Green Plantains

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LOCAL

& ORGANIC

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For more info on the guide to dining out, contact Brittany Fayne, Alligator Advertising, 376.4482

humor

Killing Christmas spirit

By ERIK VOSS
avenue writer

When my family gathers, we collectively devolve into sadists.

Somewhere between my father's need to leave an impression and my mother's high standards came five offspring who, when united, produce an unrelenting flow of cynicism. We're the champions of cruelty.

Naturally, my family is at its most destructive during the holiday season.

It was four days before Christmas when we dined at a local restaurant. At a nearby table sat a woman wearing a headband with festive felt antlers, which jingled merrily every time she took a bite of her Reuben sandwich.

Christmas was coming early this year.

Regardless of what reindeer do in minds of believers, that sort of thing doesn't fly in my family. Our enjoyment of the holiday season has always been tongue-in-cheek: We're ho-ho-hoing at you, not with you.

"Do you think she picks up NPR on those things?"

"It's going through the uprights... and it's good!"

"I'm debating between ordering the mozzarella sticks or the grilled reindeer."

Eventually our well of wit dried up, and we changed the subject, noticing our inside joke was leaking to other tables. My father, however, hadn't been paying attention and wasn't sensitive to

the situation.

"What's with the antlers?" he asked.

Our table exploded into laughter. Antler Lady lowered her half-eaten Reuben to her plate, removed the antlers from her head, and slipped them into her purse.

She heard us.

"We finally did it," I whispered. "We killed Christmas."

At that very moment, the Polar Express derailed. Rudolph was gunned down by a Taliban rocket launcher.

Santa Claus clutched his chest and collapsed thunderously to the ground, and, after the elves' failed attempts at CPR, he wheezed his final words:

"You win, Erik."

I couldn't escape the nightmares.

On Christmas Eve, gone were my visions of dancing sugarplums - in their place were Antler Lady's sobbing children cowering in the corner, dodging shards of porcelain ornaments as they shattered on the wall behind them.

"Christmas is canceled!" she belatedly, blowtorching the artificial tree down to a steaming mound of green plastic.

"Why, Mommy, why?" squealed the children.

"Because Mommy wore these f**king antlers you gave her!"

The holiday spirit can only take so much mockery before we lose it forever. We can embrace the childish traditions, or we can dig Santa's grave.

Happy holidays.

GLAM shows gems

By MARGARET GRECO
avenue writer

people playing with sparkly multicolored hula hoops. This was somewhat shocking. What was even weirder was that these people were not just testing them out; they were actually buying them.

Later, I saw a table covered with small cloth purses that turned out to be reusable snack and sandwich bags.

Julie Adams and Meg Pearce, both 2008 UF graduates, started Moja Creations online about 10 months ago on etsy.com, which Adams described as "an eBay for homemade items."

Although this is their first craft show, the pair has sold more than 2,500 items online and has received international orders from Australia, Canada and Singapore.

The bags, which come in kid-friendly prints like dinosaurs and other more adult patterns, are popular among schoolchildren and women who take their lunch to work, Adams said.

Overall, the craft show didn't really feel like a craft show. There were no tacky Christmas sweaters adorned with puffy paint and appliques, but there was creepyfound-object jewelry and a yarn chandelier. The sale showcased the bizarre things hidden in Gainesville that we sometimes look over.

Fashion Sense

band

Cursive gets creative

By JON SILMAN
avenue writer

Cursive, an indie-rock band from Omaha, Neb., is playing at Common Grounds on Sunday. The band is on Saddle Creek records, a record label best known for another Omaha act, Bright Eyes. Its latest album, "Mama, I'm Swollen," was released in March, and they played the "Late Show with David Letterman" that same month. The Avenue got the chance to talk to bass player Matt Maginn about playing on TV, the band's sound and his favorite Nirvana record.

♦ **So what did it feel like performing on that (Letterman) stage?**

Scary. Frightening. It was intimidating and really f**king cold.

♦ **You seemed to get a pretty good response from him afterward. He said the title of the album and then said "Yowza!"**

I think he was sort of shocked or surprised. I think we caught him off guard a little bit.

As opposed to most indie bands who seem to prefer sparse arrangements and lo-fi sound textures, Cursive has more of a dissonant feel without as much sound separation, and kind of a Pixies-like vibe. Is that intentional? We do like to allow for some separation, but that's just kind of the aesthetic we've always liked. We've never hid the fact that we like bands like The Pixies a lot (laughs) and are influenced by them. We kind of like the dissonance a lot, and anytime you can make the music sound uncomfortable or different or odd, the better, really.

♦ **OK with that in mind, which Nirvana album do you like better: "Nevermind" or "In Utero?"**

I guess I kinda like "In Utero," for that reason. It's far more aesthetically interesting, but they were a big enough band that (the record label) gave people enough time to really understand it.

♦ **Back to this dissonance aspect,**

is it a statement against "popular" music?

The first time I was introduced to that type of playing, it was so different and so fresh to me that it was exciting and really captured my imagination, you know? It wasn't anything you'd heard before because it's not normal to make those sort of sounds.

♦ **So as a band when you're writing, instead of putting in a normal guitar break or something do you consciously say, "OK, let's try something that sounds a little different here."**

We try to kind of walk a line. We used to do that, but we've allowed ourselves to expand a bit and not be so intentionally counter-intuitive all the time. We've been trying to allow some normal influence to come in and not f**k everything up, but that being said, I think we collectively decided that the next record we want to completely f**k up. We've been trying to mix them both, something more traditional and things that are weird sounding, but now I think we're in the mood to do something really strange.

♦ **How do you measure success as a band?**

Good question - I don't know. I guess if our friends still like what we record then we're successful.

♦ **What about you personally? How do you measure success for yourself?**

I guess if I'm still having fun, and surviving without too much pain. You know, if we can still have fun and not have to take out a loan to go out on tour.

What: Cursive with Capgun Coup and The Early Twenties

When: 6 p.m. Sunday

Where: Common Grounds, 210 SW Second Ave.

Cost: \$14

High-tech sex pleases all

By BRANDT WILLIAMS
avenue writer

As any well-educated and well-rounded 20-year-old can tell you, college welcomes those with an irrepressible appetite for knowledge. However, those 20-somethings also comprise the nation's youth - a generation that is enjoying its prime and is fully aware of its sexual abilities. College also welcomes the flirtatious, the scandalous, the irresponsible, the debased and the adorably promiscuous. We jump in and out of one another's beds but often overlook the simpler, STD-free expressions of our sexuality.

This is where technology comes in. Smartphones, texting and webcams have broadened not only our communications, but also our sexual horizons. Long-distance couples should be especially thankful for this as it provides an outlet that allows them to get in touch, get off and prevents them from putting out for someone else.

Still, phone and webcam sex is not limited to those who are emotionally committed. Do you remember that Georgia fan you met in Jacksonville, the one who simultaneously blew you and your mind? He or she may live in Athens, but technology can establish a connection for at least one more night. Phone and webcam sex also provides an alternative to intercourse, thereby promoting abstinence. And if abstinence isn't really your game, well, high-tech sex will prove sufficient at teasing your latest crush and his cocky attitude.

It all starts with simple texting, or rather, sexting. Use your BlackBerry or iPhone one night to drop a flirtatious hello. Ask your intended target why he or

she is up at such a late hour and what he or she is doing to, err, entertain himself or herself. You'll know pretty quickly if he or she has taken the bait. Just be careful where you leave your phone when sexting; you wouldn't want the talk at Thanksgiving dinner to be why your younger sibling found a text that read, "I want to baste your turkey."

Phone sex is where it gets heavier. This requires you to get vocal and not give a damn about what your roommate might be overhearing. Start by discussing what you're not wearing and where you're touching yourself. Progress into what you'd do with your phone buddy if he or she were there - think of Ludacris' lyrics, "whips and chains, handcuffs, smack a little booty up with my belt."



Some might consider this prospect awkward or uncomfortable - but that's why a sense of humor is necessary. A little encouragement will further direct the conversation from

"but...I don't really know what to say" to "I want you on all fours."

And then there is the webcam. This is best done not with someone met in a chat room but rather someone you know, trust and is of age - jailbait should not be a word in your vocabulary. Webcam sex is essentially someone watching via an Internet connection while you show off your ass(ets), and milk yourself and that webcam's abilities for all it's worth.

This being 2009, phone and webcam sex isn't creepy; it's technological. Just ensure that your morning after doesn't include finding your adventures on texts-fromlastnight.com, or, dear God, Xtube.

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2 For Rent unfurnished

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SW Archer Rd. Area
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FREE Rent until January 2010!!!
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Ph. 372-3826 www.gremco.com
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Summer Place Pet Friendly No Weight Limits
1 bdr. from \$363 \$300 Amex card.
Just off SW 34th St.
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●1BR/1BA \$425
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www.Gore-Rabell.com 4-21-09-71-2

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Tile floors, except BRs. Covered patio. Close to Shands 2336 SW 34th Pl Apt D. \$600/mo w/stacking W/D. 1yr lease 352-372-3131 12-9-09-41-2

1BR/1BA apt, \$499/mo. 3320 SW 23rd St. Each unit has a private gated court yard. On bus route close to Shands, VA & College of Vet Med. Pets <50lbs arranged. 352-377-2150 or paloverde3320@yahoo.com 1-6-09-44-2

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Inc 352-372-1494 1-5-09-22-2

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1Blk to UF! Central H & Air,
Carpet, Laundry Fac. On site,
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Management Inc 352-372-1494 1-5-09-22-2

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WALK TO UF. Avail in Jan:
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\$100 OFF 1st MONTH RENT. 2 BR/1.5 Bath Phoenix apt. 1 mile to campus and Shands on bus route. W/D conn. Fenced yard. \$500 security, \$550/month. 2640 SW 31st Place Unit B. 562-2782 or 514-6869 if interested. 1-6-14-2

1st MONTH'S RENT FREE! Lovely, spacious 3/2 condo. Quiet, yet centrally located, just 1.5 mi. from law center. Very low utilities! Partially furnished. W/D, pool. \$975. Exit Realty Producers 352-316-6842 12-8-09-10-2

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NEED A CHANGE? Rooms for rent, 5 blks from UF. Indiv leases, no reded fees, utils incl. A few left for Dec or reserve yours for Aug. Call today 226-4111 12-9-09-10-2

FIRST MONTH FREE or \$600/MO! (original price \$660) Bright 2/1 apartment on the second floor. Short walk from UF/Shands/RTS 13,16,17. This is a lease transfer. Available Dec. 1st. Hurry! Call 407 922 0029 12-3-5-2

MOVE IN JAN. Room in 4b/3b house share bath. Easy walk to campus. No pets. No Smoking. 500/mon incl. util. 250/sec dep. kmtheo@hotmail.com or 352-262-2710/514-4570 1-5-09-10-2

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Nice 2 BR near UF, restaurants and shopping. Large utility room with WD Connections, Dishwasher, Additional private storage, Pool. \$620 per month. (352)870-5815/(352)333-7721 1-5-10-2

3BR House for rent Wood floors, front/back porch. 2035 NW 35th Ave. Close to UF, SFC busline. \$725/mo. Available now. Flex lease. 352-318-8822 12-3-09-5-2

Student looking for roommate to share a lakefront 2 bedroom 1 bath condo 1/2 mile from campus. Extremely nice, quiet neighborhood, with a respectful roommate. Would be responsible for 1/2 utilities/cable/internet. Rent \$390. Available immediately. Call Don 352-870-0152 12-4-09-5-2

\$99 Moves-U-IN! \$299 + 75 utility package. Downtown Vintage room, or 34th st condo room w/private bath & walk-in closet. 352-226-3535, 713-705-6279 1-7-09-10-2

3/1 Vintage House! \$900/month Walk to UF! Porch, w/d hook-ups, central AC 352-226-3535, 713-705-6279 517 NW 8th St 1-7-09-10-2

4 Bed/2 bath Vintage House \$990/month. Walk to UF! Univ/by Leo706. 818 SW 3rd Ave. Central A/C, porch, w/d, and close to downtown too. 352-226-3535, 713-705-6279 1-7-09-10-2

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One bedroom with office, full bath, and kitchen for rent! One block from the University of Florida on SW 5th Ave. Utilities are not included but are split among the renter and the other three roommates. It's part of a house and rent is only 500\$ a month! 386-295-1703 12-7-09-4-2

2 For Rent unfurnished

Duplex 2BR/1BA, NEW kitchen, tiled floors, fenced yard, 1mi to SFC, \$600/mo. Call 352-278-2897 12-8-09-5-2

2BR/2BA Condo 1 Mile from Campus Call 352-516-2545. Pets ok. 1-5-09-7-2

LARGE 2/2 PETS OK Fenced in backyard, W/D hook-up, plus storage, central heat & AC, Master bdrm has 3 closets, apt just painted, new carpet, new frig. Now available, rent \$650. Sec only \$100 with reference. Call Mr. Kristoff 352-332-5030 1-5-09-7-2

HISTORIC APTS Pleasant Street Historic District. 2BR \$850, two 1BRs \$625 & \$575. one efficiency \$475. Hardwood floors, ceiling fans, high ceiling & porches. 1st, last, security. No dogs. 378-3704 sallyville@aol.com 1-5-09-7-2

DUCKPOND 2BR/1.5BA 1200 sq ft townhouse. Amazing location. Tile floor, new countertops. Blocks to downtown. Available now. \$850/mo. 508 NE 4th Ave. 379-4952 1-5-09-7-2

DUCKPOND Stone cottage studio. Small but cute. Good sized kitchen. Blocks to downtown, restaurants. Available now. \$475/mo. 306 NE 6th St. 379-4952 1-5-09-7-2

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BLOCKS TO UF Available August 2010. Now showing multiple houses. 2BR/2BA, 3BR/2BA, 4BR/3BA, 5BR/3BA. www.dalyproperties.com or call Carol 359-3341 1-5-09-6-2

Beautiful & Affordable Townhouse w/fireplace in SW Gville! Laminated wood downstairs & carpet upstairs. 2BR/1.5BA near UF, Butler Plaza, I-75 & Oaks Mall. Short leases avail. Great deal! Don't miss it. 352-262-2828 1-5-09-6-2

Move in Special: No Security Deposit 2/2 Condo with washer/dryer, screened-in porch, newer condo, near UF. Shands, located off 34th & Archer Rd. 2 units available \$750 per month. Call 317-5060 1-5-09-6-2

Relocated. Assume my lease. Dec rent paid. No 1st, last, or security deposit 950.00/mo 2BR/2BA townhome, W/D hookup. Arlington Square, downtown, walk to the Hipp, on bus line, alarm system included. 863-258-6350 12-9-09-5-2

3 Subleases

\$385-Room available for Spring 2009 in 4/4 University Terrace Condo. Fully furnished, utilities included, W/D, on bus routes 12 and 35. Call Anu @ 352-262-0628 12-9-9-3

Sublease furnished 1/1 in a 4/4 at Gainesville Place. W/D, utilities, internet, cable included. \$400/mo. 3 great female roommates. Available immediately through August. (352) 231-3124 12-4-09-5-3

Release Spring 2010, UClub Apts. I'LL GIVE YOU \$350 FOR THIS APT. \$555/mo. all inclusive; 1 bdrm., private bath; female roommate email: cmm616@ufl.edu 1-5-09-10-3

Sublease furnished 1/1 in a 2/2.5 townhouse spring 2010(Jan 1 to April 30). \$500/month utilities, internet, and cable included! Located in Brighton park Call (352)222-9646 or email clarissahoover@ufl.edu 12-8-09-5-3

\$350/mo 1 BR furnished apt at Campus Lodge Available from January to August. W&D, Pool, 24 hr gym, Computer Lab, Basketball courts. Contact 8504783876 or 8507124370 12-7-09-4-3

SUBLEASE \$500 per month: The Courtyards-5 minute walk from UF campus. 4/1.5, fully furnished with utilities and wireless. Lease begins January 1 and can go until August 7 (ending date can be negotiated.) Contact Nicole at nicole.seigel@gmail.com. 12-8-09-4-3

3 Subleases

\$280/mo+util. Sublease nxt spring/sum. Lg 1 br/1ba in 3br/3ba Stoneridge apt. Inc: wash/dryer, dshwshr, all essentials! Lg walkin closet! Walk to Butler plaza. 2 bus rts 12&35. Gym, pool, bball/tennis crts also. 813-909-6447 12-9-5-3

4 Roommates

Roommate Matching HERE Oxford Manor 377-2777 The Landings 336-3838 The Laurels 335-4455 Greenwich Green 372-8100 Hidden Lake 374-3866 4-21-71-4

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Enjoy A Romantic Old House Near library downtown. \$295-375/rm + utils. Short term. No pets. No smoking. 378-1304 12-9-09-40-4

1 month free-Share 2BR/2B MH in Cornerstone. Furn rm avail now. \$200 N/R dep. \$400/mo or \$100/wk util incl. Laundry/cook/clean svc avail. Near bus/shops. 30 day notice to vacate. Some pets ok. Call 331-0762 12-7-33-4

1BR/1BA or 2BR/2BA avail Jan 1st. for responsible mature individual. \$400-\$800/m OBO + utils. Brandywine on Archer Rd. yttek@hotmail.com or 305-332-6566 12-4-09-28-4

Walk or bike to UF, Shands or VA. Roommate needed for nice 2/1, \$350/mo + half utilities at Summit House on SW 16th Ave. Recently renovated. \$200 dep. Call 352-843-0220 to see. 12-9-29-4

Female roommates needed. Live in a big new house w/ bus stop to UF, quiet/relax area, fenced yard, private pool. 480/month all inclusive. Joyce 941-724-0961. Must see House Pics: tinyurl.com/mbs77r 12-9-09-23-14

Female roommate needed, 4/2.5 townhouse, I-75 and Newberry, all included, gated, \$400 baezwp@bellsouth.net 954-557-4769 1-19-09-30-4

2 bedrooms available now in a GREAT 4 BR house near campus. Easy walk to law school, bike to main campus. Live with one student, one professional. \$450/mo. Nice neighborhood, sunny porch, great place to live. Call David, (321) 303-2214. 12-4-09-10-4

1BR/1BA in 2BR/2BA located on Archer Rd. Bike to Campus! Avail Now/Spring Sem. Discount rent until January 1st.- Then \$400+util. OBO Call Chase at 386-937-2621 12-4-09-5-4

Room for rent. Master bedroom w/ private bath. 3/4 mile from stadium. Quiet neighborhood. Split utils. 352-281-6618 1-5-09-9-4

Roommate wanted in Jan or Aug. 2000 sq ft. 2 women looking for 3rd roommate. 3BR - comes fully furnished, W/D, internet, TV. 3rd & 2nd Ave. \$600 + 1/3 utils. 561-281-9274 1-5-09-9-4

Roommate wanted. Large 3/3 house w/ 2 grad students in NW. Close to UF, SFC, shopping. \$375/mo, \$200 dep. Lease til 7/31. Large room, low utils. Call Evan 352-428-0500 1-5-09-9-4

Male, grad student, small furnished apt on side of private home close to UF. One person only. No pets. Cable, patio, clean, quiet. \$500 pm, utilities included. 336-5808 12-9-09-8-4

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4 Roommates

Roommate needed for 2BR Apt. close to UF. Bus Stop Right Outside. Room Not Furnished, Everything Else Furnished. \$350/Mo. Plus Utilities. Call Kyle at 954-907-8538 or email me at kylefranzone06@yahoo.com .12-4-09-5-4

Luxury House - room, \$500 incl. utilities. W/D, ceramic tile, micro, etc. Looking for graduate/professional for nice place & likes small pups. Williston/SW 23rd St. 352-226-3535/713-705-6279 1-7-09-10-4

Roommate needed in Rockwood Villas spacious room and private bath in a 3/3. \$400.00/month plus a 1/3 of the utilities 352-538-7521 1-5-09-8-4

Grad student seeking two female roommates (NS/ND) to share a new 4/2 house in a quiet neighborhood 3 mi. W of I-75. With cable, internet & security alarm. 475/mo., util. incl. Please call 352-331-8794. Rooms are available immediately. 1-12-12-4

Beautifully renovated, furnished condo, 1 mile from UF, \$399/MO includes cable, internet, utilities, pool + fitness room and on bus route, Female roommate needed, 352 262-2871 1-5-09-7-4

1 bed/private bath in 3/3 at rockwood villas. \$450 inc. utilities (cable, wireless internet). Washer/Dryer in unit and plenty of parking. On UF and Sante Fe bus route. Call Jerry for more info. 407.403.0656. 12-9-09-6-4

5 Real Estate

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6 Furnishings

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BED - FULL SIZE - \$100 ORTHOPEDIC Pillow-top mattress & box. New, unused, still in plastic w/warranty. Can deliver. Call 352-377-9846 4-21-09-71-6

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6 Furnishings

BED - KING - \$170 PILLOWTOP mattress & box springs. Orthopedic rated. Name brand, new, never been used, in plastic with warranty. Call 352-372-8588. Can deliver. 4-21-09-71-6

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DINING ROOM Beautiful cherry set w/table, 6 Chippendale chairs, hutch & buffet. New, still in boxes. Retail \$5200, sacrifice \$1100. Must sell. Can deliver. 352-372-8588 4-21-71-6

FUTON Solid oak mission-style frame w/ mattress. New, in box. \$160 332-9899

DINETTE SET 5pc \$120 Brand new in box. Never used. 352-377-9846 4-21-09-71-6

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BED- QUEEN New orthopedic pillowtop mattress and boxspring set. Brand name, brand new, still in plastic with warranty. Can deliver. \$130 352-377-9846. 4-21-71-6

Bed- All New King! 3pc Orthopedic pillowtop mattress set. Brand NEW, still in plastic with warranty. Can deliver. \$200 352-333-7516. 4-21-71-6

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SOFA \$185 Brand new! Love seat \$150 still in pkg. Can del 352-333-7516 4-21-71-6

7 Computers

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Florida will start NCAA play

By ANTHONY CHIANG

Alligator Writer
achiang@alligator.org

After being selected to the NCAA Tournament field for the 19th consecutive season, the Gators should be accustomed to the post-season by now – but that isn't the case.

Florida doesn't know what to expect this weekend as it has only has played a combined three matches all time under Mary Wise against the three teams in its first and second round bracket — College of Charleston, FIU and Miami.

No. 14 UF (23-5, 16-4 Southeastern Conference) will begin the tournament against College of Charleston (18-12, 12-4 Southern Conference) at 7:30 tonight in the O'Connell Center.



Wise

Although the Gators and Cougars don't have too much of a history, the one time they did matchup was in a similar situation – the first round of the 2007 NCAA Tournament.

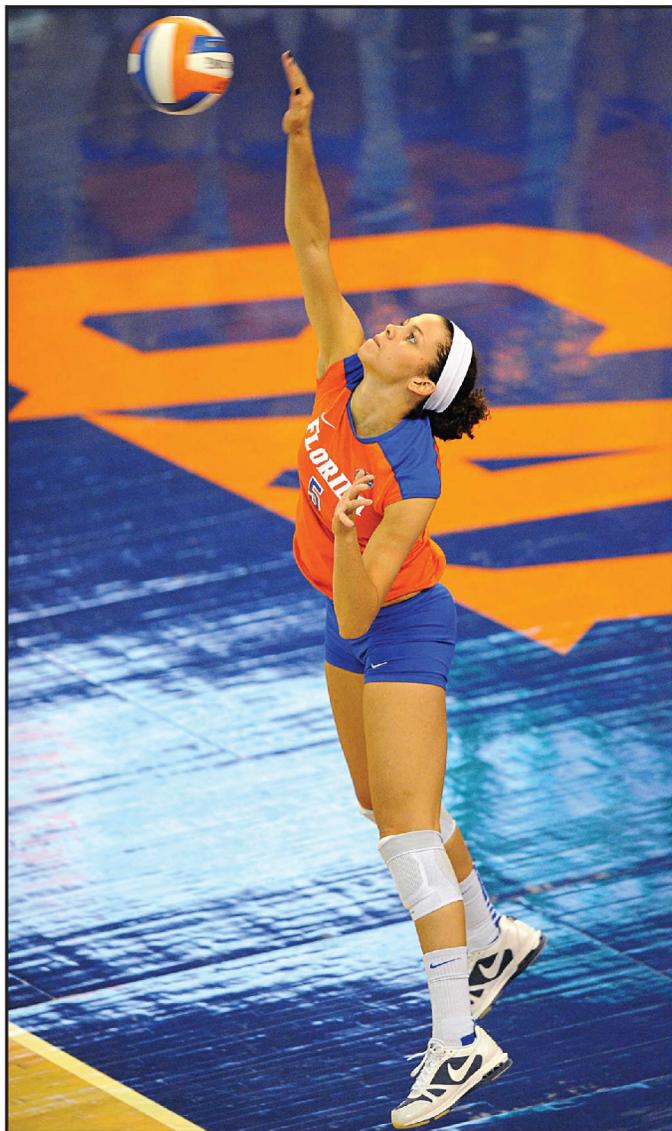
The unfamiliarity between the four teams comes as a change to the Gators.

"It's way different. In the SEC you play teams twice," opposite hitter Callie Rivers said. "You pretty much know people's names, numbers and tendencies within the conference. When going into these games you really don't know anything about the teams."

Although the players will not have the chance to view mountains of film on the Cougars, coach Mary Wise has spent all week studying UF's first-round opponent.

From what she has seen, College of Charleston runs a fast offense and block ex-

SEE VOLLEYBALL, PAGE 19



Harrison Diamond / Alligator Staff

UF outside hitter Callie Rivers said the NCAA Tournament is quite a change due to the unfamiliarity of opponents.

It's really too easy being this awesome

Editor's Note: Graduate student, Palm Beach Post Gators beat writer and reader Ben Volin earned a guest column for winning our inaugural alligatorSports Fantasy Challenge.

So apparently the prize for my outstanding performance and season-long dominance in this little fantasy college football league is to write 500 words for the Alligator.

Awesome. How thrilling.

This is exactly how I should be spending my time this week.



Ben Volin

Rollin' With Volin
sports@alligator.org

Not, you know, covering the nation's No. 1 team as it prepares for the Game of the Century, or studying for my MBA exams.

Nope, instead I'm supposed to sit here and brag or something about beating a bunch of college kids in fantasy football.

Yeah, I won the league. Cool. Can't wait to drop that line with

the ladies in Midtown.

For both of you that care, I won because of a kid I didn't know existed until Week 2. His name is Blaine Gabbert, and he's a sophomore quarterback for Missouri who lists sports, hanging out with friends and fishing as his primary hobbies. Not quite the stuff of Tebow, but he did me well this season as a replacement for Sam Bradford, who I took with the second overall pick and promptly hurt himself for the season in Week 1.

The Tigers went 8-4, 4-4 in the Big 12, but Gabbert was a champion in my locker room. He finished with 3,302 passing yards, 228 rushing yards, 26 total touch-

SEE VOLIN, PAGE 20

Alabama looks to get revenge for letting '08 slip away

■ THE CRIMSON TIDE HAVE WON 24 STRAIGHT REGULAR-SEASON GAMES.

By PHIL KEGLER

Alligator Staff Writer
pkegler@alligator.org

When the Crimson Tide take the field Saturday, they will not have lost a regular-season game in 743 days.

That will be little consolation for Alabama if it comes up short against Florida in the SEC Championship Game for the second straight year.

UA is about to get a second

chance against UF, after the Gators pulled away in the fourth quarter for a 31-20 win en route to a BCS National Championship Game appearance.

This year's winner will again have a chance to play for the national title.

"We got too caught up in the moment," Alabama linebacker Rolando McClain said. "Our guys got caught up in the pressure and they wanted to be the hero and make the extra effort play instead of just doing what we had to do and doing what our job was."

"If everybody would have just done what they had to do in the

fourth quarter instead of getting caught up in the moment, we would have been fine. I think the guys understand that now and everybody is trying to play their role, playing their role the best they can instead of trying to be the hero."



It has been well-documented that Saturday's showdown will feature a clash of the nation's top defenses. The outcome may hinge on which offense can do just enough to pull out the win. Florida and Alabama have seemed to favor the run this year, with the Gators boasting the SEC's top rush-

ing offense and Crimson Tide running back Mark Ingram second in the conference in rushing yards per game.

UA quarterback Greg McElroy said the ability to depend on Ingram on offense has been a big help as he develops in his first year under center.

"(Ingram has) been a great security blanket for all of us in our first years as starters. He's that solid rock," McElroy said. "He's been a guy we can fall back on when we need to grind the clock and a guy that's gotten off to great starts in games for us."

Ingram's superb season has

helped the Crimson Tide weather through some of McElroy's rockier weeks, including a three-game stretch against Ole Miss, South Carolina and Tennessee in which he completed 51.8 percent of his passes, averaged 119.7 passing yards per game and had a total of zero touchdowns and two interceptions.

"There was a huge question mark that everybody had about the quarterback on our team this year," Alabama coach Nick Saban said.

But Alabama's closer-than-expected win in the Iron Bowl may have given McElroy a much-needed

SEE ALABAMA, PAGE 20

UF FOOTBALL NEWS

■ Quarterback Tim Tebow was named one of five finalists for the Walter Camp Player of the Year award for the third straight year. The winner will be announced live on the 6 p.m. SportsCenter on Dec. 10. The other finalists are Alabama running back Mark Ingram, Houston quarterback Case Keenum, Texas quarterback Colt McCoy and Nebraska defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh.

POLL QUESTION

Today's question: How far will the UF volleyball team go?

POLL RESULTS

Previous question:	Percent (Votes)
Which school has been Florida's biggest rival in the Urban Meyer era?	LSU 59% (287)
	Georgia 27% (133)
	Tennessee 9% (43)
	FSU 5% (23)

Down But Not Out

By **ANTHONY CHIANG**

Alligator Writer
a Chiang@alligator.org

The Gators' season hit an all-time low as they traveled to face Kentucky on Nov. 22.

For the first time in 19 years, they would not win the Southeastern Conference title.

But the disappointment and embarrassment that came with ending Florida's 18-year streak did not prevent this team from staying focused.

Before the match against Kentucky, junior Callie Rivers made sure that her team knew there was still a lot at stake.

"When I walked into the locker room prior to the (Kentucky) match, she had written on the wall 'not on our watch,' and she had every player sign it," coach Mary Wise said. "That was their rally cry."

UF went on to dominate Kentucky en route to a four-set victory after losing to the Wildcats less than two months before.

Since falling out of contention for the conference crown, the Gators have looked like a new team.

Wise's decision to insert middle blocker Lauren Bledsoe into the starting lineup along with the strategic move of using a one-setter offense has rejuvenated the group.

After a devastating loss to Tennessee, which knocked the Gators out of title contention, the changes were made.

UF has reeled off three impressive victories since — two coming against top-25 opponents — as it begins the NCAA Tournament today against College of Charleston.

"As much as you would love to win the SEC every year, it has gotten a lot better," sophomore Kristy Jaekel said. "Overcoming this adversity is something that is really going to make us a stronger team, ultimately."

The Toughest Road Yet

As the Gators begin their journey to the Final Four in Tampa, they will have to look no further than the rough road they've traveled this season for some experience.

In the first 18 seasons of Wise's

tenure at UF, she only dropped eight conference matches. This year, the team lost an unprecedented four matches to SEC opponents.

"It has easily been the most competitive season in the SEC because there is so much more parity now," Wise said.

Three other SEC teams are currently in the top 21 of the RPI rankings and all four of the Gators' conference losses have come against those teams: Kentucky, LSU and Tennessee.

While UF went undefeated in conference play during the 1992 and 1993 regular seasons and from 1995-2003, Jaekel believes the team used to pay for it in the post-season.

"Being able to learn from our losses early instead of having one of our first losses in the tournament can really help us," she said. "If we really take it to heart and learn from these losses, it can only

make us stronger for the tournament."

Although conference competition has been tough, nonconference play has been even tougher.

The Gators have faced four non-conference foes ranked in the top 14 of the RPI, including No. 3 Florida State, No. 5 Washington, No. 6 Stanford and No. 14 Notre Dame. They went 3-1 in those matches, with their only loss coming against Washington early in the season.

"With the experience we have and all the great teams we have played so far, once we get to the tournament we will be better prepared," senior Elyse Cusack said.

Unmatched Versatility

There were many questions surrounding the setter position after Cindy Bathelt transferred from UF before the season began.

But then came junior transfer Brynja Rodgers to fill the void and provide another setter to comple-

ment sophomore Kelly Murphy in UF's 6-2 offense.

Although Rodgers has been consistent and is second on the team with 5.43 assists per set, the Gators have turned to a one-setter offense featuring Murphy for the latter part of the year. Last season this scheme was not used as Bathelt and Murphy ran the two-setter attack.

The new offense has paid dividends.

When first used against Auburn on Nov. 8, the Gators committed a season-low four attack errors in the match. Against South Carolina on Nov. 27, the offense led to a season-high hitting efficiency of .519.

"I think it's a lot of fun. It gives different teams a lot to prepare for," Murphy said. "If one thing is not working out, it lets us know that we always have another option."

UF's versatility has led Wise to implement another adjustment.

After the loss to Tennessee, she moved Bledsoe from opposite hitter to starting middle blocker and removed senior Kristina Johnson from the starting lineup.

For most of the season, Bledsoe and Rivers fought for playing time at the right side. By moving Bledsoe to the middle, both can be on the court at the same time.

"By using these players that are versatile enough to play at different positions, it allows us to get all of our playmakers on the court at the same time," Wise said.

The new middle blocker has led to increased offensive production as Bledsoe has averaged eight kills per match in the three she has played at the position. Johnson only averaged four before the switch was made.

Both of these late-season shake-ups have helped breathe new life into the team as it heads into a postseason that is structured in the Gators' favor.

Home Court Advantage

Although UF failed to win the SEC, the Gators have a lot going for them as they begin the tournament.

The team is guaranteed to stay in Florida for the entire postseason.

The O'Connell Center will host the first and second rounds, as well as regionals. The Final Four will be held in Tampa.

Last year, the Gators had to travel to Colorado for regionals and lost to Stanford. This season, traveling won't pose a problem for them.

Confidence shouldn't be an issue either.

UF has beaten two of the tournament's top-four seeds, No. 3 Florida State and No. 4 Stanford, during the regular season.

All this combined with Wise making the most of the Gators' versatility and the experience gained from playing in a much-improved SEC will help prepare this team for a run in the postseason.

Wise even believes that the end of the 18 year streak can help the team set its sights on a bigger goal.

"We said all along that we would not win a national championship until we lost the SEC."

UF Volleyball in the NCAA Tournament under Mary Wise

YEAR	RECORD	NCAA FINISH
1991	35-5 (13-1 SEC)	Sweet 16
1992	34-2 (14-0 SEC)	Final Four
1993	33-4 (14-0 SEC)	Final Four
1994	28-6 (13-1 SEC)	Sweet 16
1995	35-2 (14-0 SEC)	Elite Eight
1996	37-2 (14-0 SEC)	Final Four
1997	34-4 (14-0 SEC)	Final Four
1998	35-3 (14-0 SEC)	Final Four
1999	33-3 (14-0 SEC)	Elite Eight
2000	29-5 (14-0 SEC)	Sweet Sixteen
2001	28-2 (14-0 SEC)	Elite Eight
2002	34-3 (16-0 SEC)	Final Four
2003	36-2 (16-0 SEC)	National Runner-Up
2004	28-5 (15-1 SEC)	Second Round
2005	33-3 (15-1 SEC)	Elite Eight
2006	30-3 (19-1 SEC)	Sweet 16
2007	29-3 (19-1 SEC)	Sweet 16
2008	27-4 (18-2 SEC)	Sweet 16
2009	23-5 (16-4 SEC)	?????

Jessica Warshaver / Alligator Staff

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Quick turnaround time leads to limited video study of opponents

VOLLEYBALL, from page 18

ceptionally well.

"Once we get to the tournament we get limited video on each opponent," senior Elyse Cusack said. "We'll really only watch video on them (the Cougars) one time. But then we get the opportunity to scout FIU and Miami for the second round, so we'll see them on video and playing live."

The nonconference schedule has pre-

pared the team well for this situation. In each of UF's first three tournaments of the season, it played two matches against unfamiliar opponents on consecutive days.

The key to playing against these types of teams is the ability to make adjustments on the fly, Wise said.

"It's actually more fun because you kind of make an adjustment during the match," Cusack said. "You'll see teams do new things during the match that maybe

we didn't see on video, so it's a different challenge."



Volleyball

FOUR GATORS NAMED ALL-SEC: UF may not have won the conference this season, but it was still able to tie for the most players named

to All-SEC teams.

Kentucky, Tennessee and UF all saw four of its players earn the honor.

On Monday, sophomores Kristy Jaeckel and Kelly Murphy were named to the All-SEC First Team.

Murphy has been a triple threat all season long and currently leads the nation with nine triple-doubles. As a setter, whose primary job is to pass, she is still second in the conference with a .370 hitting efficiency.

Meanwhile, Cusack and sophomore Colleen Ward earned second-team honors.

VOLIN, from page 18

downs and just seven interceptions.

I contacted the Missouri athletic department to try to score an interview with Gabbert, but saying that I'm writing a column for The Alligator apparently didn't have quite the cache I expected.

But Gabbert, of course, didn't win this thing by himself. Texas' Jordan Shipley, Kansas' Kerry Meier, Minnesota's Eric Decker, West Virginia's Noel Devine and the Alabama defense also led me to the title.

Florida fans hope I don't type that last part of the sentence again this weekend.

How many words are we at now? 306? Ugh.

This was my first season playing college fantasy football, and you know what?

It's really easy. I played in two leagues, and reached the finals in both.

I can't sit here and claim that I had any special insight during the draft.

By the fourth round, I hadn't heard

of any of the remaining players, and we still had like seven rounds to go.

We limited the playing field to only BCS teams, which if you're counting at home is 65 teams.

Then consider that we only had 10 owners in the league.

With 65 teams, there were plenty of good players to go around.

When my running back Nic Grigsby got hurt, I simply went to the waiver wire and found a guy named Daniel Thomas from Kansas State I had never heard of him before, but I'll take his 971 yards and nine touchdowns, thank you.

The fact that I dominated the league — no one came within four games of my 12-3 record — says more about the simple-mindedness of the other owners in the league than of my fantasy football genius.

This really isn't hard, people. Please come stronger next season. Dominating isn't as fun as it seems.

Especially when it results in you having to write 500 words.

UF will look to contain WR Jones

ALABAMA, from page 18

boost of confidence. He completed 21 of 31 passes for 218 yards and two touchdowns and drove his team 79 yards for the game-winning score with 1:24 remaining.

That might be remembered as the day McElroy went from a game manager to a clutch presence in the pocket.

"It was important for us as an offense," McElroy said. "Most times people will sit back and say — if our offense is put in charge of winning that, shoot, we're going to be out of luck."

McElroy's favorite target has been star wideout Julio Jones. Jones caught five passes for 124 yards in last year's SEC Championship Game as a freshman. This year, he has eclipsed the century mark in yards just once, racking up 102 against LSU.

The Gators will rely on their conference-best passing defense to shut down Jones.

"What they do is not necessarily over complicated," McElroy said. "It's tough



McElroy

to prepare for in the sense that you can replicate the looks, but it's difficult to replicate the personnel they have."

McElroy has gone through quite a transformation this season, but whether it will be enough still remains to

be seen.

"At the end of the day, you can talk about playing Florida and how you want to beat them," McClain said, "but at the end of the day, you have to go out and prove it."



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