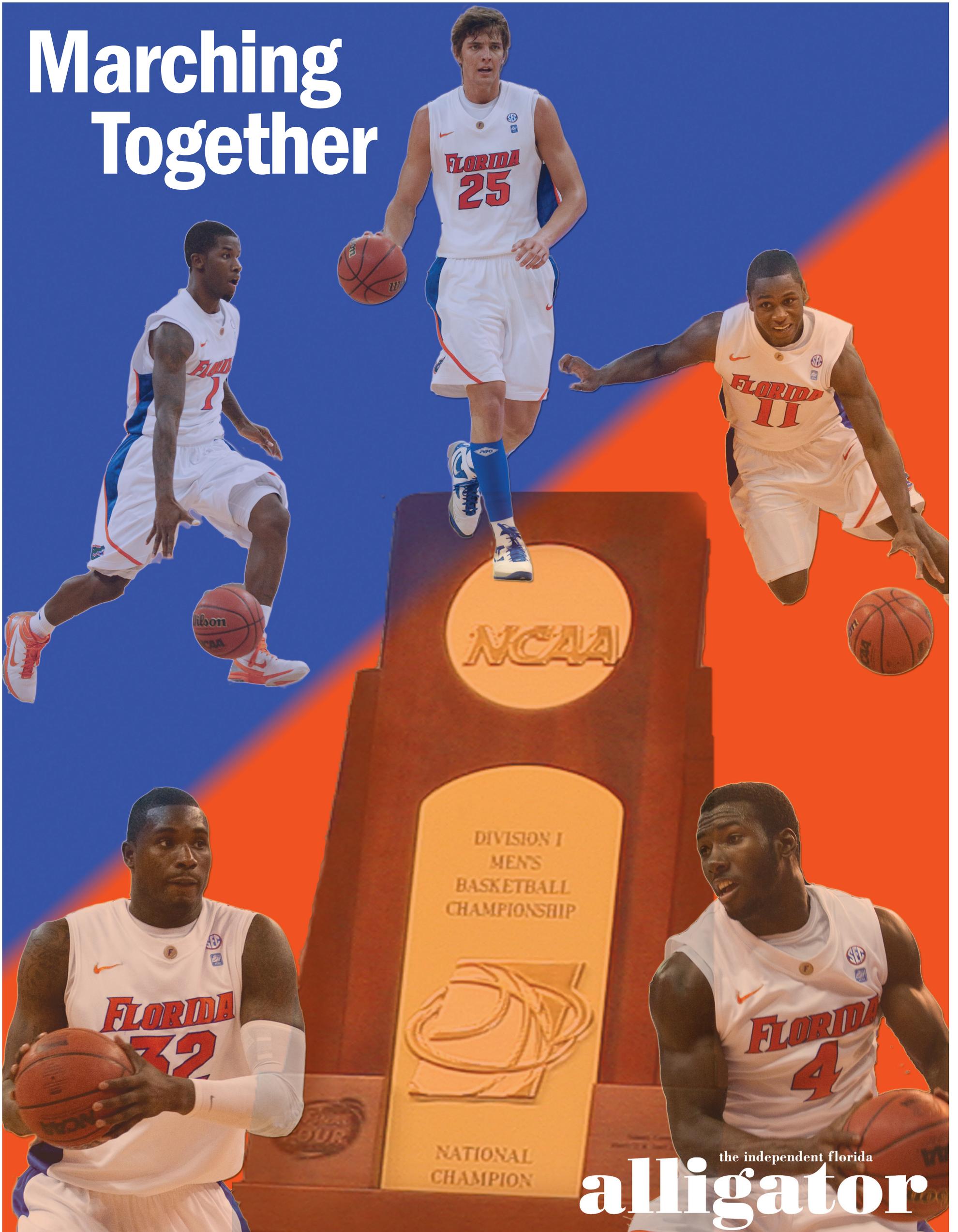


Marching Together



the independent florida
alligator

All for One

Familiarity breeds success for UF as Tournament begins

By GREG LUCA | ALLIGATOR STAFF WRITER

gluca@alligator.org

As the Gators sat at 5-2 following a loss to UCF, earning a No. 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament seemed impossible.

Florida had just completed a swift and decisive fall from its preseason No. 9 ranking, evoking memories of 2008 and 2009 trips to the National Invitation Tournament.

Despite returning five starters, the Gators resembled a group of strangers, playing in a manner they called selfish and disconnected.

"We have a bunch of guys on the floor that make nobody better," coach Billy Donovan said on Dec. 1 after losing to UCF. "The older guys are less concerned about trying to do something great collectively as a group and are more wrapped up in, 'What's going to happen to me?'"

It would have been impossible to fathom then, but the answer to "What's going to happen?" has been an extraordinary turnaround.

UF has learned to move the ball better since a Dec. 20 loss to Jacksonville, as assists have outnumbered turnovers by 49, reversing a negative assist-to-turnover ratio they posted to start the season.

Open players who had gone unnoticed now receive the ball, and one-man possessions have been all but eliminated from Florida's repertoire.

"We've got great guys that understand the importance of us being a team," Donovan said earlier this month. "I feel like we're a connected team. ... Our guys are starting to see that, through the unselfishness, now they're all playing better, they're all scoring more and they're all being utilized better."

The Gators have been able to undergo this turnaround and lift themselves from a despondent group to a legitimate Final Four contender by removing their egos and working together.

But what truly made the process possible were the relationships within the team, which are full of emotions that run much deeper than

anything on the court.

"We're just trying to get as close as we can, because for me, Alex [Tyus] and Chandler [Parsons], this is our last year," senior center Vernon Macklin said. "I love these guys, and we love being around each other, so why not win together?"

Eschewing Expectations

From the 17-year-old freshman all the way to the 24-year-old senior, this team understands how to operate as one.

The Gators have players from two countries and eight states but still managed to form a cohesive unit.

"Our biggest attribute right now is our chemistry and how well people play their roles," Parsons said. "There's no freshman that wants to come in here and play 30 minutes and get 20 points. Everyone understands their role, and everyone plays their role perfectly."

"I love these guys, and we love being around each other, so why not win together?"

—Vernon Macklin

Florida senior center

The idea of using balance and understanding each individual's responsibility was critical to the 2006-07 national championship team.

Coach Billy Donovan said Al Horford could have easily averaged 20 points and 10 rebounds, but he gave that up for the good of the team.

In the same way, freshman center Patric Young had to learn that big scoring numbers aren't necessarily in the best interest of the Gators.

"I realized that I need to do what's best for the team and just give the team energy," Young said. "I don't need to focus on scoring all of

these points. I just need to focus on being a great defender."

The McDonald's All-American is gifted with a rare combination of size and athleticism, but he realized he didn't need to pay attention to what NBA Draft scouts were trying to tell him.

Young averages just 3.3 points per game but has been invaluable to the team as a physical defensive presence.

In the same way, Florida's veterans have had to tame their personal expectations to make the team better.

After a strong season culminated in an NCAA Tournament appearance in 2010, the starters all figured they would see better numbers with an extra year of practice and study.

But Donovan needed each to discover and excel in their role, without worrying about who is shooting and scoring.

Parsons has epitomized that idea. The senior struggled early in the year with the expectation that his scoring would increase but went on to claim the Southeastern Conference Player of the Year award.

Although he is UF's third-leading scorer, Parsons was selected as the conference's top player by league coaches because of everything else he does to help his team win.

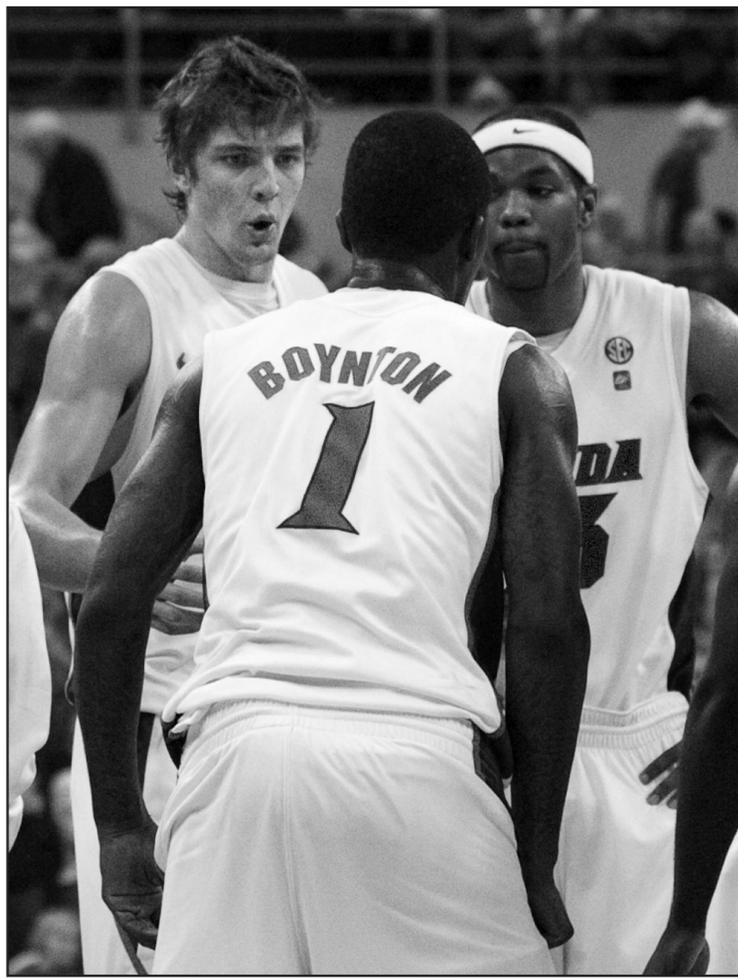
"I was putting a lot of added pressure on myself to try and please everybody," Parsons said. "But lately I'm just trying to let the game come to me and do anything I can to win."

Joker and the Freak

Between team dinners, practice and shared living arrangements, Parsons says the Gators are together nearly 24/7.

While the older players have had at least a year to foster this relationship, the freshmen have taken to each other right off the bat.

The five-man class — Young, Cody Larson, Casey Prather, Scottie Wilbekin and Will Yeguete — live together in the Springs Complex, where



Matt Tripp / Alligator Staff

Florida senior Chandler Parsons has embodied the idea of putting the team first this season. He ranks third on UF in scoring but was still named the SEC Player of the Year.

Wilbekin hosts Call of Duty games he and Young frequently dominate.

"We're tight as anything," Young said. "We hang around all the time, and we always want to do stuff with each other. We can relate to each other on anything. And the older guys, they're the same way."

Young has grown particularly close to Macklin, although the two are nearly polar opposites.

Macklin is a wily veteran with a game built around finesse and an unstoppable hook shot, while Young is an athletic freak who can match up with anyone.

But after a year of facing each other in practice day after day, those styles have started to mesh.

"Vernon's experience has really, really helped Patric grow," Donovan said. "Vernon uses his skill and his experience, and it drives Patric a little nuts sometimes."

Instead of growing frustrated, Young has taken the opportunity to learn patience in the post, the importance of playing hard and the need to take instruction.

Macklin has even started to influence Young off the court.

The senior has spent the last two years as the team joker, and he believes Young will one day follow in his footsteps.

Macklin does anything he can to keep things light, whether it's making jokes, pulling the bottom lace all the way out of Yeguete's shoe or hiding the phones of Adam Allen, Kenny Boynton and Erving Walker.

"I like to make people laugh," Macklin said. "I've spent my whole life just trying to be funny and be goofy. I feel like in basketball sometimes if you go out there and have fun, you'll be more relaxed and play better."

Fed up with Macklin's practical jokes, including fake Twitter posts and text messages, his teammates have started to turn the tables on him.

But the senior is prepared. "I keep my phone locked, and I keep my phone on me," he said. "They always try, but they'll never get me."

As Macklin's career draws to a close, the Gators will have to look to someone else to break up the monotony and relieve the tension. That's where Young comes in.

"I think Pat will take it on and be the jokester next year," Macklin said. "Pat is acting like that right now. He plays around and jokes, so I think Pat will be that guy."

Brotherly Backcourt

The entire team is close, but none are closer than the guard tandem of Walker and Boynton.

"He's like a brother to me," Walker said.

"We do pretty much everything together, honestly," Boynton said.

The duo became fast friends from the moment Boynton stepped on campus last season, and that friendship grew to the point where they decided to room in the Keys Complex this year, along with sophomore Erik Murphy.

Boynton estimated he and Walker spend 92 percent of their time together, parting only for class.

"That's pretty much the only time we ever split," Boynton said.

The two eat nearly every meal together and usually spend their free time hanging out in their room, watching college hoops or catching up on Family Guy.

Their bond formed early last season, as the team's two leading scorers helped each other deal with the ups and downs of streaky shooting.

Each seemed capable of going through hot streaks and devastating slumps, which made it difficult to keep a level head.

"We just talked about it and tried to help each other," Walker said. "That just brought us closer together."

That closeness has led to an uncanny level of awareness on the court.

There are times when Boynton makes a 60-foot pass to seemingly no one, only to have Walker dart in and make the catch.

"I definitely know where he is at all times," Boynton said.

Both will be returning to UF next season with even more experience and a tighter friendship, something they hope can be a harbinger of success.

"Anytime you have a bond like that with a great player such as him, it makes it easier for me," Walker said. "And hopefully I make it easier for him. As long as we can keep that bond, I think great things will come."

The Gators will begin their quest for greatness today, when the NCAA Tournament gets underway in Tampa.

After a slow and disjointed start, Florida has found cohesion.

Their new "all for one" mentality has been critical to past success and figures to be equally important going forward.

"We have great chemistry," Young said. "Really the reason why we've been winning so much is our chemistry and how much guys care about each other."

Whether it's the brotherly guard tandem or the mentor and pupil in the post, the Gators are filled with relationships strong enough to handle the pressure of the NCAA Tournament.

With egos removed and a devotion to team play firmly in place, only one question remains: Why not win a national championship?



Matt Tripp / Alligator Staff

Guards Erving Walker (left) and Kenny Boynton have developed a close relationship on and off the court during their two years as teammates at Florida. The roommates are the team's top two scorers and will look to lead the Gators against UCSB tonight in Tampa.

UF MEN'S BASKETBALL

Florida looking to make deep tourney run after early exit in 2010

By GREG LUCA
Alligator Staff Writer
gluca@alligator.org

The Gators are no longer content with simply reaching the NCAA Tournament.

Earning a bid was enough to satisfy them in 2010 following two straight National Invitation Tournament appearances, but this season the team wants more.

"Last year, we had a whole different mindset," senior forward Chandler Parsons said. "We don't just want to get in. We want to make noise."

Second-seeded Florida's first step will be today at 6:50 p.m., when it faces off against No. 15 seed California-Santa Barbara at the St. Pete Times Forum in Tampa.

The Gators (26-7, 13-3 Southeastern Conference) enter the contest as a heavy favorite and will have the added

benefit of previous tournament experience.

Sophomore guard Kenny Boynton said Florida entered the 2010 Tournament with the wrong mentality, and the team's mindset will be different this time around.

"We went in and we got complacent that we were in the tournament," Boynton said. "When we got in the game, we played hard, but I think for us, to prepare, we didn't prepare the right way."

Before UF's 99-92 loss to BYU in Oklahoma City, the Gators focused too much on the Cougars and not enough on themselves.

This season, the team is looking internally, concentrating on not turning the ball over and converting on fast breaks, according to Boynton.

The Gators are also focusing on avoiding the slow starts that plagued them in the SEC Tournament, noting

that they can't afford any slip-ups in a situation where one loss ends their season.

"We're taking every game like it's a championship game," Boynton said. "We want to go deep into the Tournament."

That wasn't the case a season ago, when a group that had endured two years of NIT frustration was just happy to make the field of 65.

Coach Billy Donovan said this season, on the other hand, has been different.

"They wanted to try to experience more than they did a year ago," Donovan said. "None of these guys have won a game in the NCAA Tournament, and I hope that, in itself, is motivation and fuel for them

to really be focused."

Last season's first-round NCAA Tournament loss was especially beneficial because of how the game unfolded.

In two different instances the Gators were one shot away from pulling out the win, but Parsons and Dan Werner missed shots late in regulation and overtime, respectively.

"That really gave us a good experience getting there," Parsons said. "We have a lot better understanding of it this year."

The Gators also pointed out the need to not let the pressure and hype surrounding the Tournament affect the way they perform on the court.

"It was our first time in the NCAA Tournament, and now we've got a taste of it," Boynton said. "You've just got to come out and play like it's a regular game."



Boynton



Funeral today for UF freshman

■ MOLLY AMMON DIED SUNDAY AT A CONDO IN MADEIRA BEACH, WHERE SHE WAS SPENDING SPRING BREAK.

By HANNAH WINSTON
Alligator Writer

Family and friends will gather today to bid farewell to a UF student who died over Spring Break.

The funeral for Molly Ammon will be at 10 a.m. at Christ the King Catholic Church, 821 S. Dale Mabry Highway in Tampa.

Ammon, 19, was found dead Sunday morning in a condominium in Madeira Beach, where she was staying during Spring Break.

While an official cause of death has not yet been released, alcohol is being labeled the cause by those who knew Ammon.

According to an article in the St. Petersburg Times, both of Ammon's parents knew their freshman daughter drank underage and that she had been drinking the night before she was found.

When the Ammon family was contacted for comment, Bob Ammon said he was unable to talk because he and his family were getting ready for the viewing and wake of his daughter.

Delta Delta Delta President Kelsey Bryant also declined to comment on her deceased sorority sister.

Bryant said she was not comfortable without consent from Ammon's parents and wanted to respect their privacy. Instead, she released a statement on behalf of the sorority expressing the feelings of the sisters.

"There are no words to convey the sorrow we feel following the loss of our beloved sister, Molly Ammon," the statement said.

Maureen Miller, the coordinator for alcohol and other drug prevention at GatorWell Health Promotion Services, said Spring Break has been known for such

SEE AMMON, PAGE 4



Special to the Alligator

Molly Ammon, left, stands with a friend after her high school graduation. Ammon was a UF freshman who passed away over Spring Break.

Campus gun bill shot down

By ALEXANDER KLAUSNER
Alligator Staff Writer

The Florida Legislature is no longer considering a measure March 9 that would have allowed students to openly carry guns on campus.

Following a speech by Robert Cowie, the father of a girl who was accidentally shot Jan. 9 at an off-campus FSU fraternity house, the controversial measure was pulled from the bill.

"I'm very excited," Student Body President-elect Ben Meyers said. "I can't help but think that Student Government, campus police departments and administrations from across the state had an impact."

The bill itself now exists as a measure to introduce open carry to the state and advanced past the Senate Public Criminal Justice Committee Safety on Monday by a 3-2 vote.

The campus-carry measure has been opposed by virtually all governing bodies at UF. President Bernie Machen, Police Chief Linda Stump, the Student Senate and the Faculty Senate have publicly opposed or passed resolutions against the bill.

"College campuses, as far as crime goes, are very safe places to live and study," Stump said. "[Faculty and students] were fearful that guns on campus might change the academic climate, where now they feel free to partake in civil discourse to its fullest extent and not be fearful of somebody having a gun."

UF spokeswoman Janine Sikes indicated it may be too soon to begin making funeral arrangements for the open-carry clause, but it's not stopping people like Progress Party leader Dave Schneider from celebrating.

"It's a victory in that we were able to get students from different political orientations to come out and champion safety on campus," Schneider said.

SEE ST. PATTY'S, PAGE 4

St. Patrick's Day full of traditions

Everyone celebrates it differently

By ALEX ORLANDO
Alligator Writer

Catholics dress for Mass. Children don green for fear of being pinched. A beer tanker lurches as its driver unloads kegs.

Today marks St. Patrick's Day, the holiday named for the man who, legend has it, escaped slavery, drove snakes from Ireland and used vegetation to explain theological concepts.

David Hackett, a religious-history professor at UF, said most Americans,

whether they are Catholic, Irish or neither, celebrate the patron saint's holiday.

"Those of a more secular vein see it as an opportunity to drink green beer."

David Hackett
UF religious history professor

"Those who are more pious see it as a way to rededicate themselves to their Irish heritage," he said. "Those of a more secular vein see it as an opportunity to drink green beer."

In Saint Patrick Interparish School's church on the eastside of town, a group of green-clad fourth-graders is leading an Irish-themed Mass beginning at 9 a.m.

Every hour, principal Mark Akerman will announce a fact about the school's namesake saint.

"St. Patrick is one of the top saints that Catholic schools are named after," Akerman said.

On University Avenue, Mother's Pub and Grill will have a celebration of its own. Doors will open at 8 a.m. — the better to catch night shift caterers on their way home.

SEE ST. PATTY'S, PAGE 4

■ Florida coach Will Muschamp (right) oversaw his first spring practice Wednesday, happy to finally be back on the field after months of recruiting and preparation. See Story, Page 18.



Squirrel attacking residents of Vermont neighborhood

BENNINGTON, Vt. — A Vermont neighborhood is being stalked by a renegade gray squirrel.

Several people in Bennington say they've been attacked by a squirrel over the last few weeks.

Kevin McDonald tells the Bennington Banner he was shoveling snow when the squirrel jumped onto him. He says he threw the animal off, but it twice jumped back onto him. A game warden says there have been

other reports, too.

One woman is being treated for exposure to rabies, but Vermont Public Health Veterinarian Robert Johnson says there's never been a case of a squirrel passing rabies to a human.

Johnson says it's possible the squirrel was raised as a pet and lost its fear of humans. He says the squirrel might "go ballistic" when it encounters people it doesn't recognize.

— THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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81/48

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News Today

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Free Yourself: No Photoshop Needed

Today, 11 a.m.
Plaza of the Americas
Come experience an event that will inspire confidence and push individuals to be liberated from their negative views of body image, allowing them to truly embrace their beauty.

Females in the Fine Arts

Today, 7:30 p.m.
Orange & Brew
UF's Women's History Month and Students Taking Action Against Racism are hosting "We Rock the Mic Right." Women's History Month is a month devoted to the accomplishments of women throughout history. This event will showcase the work of UF students.

FORECAST

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
SUNNY 81/48	SUNNY 83/49	SUNNY 84/52	SUNNY 84/60	PARTLY CLOUDY 80/57

Two-Part Panel Discussion: The Role of Haitian Creole in the School System of Post-Earthquake Haiti
Today, 7 p.m.
Smathers Library, Room 1A
Professors Michel DeGraff of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Flore Zéphir of the University of Missouri will be discussing opportunities to reform the school system in post-earthquake Haiti and the role of the Haitian diaspora in the U.S.

Got something going on?
Want to see it in this space? Send an e-mail with "What's Happening" in the subject line to ebehrman@alligator.org.

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352-376-4458 (Voice), 352-376-4467 (Fax)
Editor Paul Runnestrand, prunnestrand@alligator.org
Managing Editor / Print Elizabeth Behrman, ebehrman@alligator.org
Managing Editor / Online Joshua Saval, jsaval@alligator.org
Metro Editor C.J. Pruner, cpruner@alligator.org
University Editor Elizabeth Behrman, ebehrman@alligator.org
Sports Editor Adam Berry, aberry@alligator.org
Assistant Sports Editor Greg Luca, gluca@alligator.org
alligatorSports.org Editor Jesse Simonton, jsimonton@alligator.org
Opinions Editor Cynthia Despres, cdespres@alligator.org
Editorial Board Paul Runnestrand, Elizabeth Behrman, Joshua Saval, Cynthia Despres
Photo Editors Matt Tripp, mtripp@alligator.org
Max Reed, mreed@alligator.org
Freelance Editor Amanda Milligan, amilligan@alligator.org
the Avenue Editor Melinda Carstensen, mcarstensen@alligator.org
Copy Desk Chiefs Anthony Chiang, Tyler Jett, Corey McCall, Emily Morrow, Colin Simmons
Copy Editors Rebecca Astorga, John Boothe, Safid Deen, Olivia Feldman, Greg Fink, Josh Isom, Caitlin O'Conner, Lily Parkinson, Rachel Rowan, Briana Seymour, Cayla Stanley, Matthew Watts

DISPLAY ADVERTISING
352-376-4482, 800-257-4341, 352-376-4556 (Fax)
Advertising Director Shaun O'Connor, soconnor@alligator.org
Retail Advertising Manager Gary Miller, gmiller@alligator.org
Advertising Office Manager Victoria Livingston, vlivingston@alligator.org
Advertising Assistant Melissa Bell
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Display Advertising Clerks Carly Blattner, Jesse Morgan, Stephanie Parker
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CIRCULATION
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BUSINESS
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ADMINISTRATION
352-376-4446 (Voice), 352-376-4556 (Fax)
General Manager Patricia Carey, tcarey@alligator.org
Administrative Manager Judy Moore
Administrative Assistant Lenora McGowan, lmcgowan@alligator.org
President Emeritus C.E. Barber, cebarber@alligator.org

SYSTEMS
Desktop Support Manager Kevin Hart

PRODUCTION
Production Manager Stephanie Gocklin, sgocklin@alligator.org
Assistant Production Manager Erica Bales, ebales@alligator.org
Advertising Production Staff Shannon Close, James Nolton, Vinnie Pierino, Jackie Tseng
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Photo of Beth Ann Maslinoff by Johnston Photography. Dance Alive National Ballet is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida, Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture as well as by the City of Gainesville, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs along with a Tourist Development Tax Grant from the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners in conjunction with the Alachua County Tourist Development Council.
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Festival to showcase films on environmentalism

By **DANIELLE ALVAREZ**
Alligator Contributing Writer

Gainesville residents searching for ways to make their routines more green can educate themselves by attending the Cinema Verde Environmental Film and Arts Festival.

The festival, which will run from March 18 to March 27, will present 25 environmental films at multiple venues around Gainesville such as the Hippodrome Theatre, the Harn Mu-

seum and The Venue.

This year's festival will have additional student participation from several grade schools of Alachua County. Students from kindergarten to 12th grade can participate in art work contests, literary submissions and conservation projects.

"We have a much larger arts component than last year and are expecting for it to be three times bigger," said Ken McMurry, the festival art director.

Trish Riley, an environmental journalist and founder of Go Green Nation, partnered with the Hippodrome last year to produce Gainesville's first environmental film and arts festival.

She said she wanted a small city with less noise and traffic for the festival's location. She picked Gainesville as her target choice because of its sustainable progress.

There are two VIP Access packages. For all 25 films and events, it is priced at \$100 and to attend 12 films and all other events, it costs \$50. General Admission for each film is \$5.



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Employment of construction managers is expected to increase by 16% in the next decade.* Understanding this, Drexel's undergraduate degree program in Construction Management turns out outstanding leaders and has been since 1975. The curriculum, with an option to minor in real estate, is continually reviewed to keep pace with this dynamic industry. Class size averages 17 students.

Fully accredited by the American Council for Construction Education (ACCE), the program provides students with the opportunity to engage in hands-on projects with distinguished professors who have held executive positions in prominent construction firms.

Unique to Drexel University, students engage in experiential learning through paid internships with construction companies, providing them an environment to practice what is learned in the classroom.

Drexel University, founded in 1891, is a private institution located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For the eighth consecutive year, Drexel has been ranked as one of "America's Best Colleges" by U.S. News and World Report.

*National Employment Matrix 2006-16.

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Student's parents knew she drank

AMMON, from page 1

cases.

"Realistically, we know Spring Break is a high risk period," Miller said.

She said there is a culture that surrounds Spring Break with drinking, partying and large crowds of college students together.

"Bad things can happen," she said. "And unfortunately they do."

While UF is infamous for its party image, statistics say otherwise when it comes to

heavy drinking. Compared to the national average "high-risk drinking rate" of 44 percent, UF's was at 40 percent in fall 2010.

"High-risk" is categorized as more than five drinks during one period of time.

Miller said that percentage has been decreasing steadily every year for UF.

Miller encouraged all students to look for signs of alcohol poisoning because they could potentially save someone's life.

"It's OK to say you've had too much," she said.

Pub is prepared for large crowds

ST. PATTY'S, from page 1

Two months ago the bar's owner, T.J. Goodman, was on the phone with his food distributor, planning for today.

On Monday, his order arrived: 1,000 pounds of shepherd's pie, 200 pounds of corned beef and two cases of cabbage.

Yesterday morning, he loaded his next order out of a diesel tanker parked in Alligator Alley: 40 kegs of green beer.

With a packed house by 11 this morning, he predicts it will be all

gone by 2 a.m. Friday.

Aside from watching Florida basketball, Goodman has two bagpipers on the night's agenda.

Last year, they were the bar's centerpiece.

"Everyone stopped," he said. "Everyone watched."

Despite the increased volume of customers expected in

his bar, Goodman said he sees the holiday as more than a excuse to booze.

"The bottom line is this: It's not a drinking holiday," he said. "It's the average heritage holiday."

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Students fast to combat homelessness, hunger

■ STUDENTS WILL INGEST ONLY WATER AND GATORADE OR WATER FOR 24 HOURS.

By **STYLIANA RESVANIS**
Alligator Contributing Writer

UF students are encouraged to starve themselves — at least for a day.

Starting 6 p.m. Friday, volunteers will vow to ingest nothing but water and Gatorade for 24 hours to raise awareness for homelessness and hunger.

Jeremy A. Scott, director of the Black Student Union's Leadership Development Institute, which will host the Fast for Food event, said these issues are more prevalent in Gainesville than people think.

"UF gets recognition for athletics and academics," Scott said. "People fail to notice that a couple blocks down on University Avenue is where the majority of homeless are."

The organization will also use Fast for Food as an opportunity to give students a taste of what it's like to live in poverty.

Students are expected to follow the honor code and promise not to eat during the night. They will meet again at 9 a.m. Saturday on the Plaza of the Americas to compete in an "Amazing

Race"-style scavenger hunt.

They will split into teams and complete tasks around town — but they will only be allowed to walk or take the bus to each location.

He said tasks will include participants buying meals, pillows or jackets for homeless people they meet and listening to their stories.

"You don't think to do these things when you see the homeless on the street," he said. "But these people have struggled, and they can't afford these things like we can."

The activities are open to both individuals and organizations. The registration fee is \$5 and \$25, respectively.

GAINESVILLE CITY COMMISSION

Student voter turnout traditionally low in city elections

By **MEREDITH RUTLAND**
Alligator Writer

Few students voted in Tuesday's Gainesville City Commission, but history shows this is the norm.

Out of 4,471 voters registered for the Reitz Union precinct, 57 voted.

Past elections haven't been favorable either. In the mayoral election last March, 87 people voted at the Reitz Union precinct out of 4,465

registered voters.

In the November midterm election, 804 of 4,709 registered people cast votes.

UF students don't always think of Gainesville as their home because they don't settle in the town after graduation, said Pam Carpenter, supervisor of elections.

"Sometimes students feel that it doesn't have an impact on them," she said earlier this month.

Chip Skambis, a 19-year-old UF

"Mainly, students are just unaware. And people don't see the importance in voting in them."

Stacy Eichner
president of UF College Democrats

English major, spent Tuesday trying to get his friends to vote.

Skambis said he voted in Tues-

day's election and the election for mayor last year.

He said most students just don't care about city politics because the issues are on a smaller scale.

"It's difficult to get people to care about the little things," he said.

Stacy Eichner, president of UF College Democrats, said students don't know when Election Day is.

"Mainly, students are just unaware," she said. "And people don't see the importance in voting in

them."

But city elections are important, Eichner said. She said bus systems are an issue students can relate to.

Carpenter said students are more likely to vote in a presidential election than a city election.

"For whatever reason, students are highly involved in the national elections, sort of involved in the gubernatorial and the participation really declines for the city election," she said.



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Editorial

Going Green

Legal medical marijuana makes sense

The Editorial Board is pretty straight-laced, no matter the preconceptions people have of college newspaper editors.

We're not the crazy, liberal hippies some people make us out to be.

Now that we put this disclaimer out there, we can approve of the proposed state constitution amendment to legalize medical marijuana. Although most people are doubtful the proposed change will make it to the ballots in November 2012, we're not seeing a viable argument against the amendment.

The author of the bill, state Rep. Jeff Clemens, has pointed to Florida's notoriety as a giant pill mill to argue for legalizing the drug for medical use.

The dangers of addiction to painkillers such as oxycodone are undeniable, and the idea of a safer alternative to soothe pain for terminally ill patients is appealing in a state with a large senior citizen population.

Obviously we don't want people to drive or operate heavy machinery after using marijuana, but we don't want those who have taken legal painkillers or alcohol to do those things, either.

Beyond the medical benefits of treating patients with a nonaddictive drug, we also imagine the state would get an economic boost from regulating and taxing it. We're having a tough time seeing the downside.

Clemens makes a good point, but it will probably go unheeded by the Republican-controlled House and Senate.

Open carry dropped

The Florida Legislature has abandoned the idea of allowing firearms to be carried on college campuses. While the speech made by the father of an FSU woman who was accidentally shot and killed may have ostensibly changed the minds of legislators, we think it has more to do with the opposition the lawmakers encountered.

Even for the proponents who say that open carry on campus would be beneficial, the idea still frightens many of the students, faculty and staff who live, work and learn on campus.

Perhaps the legislators decided that we shouldn't be constantly worried about our fellow students' states of mental health as we pur-

sue higher education. Perhaps they understood concerns that rates of suicides and stolen guns would likely rise if the bill was passed with the campus open carry section in tact. Or maybe they knew getting blamed for the deaths of underclassmen wouldn't make for good press.

Whatever their true reason, removing this controversial aspect of the bill has allowed lawmakers to push forward the remaining part of a Florida open carry proposal.

We're glad to see it gone.

We can think of many ways to improve our campus and the well-being of the people on it, but allowing for an open carry certainly isn't among them.

the independent florida
alligator

Paul Runnestrand
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Elizabeth Behrman
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MANAGING EDITORS

Cynthia Despres
OPINIONS EDITOR

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/opinion



Column

Republicans suppress voters, voices

The saying "If you don't use it, you lose it" does not only apply to exercise and health. Recently, it has become applicable to segments of the voting population. Groups known to not vote and those who vote overwhelmingly for Democrats are under fire from Republicans across the country. From New Hampshire to Florida, the newly elected Republicans have decided to ignore creating an environment for sustainable economic growth and progress and have focused instead on voter marginalization.

In New Hampshire, Republican legislators created a bill that would disenfranchise college students from voting. The bill would "permit students to vote in their college towns only if they or their parents had previously established permanent residency there," claiming it would decrease voter fraud. The bill would disenfranchise students from their place of residence and cause the influence of colleges to diminish significantly on a statewide as well as national level, given New Hampshire's swing state status as home to the nation's first primary. The best part of the entire movement in New Hampshire had to be when Republican House Speaker William O'Brien did something rare for a politician and spoke what he truly felt. O'Brien referred to the college students as "foolish" at a prior Tea Party gathering and at another time said, "Voting as a liberal. That's what kids do. Students lack life experience; they just vote their feelings."

It's clear to see from the Speaker himself that the whole point of the bill was to disenfranchise groups that are most likely to support Democrats rather than combat voter fraud.

In the states of Wisconsin, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, North Carolina and Maine, legislatures are aiming to restrict student turnout as well. The states want to make student IDs from private and state colleges an unacceptable form of voter identification. The Republicans in these states have not cited any particular reason for the changes.

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



Chad Mohammed
letters@alligator.org

However, it's clear that the motion is an outright assault to young voters and aims to influence election outcomes.

Much closer to home, Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi and Gov. Rick Scott have decided to repeal the April 2007 reform re-enfranchising nonviolent ex-felons who did their appropriate

time. Bondi believes these individuals should wait an additional seven years after they are released before they are even considered to regain their suffrage. Florida would be the only one of three states to deny voting rights to former nonviolent felons if Bondi's plans go into effect. The system requires that individuals pay restitution and only then, after case-by-case hearings chaired by the governor and cabinet sitting as the clemency board, can an individual's voting rights be re-instated. Basically, only the governor's cabinet can approve individuals' ability to vote again or decide that they will be disenfranchised for life. Before the streamlining and reduction of bureaucratic measures, the waiting list for all these hearings was well over 100,000. Bondi's measure would prevent the reintegration of these individuals and prevent them from becoming contributing members of society solely for immediate political gain. She also contradicts the Republican ideals of having a smaller and more efficient government.

Ultimately, it appears that the newly elected Republican legislatures nationwide are more interested in suppressing entire segments of the voting population. They're increasing bureaucratic measures to combat certain demographics instead of focusing on job growth, economic prosperity and the other affairs they were supposedly elected to perform.

Chad Mohammed is a second-year chemical engineering major. His column appears on Thursday.

Reader response

Today's question: Should Florida legalize medical marijuana?

Wednesday's question: Do you think daylight saving time serves a purpose now?

28% YES
72% NO
25 TOTAL VOTES

Vote or post a message at www.alligator.org

Guest column

Student leaders: UF community can help Japan

We would like to express our condolences to the people of Japan. Friday's earthquake and subsequent tsunami have caused an incredible loss of life and extensive damage to many communities in Japan.

We represent diverse communities on our campus and stand in solidarity with the victims' families. We extend our condolences to all those

UF Student Leaders Speaking Out

who have lost a loved one and pray for all those who are still waiting to learn about the status of their friends and families.

We extend our support to outreach efforts and aid organizations seeking to minimize the damage and to help reunite loved ones in Japan.

As student leaders, we call on The Gator Nation to stand together to support our Japanese brothers and sisters the same way we came together for the people of Haiti, who are still recovering from their disaster. Please consider making a donation to The American Red Cross via their website.

Together, we can show the rest of the community and world that we are united in both the best and hardest of times. We thank you for your support.

Michael Satyapor, Asian American Student Association President; Chelsea Cohen, Jewish Student Union President; Walter Idlette, Black Student Union President; Juan Rodriguez, Hispanic Student Association President; Donnie Fields, Pride Student Union President

UWire

If the next president doesn't know history

The gaffe has found its way on numerous websites: Michele Bachmann mistakenly confused New Hampshire's Concord with Massachusetts', botching history along the way. She is not alone in her personal revisionism: Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi seems to have forgotten much of the injustices towards African-Americans in the history of his state. Mike Huckabee, in his own right, seems to have gone back in time and placed a young Obama in Kenya, where he supposedly learned about the Mau Mau Revolution from an anti-British perspective.

Did they simply misspeak? Or is there a serious lack of knowledge of historical facts in the Republicans' top crop? And if so, should we be worried? My answers would be "no," "yes" and "absolutely."

Maybe this isn't surprising given that many Americans actually don't have a solid grasp of much of our nation's past. But, then again, most Americans aren't running for president. We can be forgiving if a passing pedestrian doesn't know about New England's geography, Mississippi's racial conflict history or basic facts about our president's life. But if you're the president of the United States, who needs to know how to avoid fighting the wrong wars, how to revitalize the economy, how to improve education and infrastructure, and how to get our nation on the right track, you need to understand America's past. It is imperative that our president know what the presidents before them did. Conservatives may be furious with the fact that the "liberal elite media" is ecstatically plastering Bachmann's, Huckabee's, and Barbour's gaffes all over the Internet; to note, Conservatives4Palin has compared Bachmann's fallacies with Obama accidentally calling

Humza Bokhari
UWire

Europe a country — but the analogy doesn't work. While it is clear Obama misspoke, we cannot confidently state that Bachmann did the same. The "lamestream media" is right to call her, and other contenders, out. As for Bachmann, she should have known the basic facts about the Revolution. She was clearly using her non-fact to pander to New Hampshire voters, so we know that she was trying to use the fiction to her advantage. But it's essential to properly understand our nation's founding. How else can a president best understand a nation's fundamental principles? This problem is especially pertinent because she was incorrectly educating voters. Our president needs to know the basic facts, and New Hampshire's residents need to know the truth about their legacy. America rests on its foundation — let's not forget what it's made of, and let's especially not misconstrue realities in order to win votes. The Tea Party movement itself is a reference to America's past. Should it not be founded on an accurate understanding of what happened?

When you look at Barbour, you see everything the GOP does not want in a mainstream candidate. Though he is an effective governor who has served Mississippi well over the years, his historical blurring of racial injustices is deeply concerning. In a nation with a deep and troubled racial past, injustices are still alive and well. To airbrush history is to do injury to not just the truth, but also to our society. If people forget the mistakes and trials of the past, how can they possibly make amends? A president should be more responsible, and should have the courage to acknowledge mistakes and be ready to further equality. The status quo is not enough.

Most unjust, however, may have been Huckabee's dishonest jab at President Obama, claiming that Obama was influenced by a childhood in Kenya. We know that Obama did not grow up in Kenya and barely knew his own father. To claim that the Mau Mau incident shaped Obama's worldview, and affected his decision to swap a bust of Churchill with a bust of Lincoln is rather ridiculous. (The bust, by the way, went to another room, not back to Britain, according to Salon.com's Steve Kornacki.) Salon.com's Joan Walsh correctly notes that "if he'd traded Lincoln for Churchill the same people would be attacking him as a snobby Europhile." Walsh is absolutely right: it is a strange hypocrisy that seeks to derail Obama's presidency. Republicans need to accept the facts that Obama was born in the U.S., and grew up in Hawaii and Indonesia. Of course, for Huckabee to then claim he was actually referring to Indonesia is ludicrous. Again, as Walsh notes, there was obviously no Mau Mau Revolution in Indonesia. And if Huckabee thought there was, then there are serious issues with his grasp of history — a president needs to understand international history to successfully shape international diplomacy.

America's president faces an extremely difficult job. He or she needs to be someone who knows exactly what is going on today, what went on yesterday, and what went on ten, or even over a hundred years ago in order to best understand what needs to be done tomorrow. He can't hesitate; he must have his facts right to begin with. Imagine if our 45th president started a war for the wrong reasons? Some feel that has already happened once. We can't afford to let it happen again.

Humza Bokhari, Harvard Political Review, Harvard U. via UWIRE

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INTERNATIONAL

UF Ph.D. candidate recounts earthquake in Japan

By **MORGAN WATKINS**
Alligator Writer

news and saw devastation in other areas of Japan.

He walked over to pick up his

6-year-old son, Wataru, at his day care. Wataru and the other children were OK.

Afterward, he called his wife, a landscape architect who was working at her office when the earth-

quake happened.

Tokyo was one of the cities farthest from the earthquake's origination point at a distance of 234 miles, according to the U.S. Geological Survey website.

But many areas of Tokyo were still thrown into confusion as public transportation systems shut down and people assessed the damages from the earthquake. His wife, who normally takes a train between her office and her family's apartment an hour away, found herself unable to take her usual route home.

Upset by the earthquake, she borrowed a colleague's bicycle and rode it back to their apartment since the train and bus systems weren't running. It took her more than two hours to reach home.

Amano returned to UF on Monday but is maintaining close contact with his family. Concerns about radiation poisoning from the nuclear power plants within Tokyo led his wife to move with the children to her mother's home in northwestern Tokyo until the crisis calms down.

Given the immense damage done by the earthquake and tsunamis, he knows it will take time for Japan to recover.

"We are well-prepared for the earthquake because we have so many earthquakes in Japan (but) this earthquake was beyond our expectations," he said. "This earthquake is much more damaging than we expected."



Special To the Alligator

Shinichi Amano, left, stands with his family in Tokyo, Japan. Amano, a doctoral student at UF, was visiting family during the recent earthquake and tsunami that devastated parts of the island nation.

Shinichi Amano was napping with his 3-year-old daughter in his Tokyo apartment when the shaking woke him.

He wasn't alarmed at first. In Japan, earthquakes are a regular occurrence.

"I thought it was just a normal earthquake. It usually stops after a couple seconds or 10 seconds," he said. "But it didn't stop."

As the shaking continued, Amano realized this wasn't the typical quaking he was accustomed to.

He woke his daughter, Akari, who was sleeping beside him on his bed. He covered her body with his, throwing a blanket over his own body as an extra layer of protection.

A few dishes fell to the floor. Then the shaking stopped.

Amano, a Ph.D. candidate at UF studying health and human performance, had arrived in Japan on March 8 to visit his wife, Nobuko, and children during Spring Break.

He had just been picnicking with his daughter and the kids at her day care that Friday morning before they returned to their apartment around noon to grab a few hours' sleep.

There was no damage to Amano's apartment, which was in an area of Tokyo that wasn't hit hard by the 8.9-magnitude earthquake.

He assumed the same was true for the rest of Tokyo but checked the

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stomp the yard



Among a group of 54 performers, bluegrass group The Avett Brothers (pictured here) are set to perform in this year's Suwannee Springfest. The nature and music festival, which draws a crowd of about 5,000 to 6,000 each year, takes place March 24 to 27 at The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park in Live Oak, one hour north of Gainesville. To buy tickets, visit suwanneespringfest.org.

Music festival to hit Live Oak next week

By **HANNAH SWERDLOFF**
avenue contributing writer

Locals tired of tapping their toes for spring don't have to wait any longer: Suwannee Springfest is here.

The 15th annual music and nature festival will take place March 24 to 27 at The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park in Live Oak, one hour north of Gainesville.

Students can purchase discounted weekend tickets in advance for \$110 with a current student ID, and student tickets are \$150 at the gate.

Springfest features Americana, folk and bluegrass music. This year's lineup consists of The Avett Brothers, the David Grisman Sextet, Jesse McReynolds, Donna the Buffalo and 54 other performers.

People gather to celebrate not only the music, but also to celebrate each other and life, said Paul Levine, one of the event's organizers and promoters.

"People have been coming for 15 years. A lot of them have met here, got married, had kids and started bringing their kids to Springfest," he said.

The festival draws about 5,000 to 6,000 people each year.

Ori Blitstein, a Grooveshark marketing intern and a music festival junkie, said attendees don't just consist of college kids who want to party. Rather, several are locals dedicated to the music, he said.

Also, he said it's better called a gathering than a music festival.

"It's guys with guitars and washers and brushes just having a grand

ole time on the river," he said. "You're camping and it happens to be a music festival."

The park, located next to the historic Suwannee River, has more than 800 acres of campsites.

"It would be foolish and a waste of time not to go," he said.

Levine said just because families attend doesn't mean people aren't having a great time and celebrating. People celebrate with respect.

He said some go to Bonnaroo because about 100,000 people attend. But, he said, the experience at a bluegrass festival is different — and in a good way.

"Some of the best music you hear is by the campfire," he said.

Furthermore, what could set Springfest apart from other festivals

is that half of the audience brings musical instruments. By creating an inclusive environment conducive to learning, Levine said, Springfest provides attendees an experience unavailable at other shows.

The festival also supports regional music by allowing local musicians to perform at the park.

"The amphitheater stage is one of the finest places to see music in the world," Levine said.

The stage is at the bottom of the natural bowl of the amphitheater, and beautiful oak trees with Spanish moss provide a canopy over the audience.

"With hundreds of people swinging on hammocks between trees watching music, it's a pretty groovy environment," he said. "You've got to see it."

INSIDE:

PG 10: In the spirit of St. Patrick's Day, check out some of the best Irish beers, and get the scoop on the much buzzed-about Guinness.

PG 12: Are the latest social networking applications turning users into stalkers? Avenue columnist Thomas Nassiff explores the possibility.

PG 13: The new Pokemon game has a few new challenges, but the game still encourages gamers to catch 'em all.

Also, relax, and read the Avenue's next installment in the Gainesville Meditation Guide.

ONLINE:

- ◆ Aspiring actors: Learn about Florida Players' theater workshop.
- ◆ Out of Gainesville for Spring Break? Us too. Read about last week's iPad 2 release.
- ◆ Fifth Avenue: How to ink fashionably

Todd Roeth / Alligator

The **A** List

SEE: **Limitless**

Watch Bradley Cooper take himself to extraordinary places when he takes a pill to become a more perfect version of himself. The thriller, which also stars Robert De Niro, could show that too much of good thing may not be so good.

LISTEN: "E.T." by Katy Perry (feat. Kanye West)

Step into Kanye West's new fantasy. Katy Perry's vocals sound exactly the same as her other pop hits, but the futuristic vibe it gives off creates an alien-like feel.

WATCH: **Parks and Recreation, Thursday at 9:30 p.m. on NBC**

If you love "The Office," you're sure to love "Parks and Recreation." In the show, Amy Poehler takes her sense of humor to a small town in Indiana and mocks her way through witty writing and well-executed punch lines.

DO: **St. Patrick's Day festivities**

If you needed a specific reason to go out in Towntown, know that today is St. Patrick's Day. And you don't need to be Irish to celebrate: Wear shamrocks or green gear, and get to your favorite bar tonight.

by LAUREN GOLD

beer

For St. Patrick's Day: An Irish Beer FAQ

By **RICHARD O. STEHLI**
avenue writer

What is good Irish beer?

Guinness (Draught, Stout or Foreign Extra), Harp, or Swithwick's (pronounced 'smiddicks'). Granted, all of these beers are owned by the British conglomerate Diageo, but that's just the cold hard fact of reality. At least they're brewed in Ireland. Killian's Irish Red, on the other hand, hasn't been made in Ireland since 1956. It is owned and brewed by Coors.

What is a Black & Tan?

A Black & Tan is a 50/50 mixture of a light lager and a stout and is perfect for those who don't care for dark beer. Do it the Irish way with Harp and Guinness.

How do I make green beer?

Put one drop of green food coloring in your glass. Insert beer. Consume.

What about Guinness?

The plastic thing in a Guinness can is a "widget." When you pop the top of a Guinness Draught, the widget releases

a shot of nitrogen, which makes for smaller bubbles and allows for a richer, creamier head. This replicates the way Guinness is traditionally poured on tap. Guinness in Ireland is certainly different from what you drink in the United States. But is it better? It's hard to say. The alcohol content is lower, and the beer is less treated to prevent spoilage. Also, Guinness in Ireland would be served with a double pour and probably pressurized with nitrogen rather than carbon dioxide. A double pour takes two to five minutes and involves two separate kegs of beer.

How about some Irish whiskey?

You can't go wrong with Bushmills or Jameson.

How do I make an Irish Car Bomb?

Fill a shot glass most of the way with Irish Cream, then top it off with a layer of whiskey. Put 12 ounces of Guinness in a pint glass. Bomb the shot into the glass and chug. Can't drink it fast enough? Enjoy your curdled milk, sissy.

Theater group to act 'Floyd'

By **BENJAMIN EVANS**
avenue writer

In 1925, Floyd Collins was trapped in Kentucky's Sand Cave, and attempts to rescue the famous cave explorer drew the attention of the nation. It drew so much attention that tourists from across the United States came in herds to witness the event firsthand.

By the time rescuers reached Collins, the explorer was dead from exposure and starvation.

This weekend, UF student-run theater group Florida Players will perform "Floyd Collins," a musical based on the story.

The group, which is funded by UF's Student Government, kicked off the production with a Wednesday night performance and will perform at 7 p.m. tonight, Friday and Saturday in the Squitieri Studio Theater at the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. There will be an additional matinee performance at 2 p.m. Saturday.

"This is one of the largest shows I think we've ever tried to put together," said 22-year-old Derek Butts, the show's director.

Given the recent death of two UF students, Grant Lockenbach and Michael Pirie, who died in a caving accident in February, some people

have questioned the timing of the play's release, Butts said.

While Butts acknowledges the connection, he said Florida Players does not intend to offend the families of Lockenbach and Pirie.

He said the similarity in the stories is coincidental, as "Floyd" has been a year-long pursuit for Butts and the play's cast.

In fact, to research Collins' story, Butts and four cast members took a trip to Kentucky to visit the cave, see Collins' home and visit his grave.

Collins' caving accident has become part of the region's folklore, said Marissa Toogood, who is making her debut with Florida Players in the role of Nellie Collins, Floyd's sister.

"Everybody knew about Floyd Collins up there," she said.

Taking the trip allowed the actors to connect with the tragedy of Collins' death.

Thaddeus Pearson, who will play Floyd's brother, Homer, said, "It was really awesome to be able to walk around where this legendary man was."

For more information, visit floridaplayers.org.



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AND**

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The applications for these positions are available at the reception desk at the entrance of the first floor of *The Alligator* Building at 1105 W. University Ave., **each weekday between 1:00 and 4:00pm from now until March 25.** Please do not call. Further written information is available at the time an application is picked up. Please allow up to 15 minutes at that time to read information you will need for the application process. The application must be returned to the same desk by **2:00 pm, April 1. THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE DEADLINE.** Interviews and selections by the Board of Directors will be held at *The Alligator* offices in a meeting open to the public beginning at **2:00 pm, Friday, April 15**. Applicants must be present at that meeting to be considered. Applicants must be degree-seeking college or university students. Preference will be given to those who have experience at *The Alligator*.

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New apps could be breeding status-obsessed stalkers

“You like someone. They’re in a relationship. Be the first to know when they get out of it.” Mantra for the too-persistent suitor or tag line for one of the latest social networking applications?

Maybe it’s both, but in practice, the short and sweet (and somewhat creepy) one-liner is the tagline and marketing slogan for Breakup Notifier, an app that enables users to receive e-mails when select friends change their relationship status.

Within about three days of its activation, Breakup Notifier attracted 3.6 million relationships of its own.

But after that short romance, Facebook disabled the application, pulling the plug on a relationship still in its early stages. With the influx of demand for the app, why end it?

It turns out that Breakup Notifier was, in fact, too successful — it caused too much strain for Facebook’s servers, and more important, it attracted too many stalkers.

Because, in essence, that’s exactly what we’ve become today: born-and-bred stalkers. College students, along with younger and older age groups, display their lives on Facebook.

You may say, “Oh, I’m not like most of my friends. I’ll check it every once in a while, but a stalker? Not I.” Don’t be so quick to say so.

Let’s take it down to the most simple situation. You sit



Thomas Nassiff
Columnist

next to a girl in class, you get to know her, and after a few painstaking lectures you finally figure out her last name. What do you do?

You add her on Facebook.

And just like that, you know everything you need to know: You’re cognizant of the fact that she’s single. You run a sweep of a few recent statuses, see a few sets of vomit-inducing lyrics from Top 40 radio jingles, and conclude that she just ended a messy five-month relationship with a John Patterson, who conveniently goes to FSU. Green light!

Or, you add her, notice she’s dating someone, and — um — add her to your Breakup Notifier list? Of course the app is dead now, so that’s not a possibility.

But that specific app is just part of a wave of conclusive evidence of America’s obvious stalker-like nature.

Chevrolet also recently introduced a new application in its Cruze model that reads live-time status updates from the driver’s personal Facebook news feed.

That’s right: You just finished a long, hard day of work, you’re driving home to spend the night watching old episodes of “Hey Arnold” on Netflix with your cat, but first you need to

know what all of your friends have been saying since you last checked your Facebook for iPhone app 15 minutes ago.

Luckily, the all-new Chevy Cruze lets you do it hands-free.

America, our problem isn’t that we’re stalkers — it’s that everyone knows we are.

People and companies spend their time and money making applications, widgets and gadgets that feed our inner stalker because they know we’ll not only use them but will absolutely devour them.

It’s not just that Internet-based stalking has taken off to a whole new level, but that enough people realize it that businesses have begun to cash in on the phenomenon.

So, after all the sarcasm and rhetoric, I’ll bet that you, reader, think I’m completely against this social networking and stalking stuff.

Well, that’s not the case — well, not entirely at least.

The truth is, America’s shift toward being nosy isn’t a good or bad thing. It just is what it is.

Yes, maybe I think the general population has gone a tad overboard with it all. But, at the end of the day, it’s not anything that’s going to change soon.

And I, like everyone else, will be keeping an eye out for the tweets and Tumblogs and status updates to surface about the next big Facebook app.

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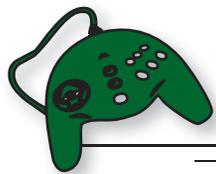
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Gamer Bait

Pokemon still urges gamers to catch 'em all

Although it's no longer the cultural phenomenon it once was, Pokemon is still part of, and really never left, the video game world. What was once the crown jewel of the Game Boy is now the highest selling Nintendo DS franchise of all time. The cartoons are still airing every Saturday (albeit the new seasons are not nearly as good as they used to be when we were kids), and Pikachu is a character recognized by the entire world on par with Mario himself. There have been four generations of Pokemon games since Red and Blue Version divided playgrounds nationwide, with a few remakes and spinoffs here and there, and now it's time for a new one.

Pokemon Black & White, the fifth generation of the franchise, has the most changes out of any proper Pokemon game thus far. Some of the changes are cosmetic and a bit unnecessary, but most of them are for the better.

The most noticeable change as you progress on your journey to become Pokemon champion is that there are no older Pokemon around, just the newest batch of 156 Pokemon waiting to be



Andrew Wyzan
Columnist

captured. The older generations become available after you beat the main story, but it can get boring catching Pokemon after Pokemon just to complete the full Pokedex if you're starting from scratch. If you've followed each generation, then you can simply import them from past games. If you manage to collect all 649 Pokemon, you're a braver man than I.

That being said, it will probably take you less time to catch 'em all, as battles have been expedited by a significant amount. While the need to grind is still there — especially when you get to a certain gym leader who uses mean electric-type flying squirrels — the time sink is not as bad as it used to be.

Developers have also added to the game new types of Pokemon battles. Triple Battles are a three-on-three match that limit attacking based on position, and Rotation Battles are fast-paced

round-robin matches. These types are few and far between, but they require the use of tactics and quick thinking that is refreshing.

Aside from a few cheap bosses, the game is pretty easy, so Poketots won't get discouraged. However, Nintendo tries to inject some maturity into the franchise through Team Plasma, Unova's resident bad guys. Instead of following in Team Rocket's footsteps of stealing Pokemon to take over the world, Team Plasma wants to free Pokemon from what they see as servitude from their trainers.

All in all, this is probably the most modern Pokemon game recently. The graphics have been overhauled since the franchise came to the DS, new dynamic camera movements have been added and the Pokemon sprites have been made animated during battles. This iteration of Pokemon almost feels like a new franchise — one that's becoming more in tune with its RPG qualities as its fan base continues to age. If you've been away from the series for a while, I suggest you give Black & White a try. If you've already caught them all again and again, there's still plenty more to catch.

wellness

Gainesville Meditation Guide: at the Hare Krishna House

By **ROBERT IMFELD**
avenue contributing writer

Every day, the Hare Krishnas chant a melodic meditation and serve food to students in UF's Plaza of the Americas. A decent number of students usually line up — especially on Spaghetti Wednesdays — but no one seems to know much about the people who serve the vegetarian-friendly fare.

An hour and a half before the sun rises, the Hare Krishnas gather for

meditation, called japa, in the temple of the Krishna House, just off campus on Northwest 14th Street.

They recite their mantra with the help of Japa Mala beads, a strand of beads — not unlike the rosary — that helps devotees keep track of their chanting. Each strand has 108 beads, one for each time they chant to Krishna, and they do it 16 times. That means every morning, they recite the mantra 1,728 times.

They believe the god Krishna and

his name are one and the same.

"When you chant Hare Krishna, you're actually associating with God through his name," said Caitanya, a devotee who's been chanting for 19 years.

They also serve Krishna through cooking and cleaning.

They devote themselves so stringently because they believe the material energies of the world cover the spiritual soul, effectively blocking them from being one with Krishna.

They have their sights set on a higher plane.

"If you want to really feel free in the material world, you refrain from activities that bind you to the material world," Caitanya said.

They use the material energy in his service to prevent becoming entangled in the material life. The van they use, for example, is used to serve Krishna food to other people instead of being used as, say, a way to get to a party. And because the food is served

with love and devotion, it's karma-free, as the side of the van reads.

Even if you don't wish to wake at 4 a.m. to chant, Caitanya said non-devotees can still reap the benefits of the Krishna beliefs.

"We just encourage people to chant the holy name and take Krishna lunch," she said. "By doing that, the purification of the heart happens, and then, automatically, everything else that doesn't help them in their spiritual life melts away."

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2.1 bedroom Apartment

>From \$550/mo; 1 mo free for

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1.1 Townhomes

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>From \$475 mo; Walk to Campus</

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2/2 with Vaulted ceilings & W/D.
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Text MADISON to 47464 for more info!
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Fall. www.forrentgainesville.com or call Todd
at 352-514-4915 3-17-11-30-2

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Cent H/AC, W/D, quiet areas
Bike to UF
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Duplex, Duckpond, CHA, carport, carpets,
ceiling fans, quiet, trees, large yard, \$700/mo,
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Call Eric @ 352-682-7424
Ask abt Family Discounts
Immediate Move-In Available
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3BR/2BA, 1940sq.ft. Quiet neighborhood.
1.5 miles from U.F. Large fenced yard, wood
floors, 2 car garage, and sun room. Available
5/1. \$1100/month. 3936 SW 3rd Ave. 352-
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Large 1/1 in quiet neighborhood next to
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Screened porch, lots of storage. Move in by
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Discount for longer leases. Rent \$500/mo.
call 305-992-2832 or pazos.lu@gmail.com
3-22-11-10-2

2 For Rent unfurnished

1BR/1BA, 5 blocks from Shands & UF. Quiet
complex, parking, walk-in closet, W/D. \$550/
mo. Call 317-2642 or 371-9520 3-23-11-
10-2

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352-372-1494 x10
www.merrillmanagement.com

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\$475 per Month 2BR 1BA Apts
3 BLKS TO UF & Downtown!
840 Sq. Ft. Large Rooms, Plenty of
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Carpet, Pets Allowed. 829 Sw 5th Avenue.

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2BR 1BA Apt 3 BLKS TO UF
New Carpet \$450/Mo \$600 Deposit
Window A/C, Nat Gas Ht.
216 SW 12th Street.

GRAD II Apts
1BR 1BA 1BLK TO UF
Central H & Air, Laundry
On site. \$500/Mo
1236 Sw 4th Avenue \$600 Deposit
3-31-11-15-2

\$385-rooms available in beautiful 4/4 condo
in SW Gville. Incl. cable and internet. 5 mins
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W/D included, furnished common area.
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Plaza. Asking \$750/mo. Please call Kitty
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\$700/\$350 each ●1BR avail now \$450/mo.

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11-5-2

3 Bed House
\$695/mo w/Porch & Walk to UF
Great Deal, Won't last long!
photos at rentalworkshop.com
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1700 sq ft 3BR/2BA House
Wood floors, large screened-in back porch,
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HUGE 1 BR apt for quiet mature person
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Living room, dining room & family room,
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4-5-11-15-2

****3401 NW 7th Place****
3/2 living, dining, family rooms. All appliances,
W/D, close to campus, large yd. Small pets OK
Avail Aug. 1, \$1325 - 333-9874 or 317-7346
4-5-11-15-2

****4/3 18 NW 36th St.****
Close to campus, all appliances,
W/D, central heat/air
Avail. Aug 1, \$1400 - 333-9874 or 317-7346
4-5-11-15-2

●NW 39 Ave Huge 3BR/2BA apt, w/lg loft
Tile flr & nice carpet. Bright, wdlke flr \$800
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BR carpet. \$600-635. Gated patio, trees, flood
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3-22-5-2

2 For Rent unfurnished

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2694 Avail August 3-17-11-2-2

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1,2,3 and 4 bedroom houses and apartments
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Most pets accepted. Call 870-2760. 4-20-
11-26-2

2/1 Across from VA Hospital.
\$550/mo. \$300 dep. No dogs, cats ok w/
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575 sq ft, \$550 PLUS ONE MONTH FREE!
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400 sq ft, only \$450!
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530 sq ft, only \$450!
1220 NW 12th Street

No application fee, most pets ok.
For info call E.F.N. Properites, 352-371-3636
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gainesvillestudentrentals.com
●5/3 house 630 nw 36 street \$1800
●4/3 house 3514 nw 7 place \$1500
●4/2 house 1534 nw 54 drive \$1500
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Utilities, cable, internet, furniture & washer/
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2801 4-20-25-2

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students or professionals only. Plasma TV
incl. May-Aug \$1775/mo; \$2375/mo Aug on.
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4 Roommates

Roommate Matching HERE
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The Landings 336-3838
The Laurels 335-4455
Greenwich Green 372-8100
Hidden Lake 374-3866
4-20-70-4

Roommate wanted \$400. 3/2
Grad student preferred. Quiet Lakefront
house. 1/2 utilities. 352-281-2200 or
Welchds1@bellsouth.net 3-17-11-5-4

Roommate wanted
New 2/2.5 Fully Furnished except for bed-
room in Grantwood Condominiums 2.5 miles
from UF
\$550/month includes utilites & WiFi
Contact Kourtney 352-422-1448 3-25-10-4

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MONTH, UTILITIES INCLUDED, NO MOVE
IN COST. WE DO SEMESTER LEASING,
Frances 352-375-8787 Rent Florida Realty
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Gated 4BR/4BA Countryside condo, pool-
side, own BD & BA, W/D, cable, hi-speed
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cluded. \$400/mo. No deposit required. 863-
634-1893. Available immediately.
3-29-10-4

Master Bd/priv. bath in 2/2 apt. \$475 all
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Walk to UF from a 4bd/2ba NW house.Male
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parking\$450.00/mo.Includes all utilities,
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lease. 727-726-2915 3-22-11-5-4

4 Roommates

HANDYMAN SPECIAL Share 2BR/2BA MH
in Hidden Oaks. Furn rm incl elec, ph, cable,
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NR dep. \$400/mo. NS, NA, ND. Handyman
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Located in Whitney Park on hwy 411 in
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6 Furnishings

BED - QUEEN - \$120 ORTHOPEDIC
Pillow-top, mattress & box. Name brand,
new, still in plastic. Call 352-372-7490 will
deliver. 4-20-10-70-6

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I ₁	U ₁	U ₁	T ₁	S ₁	R ₁	P ₃		RACK 1
A ₁	O ₁	U ₁	Y ₄	T ₁	T ₁	R ₁		3rd Letter Triple RACK 2
E ₁	E ₁	O ₁	R ₁	R ₁	S ₁	C ₃		RACK 3
I ₁	O ₁	M ₃	N ₁	R ₁	P ₃	W ₄		Double Word Score RACK 4

PAR SCORE 145-155
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FOUR RACK TOTAL _____
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Network specialists
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4-20-10-70-7

10 For Sale

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11 Motorcycles, Mopeds

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11 Motorcycles, Mopeds

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12 Autos

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4-20-70-12

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On cash vehicles
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12 Autos

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by David L. Hoyt 3-17-11

1		2		3		
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5						
		6				
	7					

CLUE ACROSS ANSWER

1. Oddity TMTUAN
5. Proxy NTGEA
6. Rule WYALB
7. Space object TEMOER

CLUE DOWN ANSWER

1. Scant EGAMRE
2. Shiver MERTELB
3. Wood AIALTNE
4. Colorful plant WOEFRL

CLUE: Some species of this bird can reach five feet tall.

BONUS ○○○○○○○○○○

How to play Complete the crossword puzzle by looking at the clues and unscrambling the answers. When the puzzle is complete, unscramble the circled letters to solve the BONUS.

ANSWERS: 1A-Mutant 5A-Agent 6A-Bylaw 7A-Meteor 1D-Meager 2D-Tumble 3D-Natallie 4D-Flower B-Flamingo

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P ₃	U ₁	R ₁	S ₁	U ₁	I ₁	T ₁	RACK 1 =	59
T ₁	R ₁	Y ₄	O ₁	U ₁	T ₁		RACK 2 =	17
R ₁	E ₁	S ₁	C ₃	O ₁	R ₁	E ₁	RACK 3 =	59
P ₃	I ₁	N ₁	W ₄	O ₁	R ₁	M ₃	RACK 4 =	78
							TOTAL	213

PAR SCORE 145-155

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Receptionist - PT for immigration law firm. 28 hrs/wk. Bilingual Spanish-Engl a plus. Proficient in MS Office. 1 yr commitment. Resumes to robjac@myimmigrationlaw.com. 3-22-11-5-14

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16 Health Services

HIV ANTIBODY TESTING
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16 Health Services

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18 Personals

HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

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4-4-14-18

20 Event Notices

Casting call for feature film: The Best Western Gateway Grand at the Northwest quadrant of the intersection of I-75 and exit 390. April 2nd, 9am - 4pm. Please visit www.SwampTales.us for more information. 4-1-11-13-20

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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

- 1 Bingo call
- 5 Gordon ___: Michael Douglas's "Wall Street" role
- 10 One may require stitches
- 14 German import
- 15 Slangy negative
- 16 Control
- 17 See 53-Down
- 20 Fairy tale ender
- 21 Amazement
- 22 Early surgery aid
- 23 Talking with one's hands?: Abbr.
- 25 Ante-
- 26 See 53-Down
- 34 Washington's Grand ___ Dam
- 35 Fierce anger
- 36 Carnival city
- 37 Old, in Oberhausen
- 38 "Good heavens!"
- 40 Humdinger
- 41 Relieve (of)
- 42 Pencil remnant
- 43 Legal-sized fish
- 45 See 53-Down
- 48 Neighbor of Nev.
- 49 Reggae singer Kamoze
- 50 Big name in food service
- 53 Brine-cured delicacy
- 55 Remove forcibly
- 60 See 53-Down
- 63 Andy Taylor's son
- 64 Submit taxes, nowadays
- 65 Kong's kin
- 66 Guam, for one: Abbr.
- 67 '50s experiment, briefly
- 68 Longings

- 7 Had no doubts about
- 8 Leafy vegetable
- 9 Santana's "___ Como Va"
- 10 Irritates, with "on"
- 11 One may have an agt.
- 12 Fruit used to flavor gin
- 13 Bavarian mister
- 18 Really peeved
- 19 Fogg's creator
- 24 Honeybunch
- 25 What might be used when a bomb is hurled on a field?
- 26 Port closing?
- 27 Show up
- 28 Flamenco exclamation
- 29 Bedouins, e.g.
- 30 "Really cool!"
- 31 Break out, as violence
- 32 Ticks off
- 33 Organized string of gigs
- 34 Atkins diet taboo
- 39 Pistol
- 40 Island welcome

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

H O L E T B A H I S S E S
 E B O N H I S O R I O L E
 F E E D B A C K T O L L E D
 T Y B A L T T H I N K I N G
 L O S E O U T D I E
 O U T L O O K P E P E
 P L O P K G S M A R T I E
 A N N I E G R U N T
 L A S O R D A A P A B R A
 U S E R M I N D S E T
 T S O F I D E L I O
 A T T I T U D E E N T R A P
 R O T T E N P O S I T I V E
 O N E S E C T H U E P I C
 T Y R A N T H O P D E S K

xwordeditor@aol.com 03/17/11

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66						67				68			

By Bruce Venzke (c)2011 Tribune Media Services, Inc. 03/17/11

UF FOOTBALL

Muschamp, Gators open spring practice season

By **ADAM BERRY**
Alligator Staff Writer
aberry@alligator.org

After months of anticipation and plentiful talk about the transition, Will Muschamp oversaw his first practice as Florida's head coach.

The Gators opened their spring practice season Wednesday afternoon, and Muschamp said it was used mostly to teach players the new offensive and defensive systems, as well as a few special teams tweaks.

"We do believe in the theory of throwing a lot at them and finding out who can learn and who can adjust, how long does that take, who can make adjustments on the run," Muschamp said. "We're able to throw a lot at them and see who's able to retain and handle the information — expose them to as much as we can."

Muschamp said each of the three quarterbacks on the depth chart — John Brantley, Tyler Murphy and Jeff Driskel — took reps with all three units Wednesday.

All of Florida's spring practices are closed to the public and

the media, but Muschamp said he only had three players sit out Wednesday due to injury.

The Gators had seven players listed as "limited" before practice, but Muschamp said they all were able to take a few reps on the field in the team's first session.

"When they get close to football and playing, they all get well," Muschamp said. "It's amazing how that happens."

"Our trainer rides in on his white horse, and they all of a sudden get well. It's phenomenal. I wish we could discover that medicine before practice started."

JENKINS SITTING OUT AFTER SURGERY: Senior cornerback Janoris Jenkins will not participate in the team's spring season after having reconstructive shoulder surgery in the offseason.

Jenkins, who had 44 tackles and three interceptions last season, surprised many people with his decision to return to the Gators instead of jumping to the NFL.

Muschamp said much of that choice was based on his inability

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 19



Matt Tripp / Alligator Staff

Florida coach Will Muschamp, standing between former UF coach Urban Meyer and New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick, ran his first spring practice with the Gators on Wednesday afternoon.

UF taking underdog role into NCAA meet

■ THE CHAMPIONSHIP MEET BEGINS TODAY IN AUSTIN, TEXAS.

By **MELISSA PENDER**
Alligator Writer

Although Florida isn't picked to win the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships this weekend, coach Gregg Troy said the 14 women who qualified for the event are determined to defend their title.

"(We're) not the favorite, but we haven't been the favorite in the past either, so the girls kind of relish in that role," he said. "We've looked good the last couple of weeks."

Troy said freshmen Elizabeth Beisel and Hilda Luthersdottir will play a huge role in the team's fate at the

meet, which is in Austin, Texas, today through Saturday.

"Even though they are freshmen, they have a lot of experience," he said. "They do have to step up. The biggest challenge for them is you've got to swim well in the morning at the NCAA meet."



Swimming

Troy said the Gators will also lean on the squad's elders to provide leadership. That includes diver Monica Dodson, the squad's lone senior, as well as juniors Teresa Crippen and past NCAA champions Sarah Bateman and Shara Stafford.

Crippen, who will swim three individual events and one relay, won't

SEE SWIM, PAGE 19

What your bracket says about you

Note: The following column is not meant in any way to disrespect women. It may seem to address only men, but this is because the columnist wishes to follow the format laid out in the Holy Bible. By "man," he means "any human being who partakes in awesome things." If, by chance, you are a single woman who happens to fall in that category, do not hesitate to e-mail the columnist. He is free this weekend.



Tyler Jett
The Jett Stream
tjett@alligator.org
Twitter: @iam_tyler

a pool with friends. If you don't mind taking a few minutes, you can use today as a teaching tool. You see, your bracket is an objective measure of exactly what type of person you are. The same can be said about looking at your friends' brackets.

To understand yourself, or your friends, ask yourself exactly why you picked certain teams to win. "Because they are the better team," you say. But are they? Think about it.

You rode the highest seeds: You are conservative, and you should be. You come from an upper-middle class home. You

Among the American male population — a very distinct subculture, I understand — only a few holidays are celebrated. Because of that, today is a rare treat, perhaps the rarest to any man who enjoys the following: basketball, beer, recklessness, self-indulgence, beer, running amok, green beer, irrationality, more beer, fun.

To take full advantage of today's festivities, you no doubt have put your bracket in

SEE TYLER, PAGE 19

SEC BASKETBALL COACHING NEWS

■ Tennessee coach Bruce Pearl may not be with the Volunteers next season, according to multiple reports. UT athletic director Mike Hamilton told a Knoxville, Tenn., radio station, "The jury is out on what's going to happen with that at this point."

BRACKET CHALLENGE

■ Registration ends at noon today, so hurry up and fill out your brackets at alligator.org/bracket_2011. The grand prize is a \$500 Best Buy gift card, and anyone who beats sports editor Adam Berry is eligible for a \$100 Gator City gift card.

ONLINE

■ Follow alligatorSports basketball writer Greg Luca on Twitter at twitter.com/alligatorSports. Greg will be providing updates from Tampa throughout the day, including random musings, basketball analysis and live posts from the Florida-UCSB game at 6:50 p.m.

WR Hammond back on scholarship

FOOTBALL, from page 18

to work out at the NFL Combine or for pro scouts. Jenkins got out of his shoulder sling just two weeks ago.

"There is no contact," Muschamp said. "He felt like he could help the situation by coming back and getting his shoulder

healthy."

HAMMOND BACK ON SCHOLARSHIP: Muschamp said Frankie Hammond Jr. is once again playing on scholarship for UF after having his revoked last season.



Football

The redshirt junior wide re-

ceiver was arrested last summer for driving under the influence but returned to the team following a two-game suspension, albeit without a scholarship.

Hammond, listed as a starting wide receiver on the preseason depth chart, caught 22 passes for 276 yards and two touchdowns in 11 games last year.

Gators relying on relays to help carry team

SWIM, from page 18

compete on the first day of the competition and has to do in two days what the other swimmers hope to do in three.

"She's got to be tough with the way she goes about it, but there's no one more articulate with the way they train," Troy said.

Crippen will swim in the 800-yard freestyle relay, one of Florida's four qualified relays. Troy said the success of the relays is key for the team, which has placed in the top 10 the past 10 years, to bring home a win.

"This is the first time this season we've had ev-

eryone healthy," he said. "Hopefully our relays are going to be a little better, and it will be real key for us."



Troy

then there's another eight to 10 teams that are all in the mix, and we're certainly one of those."

Troy said he expects the major contenders to be No. 3 Stanford, No. 2 California and No. 1 Georgia, the team that narrowly beat the No. 7 Gators at the Southeastern Conference Championships last month.

"They all look good on paper, but fortunately the meet isn't swum on paper," he said. "And

TYLER, from page 18

study something not because it interests you but because it will lead to a steady career: law, business management, information technology, etc. You find risk interesting, but the reward is never worth it. You drive a Volvo. You listen to top-40 radio, music with a simple, catchy hook. You want to meet your future wife at work and get married at 25.

You picked three first-round upsets and have a 12-seed in the Sweet 16: You pride yourself in appearing sophisticated. You read the New Yorker. You are majoring in a foreign language and when people ask why, you explain, "Because I want to." You will live out of the country for a few years after college before settling down. You have a beard.

You put Indiana State in the Elite Eight: You like fundamentals, farm towns and underdogs. You like players who are stereotyped as "hustlers" and "gym rats." You wear flannel, but not because indie rock stars do. You are Larry Bird.

You picked a 16-seed to win the first round: You went to Bonaroo last summer, but only because you heard it's a good place to find drugs. You were planning to get your degree, but then you decided not to. You spent last summer working at a hostel in Spain because the owner let you sleep on the floor for labor. Your friends only hang out with you when looking to blow off steam. You are what some people call "an alcoholic."

You picked Duke to win the national championship: You wake up in the morning, look at yourself in the mirror and say, "I wish I had friends."

FLORIDA LACROSSE

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UF SOFTBALL

Bruder launches two homers in doubleheader sweep

By **STEPHEN SHEEHAN**
Alligator Writer

No one was going to get Kelsey Bruder out Wednesday.

After hitting the ball hard, but often into defenders' gloves, the past few series, Bruder broke through with six hits, six runs and nine RBIs in the No. 2 Gators' pair of wins against Mississippi State.

Although she missed the cycle by only a triple, Bruder went a perfect 4 for 4 in the second game, raising her average to .395. The senior blasted two home runs, including a three-run shot as UF

(27-1, 4-0 Southeastern Conference) dismantled the Bulldogs (12-14, 2-2 SEC) 18-1 in Game 2.

"It's really hard not to get down on yourself when you think you're hitting the ball well," she said. "You just got to keep pushing along. I'm not fast enough for a triple, so I think this is one of my better days."

Florida's power stroke didn't stop with Bruder, as senior Megan Bush and sophomore Brittany Schutte launched home runs of their own.

In UF's 8-0 Game 1 victory, Bush smashed a ball for her second

grand slam of the season.

After getting pitched around early on, Schutte slammed a three-run homer as part of her five-RBI effort in the second game.

It was also an encouraging afternoon for freshman third baseman Kasey Fagan, who had a solid day defensively and at the plate.

After coming to UF as one of the top high school players in the



Bruder

nation, she hasn't made as many flashy plays as some expected.

But Fagan showed some serious glove skills with an acrobatic diving catch on a sharply hit ball to her right. She also knocked down a ball and flipped it to shortstop Cheyenne Coyle, who was covering third base.

She broke out of a 1-for-15 slump with two hard-hit RBI singles.

While she hasn't been consistent at the plate, she has stepped up when it counts.

"She's hitting really well in SEC play," UF coach Tim Walton said.

"Defensively, she hadn't made those plays for us yet, but she did a good job."

Freshman Hannah Rogers continued to dominate, picking up two more wins to improve to 13-1.

The young righty needed only 53 pitches to get through Game 1 and threw 36 in four shutout innings in Game 2.

With a 0.51 earned run average, Rogers has matched senior Stephanie Brombacher pitch for pitch.

"Hannah's amazing," Bruder said. "She's pitching well beyond her years. We're lucky to have her."

Lacroix secures place in UF history with recent accolades

■ **THE NO. 13 FLORIDA MEN'S TEAM WILL TAKE ON NO. 3 USC TODAY.**

By **THOMAS NASSIFF**
Alligator Writer

When Alexandre Lacroix arrived at Florida four years ago, he came in with the burden of expectations on his shoulders.

But in his time as a Gator, Lacroix has successfully dealt with the pressure of being a highly sought recruit en route to transcending greatness in Florida tennis history.

Last week, he notched two major career-spanning milestones in Florida's 6-1 drubbing of then-No. 35 Alabama.

He became the winningest doubles play-

er in UF history, as he and partner Sekou Bangoura Jr. beat Alabama's duo of Ricky Doverspike and Jarryd Botha to give Lacroix his 94th doubles victory.

Later in the match, Lacroix toppled Doverspike in straight sets for his 100th career singles win.

Reaching those milestones boosted Lacroix to being named the Southeastern Conference's Player of the Week on Wednesday.

While the numbers carry an impressive weight, Lacroix's work ethic and journey to his current success has made his career special.

Coach Andy Jackson said Lacroix came to Florida as an unpolished doubles player, making his achievement even more remarkable.

"Alex has really taught himself how to play doubles here," Jackson said. "We want young-

er guys who are learning to play doubles to see that the guy who won more matches at Florida ... didn't come in as a fantastic doubles player in juniors, but learned to play as time went on."

Looking back at his earlier years, Lacroix said the hardest part of learning the doubles game was adapting the singles play he honed during junior tennis.

"It shows that after a few years, you can play anything even if you're not tall or you can't volley well at first," he said. "It means a lot to have that record."

While his hard work brought out the best of Lacroix on the doubles court, he has always been known for his dominance in singles.

Currently ranked No. 6 in the ITA singles rankings, Lacroix is an intimidating opponent, and he has proven himself against the top players in the nation throughout his career at Florida.

With the No. 13 Gators (11-3, 4-0 SEC) a third of the way through their SEC slate, Lacroix will need to keep piling up the wins to help Florida stay competitive.

The Gators will get one of its toughest tests of the year today, as they host No. 3 USC, the two-time defending national champion.

"It's important for our guys to not be impressed by Southern California," Lacroix said. "They're a talented team with great players from top to bottom, but if we give the same effort that we have been all season we can have a chance."

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Injuries ending Noble's career

■ THE FRESHMAN HAS DEALT WITH ANKLE, SHOULDER AND BACK PROBLEMS THIS YEAR.

By **ALLISON BANKO**
Alligator Writer

Numbness shot from her neck and tingled down to her fingers.

Despite the pain, freshman Brittney Noble told her coaches, "I can do this. I can do it. I can push through."

They told her, "Absolutely not." She had to see a specialist. That's when the truth hit. Hard.

After dealing with a slew of injuries including those in her ankle, shoulder and back, Noble learned a week ago her gymnastics career is likely over.

She has a disc in her back pressing on her spine — damage that coach Rhonda Faehn said is so severe she doesn't expect her return to competition for the Gators.

"My heart just breaks for her because I know how talented she is," Faehn said. "However, her body is just not kind to her. It's something that's very, very serious, and this is very difficult for her. She's going to have to go through a grieving process."

Faehn said Noble's work ethic and passion will suit her well in the future, but sacrificing her body for gymnastics isn't the right decision.

"She has the rest of her life," she said. "I told her that she has to be able to one day run outside with her children and play sports with them and lift them up. Gymnastics is not her identity."

"It's been a beautiful part of what her life is, but she's going to have to go through the grieving process and know that there's something better for her out there that she's going to channel her passions toward."

Noble only competed in the season opener before going on a five-meet hiatus, returning to the floor routine with less-than-stellar performances later in the year.

By the time it came to the last regular-season meet against



Matt Tripp / Alligator Staff

Florida freshman Brittney Noble learned last week that her gymnastics career has likely come to an end due to a disc in her back pressing against her spine, causing severe damage. Noble competed in two meets this season.

Utah, Noble's condition was so severe she couldn't travel with the team.

She couldn't even sit up for more than 15 minutes without having to lie down.

But with the two biggest competitions of the year left, the Southeastern Conference and NCAA championships, Faehn

still hopes to have Noble with the team on the sidelines.

"If she's capable without being in pain, I know she's on a lot of pain medication right now, she will travel with us the rest of the year," she said. "I would absolutely love for her to be there on the sidelines cheering, but it's a matter of what her body can handle."

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