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VOLUME 105 ISSUE 54

TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2011

More boots than suits at cowboy church



Alex Orlando / Alligator

Christian country singer Hunter Erwin leads a chorus of "I Found Jesus at a Walmart" during a service at a Cross Brand Cowboy Church in Williston.

■ THE CONGREGATION MEETS THURSDAY NIGHTS IN WILLISTON.

By **ALEX ORLANDO**
 Alligator Writer

When the whip cracks, they know they're in the presence of the Lord.

A group of boys spitting chew around a fence post glances over.

In a nearby field, 9-year-old Hunter Holmes and 6-year-old Emory Weins, both in matching plaid shirts and cowboy hats, break from herding fellow elementary schoolers and perk up their ears.

Older folks, still finishing their dinner of pulled pork and baked beans, put down their forks and make their way to the pavilion.

Hats fly off heads as the Rev. Billy Keith begins the prayer offerings.

Instead of pews, the congregation sits on picnic benches. For an offering basket, they use a 10-gallon hat. Rather than a choir, Christian country singer Hunter Erwin sings "I Found Jesus at a Walmart."

This is cowboy church.

In a rodeo arena just off S.R. 41 in Williston, the rugged and the denim-decked have met every Thursday at 7 p.m. for five years to hear sermons from Keith.

He's a burly man with a thick goatee and an even thicker Southern accent. His work-hardened hands wrap all the way around yours as he greets you with, "How y'all doin'?"

In 2006, Keith left Otter Creek Baptist Church in Williston to start his own church. Originally, he didn't figure himself to be the

SEE COWBOY, PAGE 5

UF ALUMNI

Pilot flies aid to Japan

By **ALLISON BANKO**
 Alligator Writer

Timothy Berryhill was no stranger to earthquakes.

The U.S. Navy pilot and UF graduate had been previously stationed in Okinawa, Japan, where he sat through plenty of small shakes and tremors.

But earlier this month, when the rocking in the 35-year-old's base room in Atsugi persisted past the short seconds he was used to, he knew something was out of whack.

"It was disorienting," said Berryhill, who graduated in December with a master's degree in chemical engineering. "It took me 20 seconds to realize, 'OK, this is a lot worse than the tremors I've experienced before.'"

Berryhill attempted to get out of his room, where he was completing some work on his computer. The shaking was so bad he almost fell down. He made it to a nearby stairwell, where he clung onto the railing for safety.

Then, just like that, it was over.

"This is a lot worse than the tremors I've experienced before."

Timothy Berryhill
 UF graduate

After the shaking on March 11 subsided, he ventured to a fellow crew member's room to figure out what exactly was going on.

"We were both watching the news togeth-

SEE JAPAN, PAGE 4

Bison removal finalized

By **MEREDITH RUTLAND**
 Alligator Writer

Against many citizens' wishes, Paynes Prairie will no longer have living, breeding herds of bison and horses.

About half of Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park's bison, and possibly its horses, will be removed from the park next winter.

The final plan for removing the animals was released by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection last week, about six months after the

plan was announced.

In previous interviews, department staff said the animals will be removed due to concerns of inbreeding and worries that the animals will escape into residential areas.

Local News

The final plan differs slightly from the draft plan, which went up against public scrutiny in a citizen meeting on Nov. 30.

The plan recommends removing all male bison from the herd of about 60 bi-

SEE PRAIRIE, PAGE 4

■ Florida safety Matt Elam (right) will attempt to fill the shoes of former Gator Ahmad Black as the quiet sophomore looks to become more of a vocal leader during spring practice. See Story, Page 13.



Raccoon's head stuck in peanut butter jar; kids name him 'Skippy'

RONKONKOMA, N.Y. — A New York raccoon found itself in a sticky situation over the weekend.

For eight hours on Sunday, the scavenger sat with its head inside a peanut butter jar while perched atop a Long Island utility pole.

The unusual sight brought out dozens of curious residents on a Ronkonkoma street. Children quickly nicknamed him Skippy. Newsday says Debbie Sullivan spotted

the raccoon outside her house at 7 a.m. She called Suffolk police, the town of Islip and the state Department of Environmental Conservation. They all said little could be done.

The raccoon's ordeal finally ended around 3 p.m. when a crew from the Long Island Power Authority came to its rescue. The jar fell off as they used a pole to grab the animal.

Skippy quickly scampered off.

— THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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visit www.alligator.org

News Today

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Masculine Mystique: Busting the Myths of Male Perception

Today, 7 p.m.

Reitz Union, Room 349

This event will be moderated by women, for women, but the answers will come from UF's first-ever "Manel:" an all-male panel of UF students of varying ethnicities, sexualities and leadership positions on campus.

Modern Genocide: A Survivor's Perspective

Today, 7 p.m.

Hillel

The ONE Campaign and Hillel Tzedek Team present Jacob Atem, a survivor of the ongoing genocide in Sudan. Join student leaders and activists in an interactive discussion of ethnic conflict, poverty and what can be done on campus to get involved and stay informed.

HEAL Health Panel

Today, 7 p.m.

Ustler Hall

Health Panel is HEAL's largest biannual event and a great opportunity to hear from health professionals firsthand about their careers.

TheHip-HopCollectivePresents: "How to Be: A Bboy"

Today, 8:30 p.m.

Rinker Hall, Room 215

Anyone can dance, but do you know what it takes to be a Bboy? The third skill seminar series will be hosted by Jonathan "Talent" Brown and select Bboys from around campus.

Your Rights on Campus

Today, 7:30 p.m.

Little Hall, Room 237

UF Libertarians will host Adam Kissel of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education to speak on threats to students' rights, and especially threats to free speech, here at UF. Refreshments will be served.

UF Toastmasters Club meeting

Today, 5:45 p.m.

Entomology Building, Room 1027

All are welcome to attend this potluck party

FORECAST



THUNDER STORMS
76/63



THUNDER STORMS
81/64



THUNDER STORMS
75/56



THUNDER STORMS
76/53



SUNNY
76/54

night. Toastmasters provides a fun and positive atmosphere for members to learn and practice public speaking and leadership skills. For more information, go to toastmasters.org or call Mary at 352-870-2267.

RUB Entertainment Presents**Author Chuck Klosterman**

Wednesday, 8 p.m.

Rion Ballroom

Klosterman is the author of six books, including "Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs," "Fargo Rock City" and "Killing Yourself to Live." He has written for Spin, Esquire, GQ, The New York Times Magazine and The Washington Post. More than anyone else in his generation, he captures what it feels like to live in — and express ourselves through — a Pop-obsessed, media-saturated culture. One of the most talked-about writers today, he shows his readers why Pop is a conversation anyone can join in on, and why it's worth talking about in the first place.

Responsibility to Protect or Right to Meddle?

Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Matherly Hall, Room 151

Join The Dynamo for this week's talk-shop to discuss the escalating situation in Libya. The talk will explore the potential motivations behind intervention in Libya from several critical vantage points. For more information, go to TheDynamo.org.

"Hungarian Self-Orientalism As An Idiom of Uniqueness In Europe" by Katalin Rac

Wednesday, 11:45 a.m.

Turlington Hall Room3312

This is the last of this semester's brown bag talks sponsored by the Center for European Studies. This paper discusses the role of

Hungarian Orientalism in defining Hungarian national identity and developing the idiom of Hungarian uniqueness. The Hungarian self-imposed easternness became a trademark, a codeword for uniqueness in Europe. This talk argues that Hungarian self-Orientalism is a contested, yet salient element of modern Hungarian historical and political thinking.

Dance Marathon 2011

Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

Dance Marathon is finally here.

Eight hundred dancers will stay awake and on their feet for 26.2 hours to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network at Shands Children's Hospital. The event concludes Sunday, April 3 at 2 p.m. with the closing ceremony. For more information, visit floridadm.org.

Upstart!!!

Saturday, 1 p.m.

Reitz Union Auditorium

Instructors from the New York Film Academy will be visiting UF for a free five-hour workshop. The event is open to all levels of experience. Learn about the filmmaking process from these top professionals.

Got something going on?

Want to see it in this space? Send an email with "What's Happening" in the subject line to ebehrman@alligator.org. Please model your submissions after above events. Improperly formatted "What's Happening" submissions may not appear in the paper. Press releases will not appear in the paper.

The Alligator strives to be accurate and clear in its news reports and editorials. If you find an error, please call our newsroom at 352-376-4458 or send an e-mail to editor@alligator.org.

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UF buildings lack funding

■ DUE TO THE DEFICIT, THE STATE CANNOT MATCH DONATIONS TO HELP PAY FOR CONSTRUCTION.

By **HANNAH WINSTON**
Alligator Writer

For the third year in a row, \$130 million in donations for UF won't be matched by the state, and an estimated state deficit of more than \$3 billion looms as the culprit.

The construction of 15 buildings, including a Chemical Engineering Building and Graduate Studies building, would have been paid for by the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program. In the program, \$29.4 million from university donors would have been matched by the state for a total of nearly \$58.8 million.

Leslie Bram, associate vice president of the University of Florida Foundation, a nonprofit organization that invests and raises money for UF, said all the proposed new buildings are necessary and highly anticipated.

"Our donors and benefactors are frustrated because they want to see the projects come through," she said.

She said while the university does not

have the money now, it remains committed to the projects.

"We've delayed three years and construction costs have gone up," she said.

Some buildings were given the go-ahead when the university took out loans and thought the money would come through.

"Our donors and benefactors are frustrated because they want to see the projects come through."

Leslie Bram

Associate VP of the University of Florida Foundation

Construction on Hough Hall finished last fall and the Harn Museum of Art's Cofrin Asian Art Wing is expected to be completed next spring. The university is still waiting for state funding to pay off loans.

The Major Gifts Trust Fund Matching Grant Program would have matched more than \$101 million in donations that could have gone to a number of projects at UF, according to Janine Sikes, spokeswoman for the university.

"We understand that budgets are tight at this point," she said.

NYT still free on campus

By **JESSICA KEGU**
Alligator Contributing Writer

The New York Times began charging users to view online content Monday.

The Times print edition is currently available for free on campus, and there are already plans to extend the college readership program to digital subscriptions, according to an email from Eileen Murphy, vice president of corporate communications for The Times.

Readers who do not digitally subscribe will still be able to access articles a number of ways that don't count toward the new 20 articles per month limit.

If a reader is linked to an article through a social media website, the view does not count toward the monthly limit, according to The Times.

Similar rules are in place for search engines like Google, but there will be a daily limit imposed on articles found through certain major search engines.

The new digital subscriptions are available in three different packages, which range from \$15 per month to \$35 per month.

Readers who already subscribe to the home delivery edition will also have unlimited online access, which they can register for online.

UF professor Mindy McAdams said she thinks the fair conditions of the article limits for non-subscribers will help keep the readership from dramatically decreasing.

Murphy said libraries will eventually be covered under group accounts, which they are working to make available in the next several months.

Around **Gainesville**

The Board of Directors of Campus Communications, Inc.

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announces the opening for the position of

GRADUATE STUDENT

With experience in Journalism

(as an unpaid member) of the Board of Directors

The application for this position is available at the reception desk at the entrance of the first floor of *The Alligator* Building at 1105 W. University Avenue, **each weekday between 1:00 and 4:00pm from now until April 5**. Part of the application consists of short essays in answer to specific questions. Applicants should pick up applications far enough in advance to allow enough time to complete them by the deadline of **4:00pm by April 6**.

More information is available for an applicant's mandatory reading at the time an application is picked up. Applicants should allow themselves 10 to 15 minutes of reading time when picking up an application. The application must be returned to the same office before **4:00pm April 6**. **This is an absolute deadline**. All returned applications will be copied and available to be read at *The Alligator* building prior to the selection meeting. Interviews and selections by the Board of Directors will be held at *The Alligator* offices in a meeting open to the public, **Friday, April 15** beginning at **2:00pm**. Applicants must be present to be considered. Applicants must be currently enrolled, degree-seeking college or university students. Board of Directors applicants cannot be current or recent past employees or trainees of Campus Communications, Inc.

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LOCAL

Area unemployment rate drops

By **MORGAN WATKINS**
Alligator Writer

While many people are still on the job hunt in Gainesville, some of their fellow unemployed peers have landed paid positions that have contributed to a nearly one-point drop in the area's unemployment rate in February.

According to data released by the state this week, Alachua County's unemployment rate dipped to 7.7 percent in February, an improvement from the 8.6 percent figure in January.

In January, 11,234 people in the area were unemployed out of a labor force of 130,932. In February, that number dropped to 10,137 unemployed people out of a labor force of 131,083 people.

The Gainesville area, which is comprised of Alachua and Gil-

christ counties, boasted the lowest unemployment rate of 23 Florida metro areas with a 7.8 percent rate for February, according to the state report.

"Gainesville is overcoming and surpassing the old idea that we're not a business-friendly community."

Susan Bottcher
District 3 City
Commission candidate

Gainesville Mayor Craig Lowe posted on his Twitter: "February unemployment numbers show that #Gainesville is moving forward!"

His sentiment was echoed by Susan Bottcher, a candidate for the District 3 City Commission seat in

Gainesville.

She said the improved unemployment rate showed how Gainesville is gradually becoming a more business-friendly area.

"Gainesville is overcoming and surpassing the old idea that we're not a business-friendly community," Bottcher said. "I think we have to keep our eye on the ball and continue to make sure our local government works with local businesses."

Bottcher's opponent in the April 12 run-off election for District 3, Rob Zeller, said many Gainesville residents still face the harsh reality of being unable to feed their families each day.

With so many people still unemployed, Zeller said there is much work to be done to improve the area's private sector to ensure they would be able to find jobs.

State will try to put bison in sanctuary

PRAIRIE, from page 1

son, leaving about 30 females and sterilized male calves to continue roaming the prairie. This is a change from the draft plan, which stated only 15 female bison would stay in the prairie.

The male horses, which are part of a herd of about 30 Florida cracker horses, will either be removed or sterilized and left to roam.

The Florida Cracker Cattle herd will remain at Hickory Ranch, the park's cattle ranch.

The plan states that the animals will be removed but does not say exactly how or who will take them.

Park manager David Jowers refused to comment.

Kirstin Lock, public information officer for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, said in an email that the details of the removal have not been determined, but the next step is to draft a request for offers.

It says the "first preference" is to put the bison in an animal sanctuary. If sanctuaries will not take the males, then the park will find other solutions.

She said the park will screen everyone who applies to take the animals to ensure that the bison are treated humanely.

To remove the animals, the plan states the park will need to hire a contractor to round them up.

Some protesters of the plan are concerned that the bison will be killed for their meat, an issue which is not specifically addressed in the plan. Others are worried the park won't have as many visitors if the animals are removed.

"You can bet that 70 to 80 percent of those people are there to see the bison, the horses and the birds," said Chuck Littlewood, a wildlife photographer who visits the park weekly.

Around Gainesville

Scott going after bad docs, pill mills

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TALLAHASSEE — A new Florida strike force will target unscrupulous doctors and pharmaceutical manufacturers illegally distributing prescription drugs to addicts and drug dealers, Gov. Rick Scott and Attorney General Pam Bondi said Monday.

Scott said the project would be paid for with \$800,000 in unused federal grant money. He noted that 98 of the 100 leading dispensers of these drugs nationally are doctors who reside in Florida. He's also bringing in several other state agencies to help the Florida Department of Law Enforcement with the investigation into the trafficking of prescription drugs and so-called pill mills. The pill mills have given the state a deserved but unwanted reputation as a haven for anyone looking for such drugs — most often the highly addictive pain-killer oxycodone.

State News

More oxycodone is distributed illegally in Florida than all other states combined. Most of the illegal activity in Florida is in the areas surrounding Miami, Tampa and Orlando, where 126 million oxycodone pills have been distributed.

"For too long in Florida, drugs have ruined lives and threatened our safety," Scott said. "We should be able to figure out how to stop this."

Scott said FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey will direct the strike force, which is aimed at eliminating the "flamingo express" — the nickname given to the pipeline of illicit prescription drugs that flow out of Florida to other states, most of which have prescription monitoring systems.

Scott, however, has proposed the state scrap a planned database for tracking prescription drugs, claiming privacy concerns. Bondi is opposed to Scott's suggestion and trying to work with him to find an alternative.

The strike force will also be assisted by the Florida Highway Patrol, investigators from the Division of Insurance Fraud, sheriff's departments and community police forces. The Department of Health and the Agency for Health Care Administration will provide regulatory and licensing personnel.

The pill mill issue has been Bondi's primary focus since she was sworn in as attorney general less than three months ago.

Berryhill was stationed at Atsugi during the March 11 earthquake

JAPAN, from page 1

er," he said. "We saw the tsunami and it was very surreal."

It almost seemed like we were watching a movie. It was humbling watching the cars and the buildings being taken by the force of the water."

Within the hour, Berryhill called his wife, Katie McGoogan, and sent a mass email to friends to let them know he was OK.

McGoogan, an employee at Shands, said her husband called her just before she had time to panic, as she woke up to the news on the radio with her 7 a.m. alarm.

In a span of a couple days after the disaster struck, Berryhill's Navy squadron, along with other squadrons from Pennsylvania, began mission work to help those in need.

That Friday, Berryhill went on a mission to distribute 21,000 pounds of food to the survivors, which they dropped off at another air base to be trucked down to the disaster areas.

In the Navy's missions, supplies ranging from seismology gear to toilet paper to blankets were delivered.

However, Rod Turbak, Berryhill's commanding officer, said that Japan's government never formally asked for the help.

"Everybody wants to reach out and lend a helping hand," he said. "People donated things. They piled up quite fast."

Part of the cargo delivered by the Navy was from donations. The rest were from supplies that were on hand.

While flying on the relief missions, Berryhill and his crew were given radiation detectors to determine their nuclear contamination resulting from the destruction.

Based on the readings, the crew hadn't been contaminated.

Now he's back in Gainesville with his wife and 14-month-old child. But Berryhill, who had lived in Japan for three years, said he still carries a personal attachment to the area.

"I hold a special place in my heart for the Japanese people," he said. "This is a huge tragedy. It was an honor to serve and assist our friends in time of need."



The VR-62 "Nomads" squadron prepares a C-130 Hercules transport plane for 21,000 pounds of Japanese relief supplies. UF alumnus Timothy Berryhill is a part of the "Nomads," which is based at the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville.

Special to the Alligator

The church has between 120 and 160 members

COWBOY, from page 1

pastor type. But a few months into organizing the church, he said, the Lord put the burden on him to preach. Since then, he's gained 120 to 160 followers. He gets more every year at church-sponsored rodeos.

The church is part of the Cross Brand Cowboy Church network of similar churches scattered around the continent. The church is informal and nondenominational. Keith says that's how he likes it.

"Everything that should be happening in a church atmosphere is happening," he said.

Since starting the church, Keith has performed two baptisms, both in a cow trough out back. He's also led two weddings with the brides wearing little white dresses. The grooms put on their best tuxedo tops and blue jeans.

Keith said informal events like those draw his target audience: day-working cowboys. Usually, they are the most reluctant ones to attend.

"They don't like to be around people," he said. "They just like to be around their horses and cows."

Now, cowboys make up three-fourths of the congregation. Mickey Thornton is one of them.

He's about 5 feet 7 inches tall and built like a grizzly bear. He's usually seen wearing clay-caked Wranglers, dusty work boots and a camouflage ball cap. The

only clean thing on his body is a tiny pewter cross that hangs between the top two buttons of his flannel work shirt.

On an average day's worth of work at Whitehurst Cattle Company, he drives 500 head of cattle, tagging ears and castrating bulls. He sees the sun rise and set while he's in the saddle. But he still makes time for church.

Thornton started coming two years ago when he saw the sign on S.R. 41 and "came in to see what's goin' on."

He kept making time every week and works now as the arena team leader for the rodeos. That, he says, is what got him out of the North Georgia bars and into barrel races, roundups and prayers.

He leads a five-minute prayer before every rodeo event.

"That may be the only word of God a cowboy ever gets," he said. "Whether you need to put Christ in a cowboy or cowboy in a Christian."

John Young joined the church after coming to one of Thornton's rodeos. Young has been riding his whole life.

"Well, not all of it," he said. "It ain't over yet."

He's the son of a Baptist preacher and chose here over any of the area's churches. "Sometimes you just don't fit in other places," he said.

The rodeo also brought in Glenn Bush. He brought his 12-year-old grandson for mut-ton bustin' (a rodeo event for children riding sheep) and got to



Alex Orlando / Alligator

Roger Chilton bows his head during the closing prayer at Cross Brand Cowboy Church. He was one of about 120 who came to Thursday's outdoor service.

talking with Keith. Bush comes every week now in blue jeans, a white cowboy hat and white boots — his Thursday best.

When prayers have been offered, announcements have been read and the 10-gallon hat has been passed around as an offering basket, Keith and the rest of

the members join in for prayer.

He thanks God for the weather, his family, a good crop season, "and how we can be cowboys, country boys, Southern boys and rednecks and still have a good time. In Jesus' name we pray."

Amen.

STUDENT HEALTH

Research links energy drinks with health risks

By **BRIANNA DONET**
Alligator Contributing Writer

A review of the effects of high-caffeine energy drinks on children and young adults suggests they may be linked to health risks as serious as heart palpitations, high blood pressure, cardiac arrest and death.

The review, published in February in *Pediatrics*, the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, analyzed scientific reports in medical journals, newspaper articles and regulatory steps taken in other countries regarding high-caffeine energy drinks.

Officials with the American Beverage Association, however, said the study presents some misinformation about energy drinks, claiming an average drink contains only half the caffeine of a cup of coffeehouse coffee.

"It's a hot college topic," said Shannon Kirkpatrick, health promotion specialist for GatorWell Health Promotion Services. "I have had a lot of students ask me about energy drinks. They have packed schedules and think it's good to find something that provides a boost."

"I have had a lot of students ask me about energy drinks. They have packed schedules and think it's good to find something that provides a boost."

Shannon Kirkpatrick
Health Promotion Specialist

The study defines energy drinks as drinks that "contain caffeine, taurine, sugars and sweeteners, herbal supplements, and other ingredients and are distinct from sports drinks and vitamin waters."

The study concluded that 31 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds and 34 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds reported regularly consuming energy drinks.

"I have them about every other week," political science freshman Max Goldstein said. "It keeps me awake for tailgates ... and when I have to be up all day."

An average energy drink contains 70 to 80 milligrams of caffeine per 8-ounce serving, about three times the concentration of cola drinks.

Energy drinks are classified as dietary supplements, so the U.S. Food and Drug Administration cannot limit their caffeine content, as they do with juice and soft drinks, which are categorized as food.

In addition, U.S. poison centers have not yet been able to monitor the number of overdoses associated with energy drinks because these episodes are classified as "caffeine" or "multi-substance exposure."

But Kirkpatrick said overdosing is possible.

"Dehydration, vomiting, upset stomach, irregular heartbeat and, as seen lately in the media, even coma and death can occur," she said.



Paige Garret / Alligator

Hunchback Of The Gator Nation

A hunchback alligator swims through the waters of Lake Alice on March 22.

Editorial

Academic Cred Professors shouldn't be "strictly business"

Professors might want to rethink how their students perceive them. In a study published in the March issue of Learning, Media and Technology, researchers found that professors who reveal a bit of their personal lives are viewed as being more credible and more caring by students.

So maybe the notion we have that a "strictly business" demeanor is a good way to appear focused and knowledgeable is wrong.

It's understandable: Students should learn from a professor, but knowing that we're seeing and interacting with a human being puts us at ease and in a better position to process information.

We generally don't mind hearing faculty go on tangents about previous work experience, their travels or — for those of us who have taken microeconomics — Leonardo's Pizza. Sometimes, we appreciate the break in the monotony and the chance to connect with our professors.

There's a balance to be struck, of course, so that we aren't inundated with hour-long epics involving our instructors' pets, but professors should let that academic and professional facade slip here and there. Mentioning your family or giving a personal opinion on a subject sometimes helps us more than sticking to stripped-down facts.

Remember: There are reasons robots haven't replaced our faculty.

We Heart the OED

It may come as a surprise, but we aren't language purists.

If you heard the way we talk around the office at times, it's hard to fathom a coherent product resulting from our efforts.

Even so, we're a little dismayed at the Oxford English Dictionary's choices for newest words.

We saw "LOL" and "OMG" coming; their usage has extended even to news headlines.

However, we're wondering who thought including "heart" as a verb was a good idea.

We usually hear this use of the word in a sarcastic context, as if the speaker is too current to say the word "love." The literal reading of a pictograph is too silly to be immortalized on paper. For instance, doesn't "I heart you" sound just as sincere as those other three

words?

In light of this inclusion, we've brewed up a little theory on these ridiculous additions.

How many people still break out the OED — even in its online version — to look up a word?

It's losing ground, but one of the ways to flag down some public notice is to elect flash-in-the-pan words that have no place in a dictionary to go into the book.

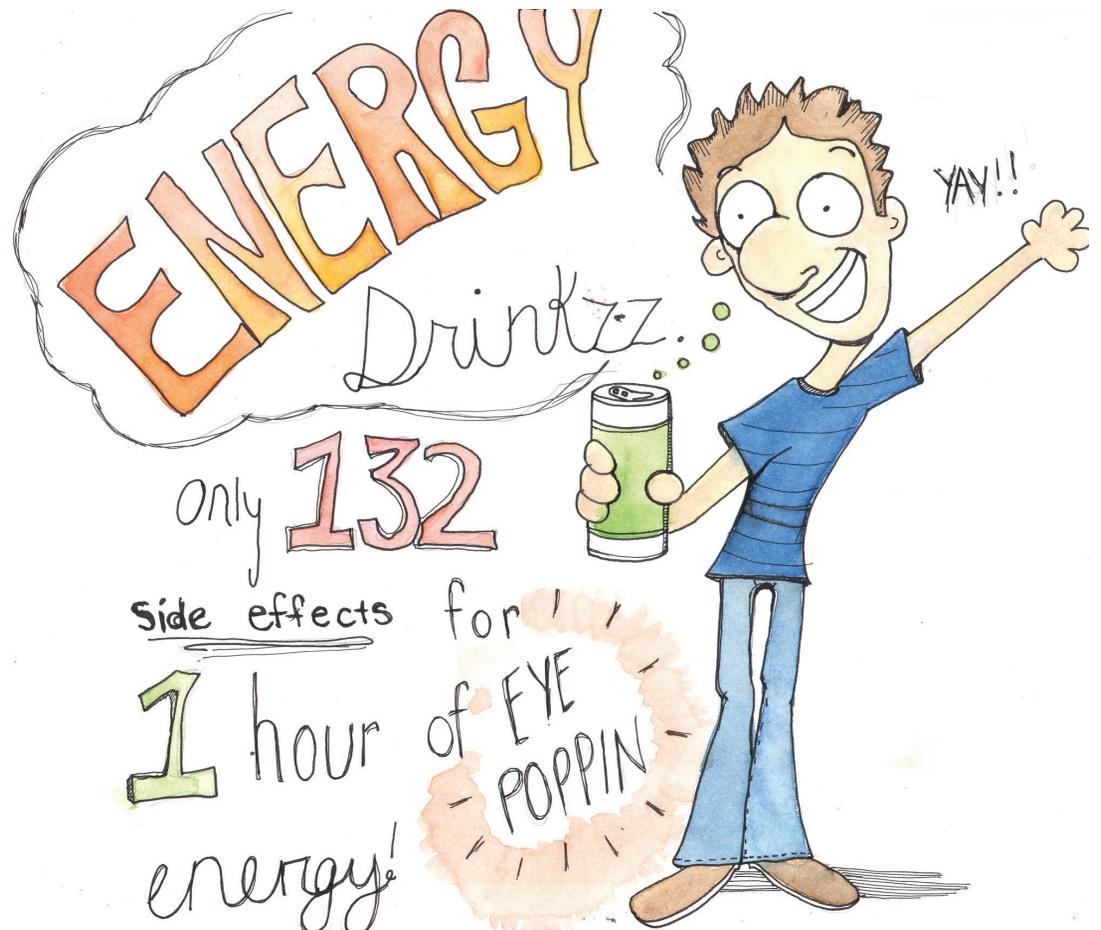
We hear the same story ever year.

The annual additions generally include a few legitimate entries needed to keep the dictionary up to date sprinkled among the ludicrous ones needed to stir up some buzz.

Here's to hoping it's a cry for help from a respected institution rather than terrible decision-making.

Opinions

ALLIGATOR
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Column

Spelling worsened by technology crutch

Predictive text technology is a wonderful thing. If you know only a few letters or the beginning of a word, most smartphones will automatically suggest multiple options for what you were looking for.

Efficient? Yes. Convenient? Yes. Simply astounding technology? Definitely.

Recently, however, I made a shocking discovery; I can no longer spell.

Any word with minimal complication, even one I use almost every day, now presents a new challenge if not presented in a technological medium. When asked to spell "across" by my roommate, I found my forehead scrunched in an attempt to remember how many C's and S's there are. Even as I just typed the word "across" in this column, I spelled it "accross" because I knew Microsoft Word would conveniently provide the auto-corrected text.

Cellphone technology and word processing functions have become such a crutch that we find ourselves less engaged in the mechanical intricacies of our work due to the ease of perfecting them with such functions. Always a reader as a child, my vocabulary, spelling and grammar were accelerated. Now, years later, I've found myself crippled by advanced technologies that will do a majority of my thinking for me.

People tend to only be as intelligent as they have to be. Average people in the world (this excludes those involved in intricately specialized professions such as computer programming) seemingly fall victim to technology which can "think" for them. Spell a word wrong? Just right click and select the correct option. Need a more scholarly word for a paper? The synonym function will help you. All of these mindless opera-



Laura Ellermeyer
letters@alligator.org

tions allow us to stare blankly at the screen while our mouse perfects our papers and essays. Of course, nothing is perfect — we all know not to rely on Spell Check — but many functions, such as Thesaurus and even AutoComplete, operate virtually flawlessly to ease projects which

would have required much more thought 20 years ago. But does it even matter? How much important writing do we even do off of the computer anyway? Anything handwritten is usually brief and in note form — and certainly not meant to be professional or scholarly.

When typing papers or business documents, as long as we know a skeleton of a difficult word we can easily get the correct word inserted into the correct space. It's a rare occurrence when we are required to accurately spell words on the spot.

Clearly, technology is not dumbing us down, or we wouldn't have the constant advancements that we do, but are the efforts of the programmers and inventors slowly encroaching more and more on our brains? It's a cycle, as new technology allows new information that in return provides new technology, but for the freeloaders such as myself, how do we halt total reliance on these conveniences? Depending on modern, communication-improving luxuries is like relying on a calculator without understanding math: It may yield a correct answer most of the time, but it will eventually fail if you don't know where to put the parenthesis.

Laura Ellermeyer is a first-year finance major. Her column appears on Tuesdays.

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

Reader response

Today's question: Has your spelling gotten worse over the past five years?

Monday's question: Should Florida elect its judiciary members?

55% YES
45% NO
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Guest column

Florida House bills would attack women's right to choose

Women's rights are under attack again.

Florida lawmakers have filed a bill that would make it a felony for doctors to perform abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy — a blatant violation of women's rights under *Roe v. Wade*. Other bills include provisions that would force women to view an ultrasound of the fetus before having an abortion; bar private insurance companies from covering abortions; and add more restrictions to the already burdensome parental notice requirements for young women. These bills are part of continuing attempts to restrict abortion rights until abortions become completely inaccessible to most women.

Women have been fighting for decades to defend our right to control our lives. We demand that our state lawmakers stand up

for women's rights and defeat these newest threats.

Abortion involves a woman's basic right to control her own body and the direction of her life; no restrictions on these rights are reasonable.

It is a right connected to all the other things in our lives. Women can't be on equal footing with men if we are unable to make life-altering decisions such as whether or not to carry a pregnancy to term. Childbearing is physically dangerous, hard work that involves risks that men never face, and women should be able to decide whether we want to do it.

In our feminist group, many of us have had serious pregnancy scares and some of us, despite a lifetime of birth-control vigilance, became pregnant when we didn't want to be. The fact is it's a constant strug-

Kendra Vincent
Speaking Out

gle for women to keep from becoming pregnant. No birth control is 100 percent effective; they all have side effects, and men often refuse to wear condoms.

Women in Florida have faced similar threats to our rights before. In October 1989, 10,000 demonstrators marched on Tallahassee when then Gov. Bob Martinez called a special session of the state legislature after vowing Florida would be the first state to restrict abortion rights following a Supreme Court decision. All of those bills that sought to restrict a woman's right to abortion died in committee because state representatives listened to their constituents. Martinez was also resoundingly defeated in the next election.

Let history be a lesson to those cur-

rently in our state legislature. Women will not stand for violations of our rights. As the women's liberation group Redstockings said in 1971, women need to go for what we really want. All women should have the right to get an abortion at any time for any reason, regardless of the ability to pay and without waiting periods, consent laws or other hurdles. Women should have the right to decide when and if we will bear children.

Call your representatives and tell them to vote no on House bills 97, 321, 415, 501, 747, 1127, 1179 and 1247.

Join Gainesville Women's Liberation, a chapter of National Women's Liberation, for Speak Out on Abortion on April 9 at 3 p.m. at the Civic Media Center. For more information, contact National Women's Liberation at nwl@womensliberation.org.

UWire

Obama's Libyan conflict separate from Bush's Iraq campaign

As the United States becomes more deeply involved in its third war in a Muslim state, comparisons with the war in Iraq are inevitably made.

Before any discussion of the two conflicts is made, it is important to note that the differences between the wars in both Libya and Iraq undeniably differentiate the two conflicts.

President Barack Obama continued his foreign policy trend of limiting U.S. combat involvement in Libya, while former President George W. Bush overwhelmingly devoted large numbers of troops to overthrowing Saddam Hussein in Iraq — though sustainability concerns limited the number of soldiers he committed as well.

There has been some international support for intervention in Libya, although these resolutions have advocated for a much narrower range of military options than explored in Libya.

Even the Arab League vote has been regretted substantially by those who voted for it.

The conflict in Libya has been overwhelmingly portrayed as a humanitarian conflict that will protect the lives of civilians, while Iraq was sold to the international community as a security action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction primarily and a humanitarian action secondly.

The bombing of Libya is somewhat similar to the NATO assault on Serbia, which saw the international community intervening to stop the destructive trend of regional politics.

Bilal Ahmed
UWire

It is worrying that despite successes in the Slavic states, the United Nations is still skeptical about the capacity of ethnic tensions to ease in the region and these developments may be replicated in Libya.

Obama sought to differentiate himself from his Republican peers by committing troops to Libya while confronting real concerns in the state.

However, the basis for this commission is almost identical to that of Iraq.

It became increasingly clear that a victory for Col. Muammar Gadhafi would set a powerful precedent in the Arab world that autocratic oppression of rebellious movements would lead to an end of political movements against the dictators in question.

American intervention in Libya would therefore prevent this eventuality and ally the United States with freedom and democracy in the Middle East, which is a similar justification to that which motivated direct action in the war in Iraq.

Iraq is a continuing military campaign, which has roots in an attitude of self-admiring support for democracy that both predated and survived the revelation that Saddam Hussein did not in fact pursue weapons of mass destruction.

This support was meant to convey that the United States was allied with the pro-democratic movements in the Middle East, though they were certainly less notice-

able until a Tunisian man resolved to set himself ablaze.

The Libyan conflict is therefore another attempt to place the United States in a favorable light in the Middle East by offering itself as the vanguard of regional democracy.

Because of this, it will have similarly complex problems later when these attempts run against American interests of maintaining stability and the export of oil from the region.

However, the most striking difference between Iraq and Libya is that in Iraq, Bush at least attempted to maintain a semblance of democracy by lubricating the months leading up to the beginning of the conflict with a public relations campaign concerning the necessity of the conflict.

Obama, surprisingly enough, has begun the Libyan campaign with little consultation from elected representatives, worrying, as there is a weak withdrawal strategy from Libya similar to that of Iraq where thousands of troops are still stationed.

Let us not forget that Iraq was originally supposed to be a conflict that was concluded in a matter of months, not years.

It seems reasonable to believe that Libya, while we are still stationed in Iraq, may become Obama's Iraq.

The gap of history is so minuscule between the two conflicts that it would be inexcusable if this were the case.

Bilal Ahmed, Daily Targum, Rutgers U. via UWIRE

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SPRING SPECIAL!
Quiet 1bd 1ba 827sq ft loft.
SW Gville on RTS 10 min on freeway from SFC
Just renovatd. swim pool, exercise room.
\$425mo call 472-6491 or 474-0841 4-1-11-10-2

3BR/3BA House, fenced yard, close to UF, open floor plan/cathedral ceilings, new tile, carpet, fixtures. W/D, lawn, and pest control incl. Small pets allowed, avail Aug, \$1350/month. 352-246-5958, tonyc@kinetixpt.com 4-8-11-15-2

SAVE SOME GREEN! Fall specials
3 BR 1 mile to UF. \$895 for WHOLE apt! W/D, H2O, sewer, gas incld.
Sign by April 1st to get this AWESOME deal 2700 SW Archer Rd 373-2700 4-1-9-2

PET'S PARADISE

\$390 - \$650. No app or pet fee. 1 & 2BR, privacy fenced. SW. 352-331-2099 4-05-11-10-2

****3/2 515 NW 51st St.****

Near GHFC vaulted ceilings, all appliances, W/D, garage, small pets ok. Avail. Aug 1, \$1225 333-9874, 317-7346 4-20-11-21-2

TOP QUALITY - GREAT LOCATIONS

Upscale, 1 & 2 BR apts. 1 block to UF campus - on N & E sides. Year lease, beginning summer or fall. Sorry, no pets. K & M Properties. 372-1509 4-20-11-21-2

GREAT LOCATION - GREAT PRICE
2BR/1BA apts on Univ Ave across from UF Stadium & O'Dome. Modern, all elec, cent H/AC, \$600/mo K&M Properties 372-1509 4-20-11-21-2

2 For Rent unfurnished

www.Bellaproperties.net

3/2 with study. Walk to UF, hardwood floors, fireplace, 2 car garage, full sevice tour 335-5424
4-20-20-2

WALK TO UF! ONE MONTH FREE!
3 blocks from Campus. New 2/2 Condo-each room has private bath + gourmet kitchen & laundry & parking. \$650 per rm. mollydh@aol.com 614-288-6730 4-1-11-7-2

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Palm Villas - luxury graduate apartments in a small and quiet complex. 2 BR/2 BA available for \$465 per BR. Call to tour 335-5424 4-20-20-2.

WALK TO UF
3 Bed 2 Bath House in upscale Golfview Estates near Law School & Athletic fields. \$1400 mo. Aug 1. Call (305) 788-4103 4-20-11-19-2

WALK TO UF. START SUMMER OR FALL

●Studios \$425-\$400●1BR/1BA \$550-\$450 ●2BR \$850-\$800 1 yr lease, SD, NS, NP. Call/Text 352-870-7256 gvl32601@gmail.com 4-20-11-20-2

Duckpond area HOUSE Aug.1 Large 3/1, W&D, Cent. H/AC wood fls, nice yard, quiet \$1100 Bike to UF 352-316-0154 www.10houses.com 4-1-11-6-2

MIKE'S HOUSES - 352-665-7316
Exc cond - Close to UF. Pets OK - fenced yards.
●3/2 \$1250 621 NW 35th St.
●4/3 \$1250 611 NW 36th Terr
●3/2 \$1150 630 NW 34th Terr. 4-7-11-10-2

Newly renovated 2BD/2BA, two-story 1340 sq. ft. townhouse available at \$925. Includes: New wood floors, new carpet upstairs, new washer/dryer, new kitchen appliances, fireplace, pool. Next to Fresh Market, Leonardo's, and other great eateries! Contact Jon at 352-275-6644. 4-4-11-5-2

3br/3ba Townhouse, UNLIMITED water, washer & dryer, pool and some furniture avail. GREAT LOCATION to UF/Shands/Vet. Move in today for \$850/month or July/August for \$1,000/month. Call 727-244-4854. 3-29-11-1-2

3 Subleases

\$750/mo OBO Windsor Hall.Summer A/C or B. Movein early. Furnished, secure,pool, all utilities inc. Walk to UF.No roomies. Your own apt! Parking avail. Call 954-821-1446 or radurier@bellsouth.net for info. 6-2-11-30-3

Summer Sublease May-July \$350/month includes utilities @ Gainesville Place Apartments 1/1 in a 4/4 42" plasma tv! Fully furnished (washer/dryer included) bbermudez@ufl.edu 3-29-5-3

1/1 in a 4/4 @ Gainesville Place for Summer. \$424/month, all-inclusive, fully-furnished, wireless in apartment, 42" TV, close to bus stops. 2 rooms available. Contact Marcella at 954-854-2503 or mpatino@ufl.edu. 3-31-5-3

Affordable & Spacious 1/1 avail. May 1 700 sq. ft. with upgraded tile floor Bel Air @ Hidden Lake Interested call 219-951-2047 Or email mcowen20@gmail.com 4-1-5-3

Your roommate hasn't done the dishes in How long?! Find a better dishwasher in the Alligator Classifieds.

4 Roommates

Roommate Matching HERE
Oxford Manor 377-2777
The Landings 336-3838
The Laurels 335-4455
Greenwich Green 372-8100
Hidden Lake 374-3866
4-20-70-4

COLLEGE ROOMS STARTING AT \$385.00 MONTH, UTILITIES INCLUDED, NO MOVE IN COST. WE DO SEMISTER LEASING,
Frances 352-375-8787 Rent Florida Realty 9-26-11-78-4

Gated 4BR/4BA Countryside condo, pool-side, own BD & BA, W/D, cable, hi-speed internet, early stop on UF bus rte. Utills included. \$400/mo. No deposit required. 863-634-1893. Available immediately. 3-29-10-4

Walk to UF from a 4bd/2ba NW house.Male or female.No pets/smoking.Free off-street parking\$450.00/mo.Includes all utilities, wifi,security system, Available 8/1 yearly lease. 727-726-2915 4-5-11-15-4

HANDYMAN SPECIAL Share 2BR/2BA MH in Hidden Oaks. Furn rm incl elec, ph, cable, internet. Close to UF, bus, shopping. \$200 NR dep. \$400/mo. NS, NA, ND. Handyman can work off most. Caged pets ok. 331-0762 3-29-10-4

MOVE IN NOW- Need 1 male student to share 4/4 poolside condo at Countryside. Easy commute UF/SFC, 2 bus rtes, furn common area, W/D. unfurn \$365/obo furn avail. Text 850 585 4405, 386 676 9703, nukken1@aol.com 3-31-11-10-4

2BR/2BA avail now in 4BR/4BA Countryside condo. \$435/mo/room - utills incl. Direct bus to UF 3 mis. Pool, exercise room, nicely furn. 3rd Flr. W/D, wireless. Flo 352-357-9656, or 352-636-4814 4-20-11-23-4

I am looking for a male roommate who is very nice and easy to get along with. Asking \$300/mo which includes util & Dish Network TV. If interested, call Joe at 331-4239 or 352-682-9412 5-30-7-4

MOVE IN AUGUST-Need 1 female student to share clean 2/2 furnished condo in Rockwood Villas. Easy commute UF/SFC on bus rte. No pets/smoking. \$450/mo. includes all utilities, W/D. Yrly lease. Text 727-494-4503, surfinbean@gmail.com 4-4-11-7-4

1 roommate needed in 4/4 at Gainesville Place for Fall 2011/Spring 2012. \$510/month OBO. Bus Route to UF, pools, tanning, all inclusive furnished, free parking! call (850)255-3832 email jgardner@ufl.edu 3-31-5-4

Male, grad student/instructor preferred for small furnished apt on side of private home close to UF. Cable, internet, patio, safe. No pets. One person only. Avail Aug. \$475/mo incl utills. 352-336-5808 4-1-11-6-4

5 Real Estate

NEW CONDOS-WALK TO UF
For Info on ALL Condo for Sale, Visit www.UFCONDOS.COM or Matt Price, University Realty, 352-281-3551 4-20-70-5

AFFORDABLE LUXURY NEW CONSTRUCTION NEAR UF, SHANDS, LAW SCHOOL
2Bed/3 Full Baths + Office. Granite Counters, 2 Direct Bus Stops to UF. Matt Price, University Realty, 352-281-3551 4-20-70-5

WALK TO UF & DOWNTOWN!
THE PALMS - New Ultra-Luxury Condos. Granite, Huge Closets, Pool, Call Eric Leightman, University Realty 352-219-2879 4-20-70-5

3 / 2 on Country Woodsy 5 Acres Owner Finance Low Down Quick Estate Family Anxious Low Taxes and Insurance Call 727-541-2173 or 386-362-6293 3-30-11-5-5

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

BED - FULL SIZE - \$100 ORTHOPEDIC Pillow-top mattress & box. New, unused, still in plastic w/warranty. Can deliver. Call 352-377-9846 4-20-10-70-6

MICROFIBER SOFA & LOVESEAT - \$400 Brand new still packaged w/warranty. Must sell. Can deliver. Retail \$1600. 352-372-7490 4-20-10-70-6

BED - KING - \$200 PILLOWTOP mattress & box springs. Orthopedic rated. Name brand, new, never been used, in plastic with warranty. Call 352-372-8588. Can deliver. 4-20-70-6

BEDROOM SET. 7pc Cherry, Queen/ king bed, dresser w/mirror, 2 nightstands, chests avail. Dovetail const. New, in boxes. Can deliver. Retail \$4500, must sell, sacrifice \$850 (352) 372-7490 4-20-70-6

SOFA & LOVESEAT 100% Italian leather. Brand new in plastic w/warranty. Retail \$1800. Sacrifice \$700. Call 352-377-9846 4-20-70-6

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

DINETTE SET 5pc \$120 Brand new in box. Never used. 352-377-9846 4-20-70-6

****BEDS - ALL BRAND NEW****
****Full \$100 Queen \$125 King \$200****
Orthopedic pillow-top sets. Brand name matching sets not used or refurbished. Still in plastic, direct from factory! 352-333-7516. 4-20-70-6

BED- QUEEN New orthopedic pillowtop mattress and boxspring set. Brand name, brand new, still in plastic with warranty. Can deliver. \$130 352-377-9846. 4-20-70-6

BEDROOM SET- \$300 BRAND NEW Still in boxes! 5 pieces include: Headboard, Nightstand, Dresser, Mirror, Chest. Must sell, can deliver. 352-377-9846. 4-20-10-70-6

Furniture for sale-Like New. Reasonable!
UF Student Graduating. Queen Bed, Triple Dresser & Chest, 2 Night Stands, Liv. Room-Sofa, Love Seat, Desk Workstation & Leather Chair, TV Stand, Cocktail Table. \$1,500 call 954-275-4008 3-31-11-10-6

7 Computers

CASH PAID for Laptops
Parts & Repair Mac & PC laptops
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8 Electronics

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4-6-7-8

10 For Sale

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bikes, computers, printers, vehicles & more.
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GOATS FOR SALE

Charlie - 352-278-1925 4-20-70-10

Estate Sale
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For Information Call
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11 Motorcycles, Mopeds

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N ₁	G ₂	D ₂																
RACK 4																		

PAR SCORE 145-155
BEST SCORE 230

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 4th Edition. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

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95 Ford Explorer \$1999
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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS
1 Lea low
4 Rocket interceptors, briefly
8 Doesn't tip
14 DJ's array
15 Atahualpa, notably
16 Sci-fi author ___ K. Le Guin
17 Completely dark
19 Took an intersecting road
20 It's not butter
21 Getting-to-know-you party activity
23 Soft baseball hit
25 Facility
26 Dirty fighting?
33 "Weeds" airer, in TV listings
36 Latvian capital
37 Eastern principle
38 Liven (up)
39 Wearisome routine
43 Expressive rock genre
44 ___ of Good Feelings
45 "Zounds!"
46 Old boys?
47 "Wow, she's good-looking!" sounds
53 Wrath, in a classic hymn
54 Fat cat
58 "Funny Girl" leading role
64 Quayle's successor
65 Orbital extreme
66 Some sculpted abs ... and what the starts of 17-, 21-, 26-, 39-, 47- and 58-Across are altogether?
68 Mother with a Nobel Prize
69 Depilatory brand
70 AFL partner
71 Turns over, as an engine
72 Film pooch in a tornado
73 Tolkien tree creature

DOWN
1 Low-paying position

2 Nancy who's slated to replace Mary Hart on "Entertainment Tonight"
3 Bone: Pref.
4 Have a bug
5 ___ B'rith
6 Cornerstone
7 Benefit
8 Hindu aphorisms
9 Most loyal
10 Its anthem is "Hatikvah"
11 Wagnall's partner
12 Make a run for it
13 1980-81 Iranian president Bani-
18 Bust's opposite
22 Spelling contest
24 Music to a cat lover's ears
27 Day in Durango
28 Lb. or oz.
29 Filet mignon requests
30 Couple in People
31 Tom, Dick or Harry
32 Continue
33 Eject, as lava
34 Medal recipient

35 Stone for many Libras
40 Rep. with a cut
41 Berkeley school, familiarly
42 First lady's home?
48 Identify, as a perp
49 Most ironic
50 ___ corpus
51 Suffix with hotel
52 "Beowulf" or "Star Wars"
55 Bologna ball game
56 Pest control name
57 Stupefy with drink
58 Pool legend
59 In ___; peeved
60 Director Ephron
61 Fails to be
62 Giovanni's good-bye
63 Stage direction
67 Tour golfer

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

M	U	C	K	S	L	A	N	B	B	I	D	S	
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By Joon Pahk and Andrea Carla Michaels
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C ₃	R ₁	Y ₄	P ₃	T ₁	I ₁	C ₃	RACK 3 =	<u>98</u>
E ₁	N ₁	D ₂	G ₂	A ₁	M ₃	E ₁	RACK 4 =	<u>61</u>
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Differences: 1. Waiter's button is missing. 2. Wine glass is full. 3. Man's glasses are gone. 4. The is black. 5. Door is missing. 6. Chef's apron is shorter.

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UF FOOTBALL

Elam looks to fill Black's spot as strong safety, leader



Special to the Alligator / UF Communications

Florida sophomore strong safety Matt Elam is looking to assume the role departing Gator Ahmad Black held as the defense's vocal leader. Elam recorded 22 tackles during his freshman season.

By TYLER JETT

Alligator Staff Writer
tjett@alligator.org

For the first time this spring, Matt Elam fielded questions from the media Monday.

His answers were quiet, barely even audible, which is why the subject he touched on most seemed ironic. Elam, a sophomore, will be tasked with replacing all-Southeastern Conference strong safety Ahmad Black, who led the team with 108 tackles and five interceptions last season.

But more important than his statistical output, Black emerged as the team leader in the first year of the post-Tim Tebow era. At UF's NFL pro day two weeks ago, Will Muschamp called Black "an ambassador to the program."

Black was the mouthpiece of the Gators, both internally and to the outside world. In September, former coach Urban Meyer compared Florida's chances of beating Kentucky to a coin flip. Later that week, Black joked about Meyer's comments, sarcastically hinting he had no idea if the Gators could win. Then, at a press conference

two days after UF's 48-14 victory, Black pulled out a coin, indicating how supposedly lucky his team had been.

With little to salvage from a disappointing 8-5 season, Meyer frequently pointed to the improvement of Black, who evolved from a freshman with an attitude problem to someone Meyer called a member of his family.

Now, Elam is looking to go through a similar — albeit accelerated — transition.

"One of the things I need to work on is being a leader," he said, his voice hardly louder than a whisper. "I'm not used to being vocal. I might have to take on that role."

As quiet as Elam was Monday, one player assured everyone Elam is a much different person while wearing a helmet and pads.

"He doesn't have any problems with his speech," cornerback Cody Riggs said. "That's just Matt. Some people handle the media different, but it only matters how he handles himself on the field. When Matt makes a call, I listen to him."

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 14

Undersized Florida will miss big men, be guard-heavy in 2011-12

I hope Florida fans enjoyed the Gators' low-post dominance Saturday more than UF's players and coaches seemingly did, because they won't be seeing much of it next year.

Despite Vernon Macklin's career-high 25 points, Florida went away from him in the final minutes of the team's Elite Eight loss to Butler.

Alex Tyus was visibly upset in the postgame press conference because he didn't get enough late-game looks.

Commentators and analysts boasted early and often about the Gators' all-senior frontcourt of Macklin, Tyus and Chandler Parsons. Yet they were rendered ineffective — arguably by their own coaches and teammates — in the most important moment of their careers.



Adam Berry
Bad News Berry
aberry@alligator.org
Twitter: @adamdberry

Unfortunately for UF fans, they won't even be around to be ignored next season.

The 2011-12 Gators basketball team will have a drastically different look — one a little less seasoned up front and a lot deeper in the backcourt.

UF will likely start Patric Young at center and Erik Murphy at power forward next year.

The duo combined for 25 minutes, two points, four rebounds and six fouls

SEE ADAM, PAGE 16

Gators seeking more from middle of lineup vs. 'Noles

■ SOUTH CAROLINA STIFLED UF'S TOP FIVE HITTERS THIS WEEKEND.

By JESSE SIMONTON

Alligator Staff Writer
jsimonton@alligator.org

Before No. 4 Florida challenges No. 7 Florida State tonight at 7 in Jacksonville, the heart of the Gators' order needs to exorcise its demons.

During Florida's weekend series loss to No. 3 South Carolina, its Nos. 1-5 hitters combined for just five hits and nine strikeouts in 51 at-bats.

While Nolan Fontana (.322), Daniel Pigott (.394) and Preston Tucker (.343) have swung the bats well this season, they were stifled by South Carolina's heavy arms.

Fontana recorded the lone RBI from Florida's first five hitters with a sacrifice fly in Saturday's 2-1 win.

The lone bright spot during the weekend was their 10 walks.

Austin Maddox, the cleanup hitter, and Brian Johnson, usually slated in the five-hole, have been relatively quiet all season.

As a freshman last year, Maddox was the Gators' best power threat, smashing 17 home runs. But through 25 games in 2011, he has just one homer and 10 RBIs.

"We're not going to win many games when we go 0 for 8 in our 3-4-5 spots," coach Kevin O'Sullivan said after Sunday's 4-3 loss. "It's that simple. They've got to produce. They've got to swing the bat better."

"Our 3-4-5 guys are going to have to hit. If we're going to want to win some games in this league, they got to do a

SEE BASEBALL, PAGE 15



Baseball

alligatorSports Video Show

■ Check out alligatorSports.org for the newest edition of the alligatorSports Video Show. UF basketball beat writer Greg Luca provides coverage of the Gators' trip to New Orleans, including their season-ending loss to Butler in the Elite Eight, complete with postgame comments from the team. Greg then wraps up the show with a quick look forward to 2011.

UF BASKETBALL NEWS

■ Florida senior forward Chandler Parsons was named one of 45 honorable mentions on The Associated Press All-America team, announced Monday.

alligatorSports Podcast

■ Keep an eye out for our latest podcast, in which Anthony Chiang, Greg Luca, Jesse Simonton and host Adam Berry overcome a gauntlet of technical difficulties to bring you an abbreviated edition of the show.

UF FOOTBALL

Sturgis returns to practice after injury

By **ANTHONY CHIANG**
Alligator Staff Writer
a Chiang@alligator.org

"Everything is different from last year," right guard Jon Halapio said. "Our offensive line coach is not only teaching us techniques, but now we are learning the entire football play. We have to know what the quarterback is thinking, running back is thinking and wide receiver is thinking."

While the Gators were having trouble getting rest preparing for the Crimson Tide last October, Caleb Sturgis was kept awake for another reason.

"I think (my back injury felt the worst) right before the Alabama week," Sturgis said. "I just really couldn't sleep or anything like that. That was the point where I got everything checked out."

Florida's kicker went on to miss the final eight games of the season with a herniated disk and a stress fracture that was first aggravated in a weight lifting session before the season. While Sturgis has yet to practice kickoffs this spring, he is slowly making his way back and is already kicking field goals.

However, the injury has had lingering effects. Sturgis has cut down on weight room work and the number of kicks he attempts in practice to limit the strain on his back.

The injury impacted Sturgis even before he was sidelined. He knocked in just two of four field goals in four games before punter Chas Henry filled in for him.

"(Not being able to play) was obviously really rough," Sturgis said. "I never really in my life had an injury before that kept me out. It was something new for me."

O-LINE ADJUSTING: Learning the new offense hasn't just been tough on Florida's skill players. The offensive line has been asked to make a change from last season, too.

On top of losing Mike Pouncey, Carl Johnson and Marcus Gilbert, the group has had to adjust to the new coaching staff's scheme this spring. Offensive coordinator Charlie Weis' system demands that the offensive line carry more responsibility.



Harrison Diamond / Alligator

UF kicker Caleb Sturgis only played in four games last year due to a herniated disk and stress fracture in his back, but he returned to practice this spring.

Elam keeps quiet about Meyer's departure, says he gets along with new staff

FOOTBALL, from page 13

Even if Elam can emulate Black vocally, replacing him as the team's most consistent tackler could be problematic. While he saw more game action than most members of Florida's hyped freshman class last year, his 22 tackles ranked 14th on the team. He also broke up one pass and recovered a fumble.

Perhaps more so than any other player in the 2010 recruiting class, Elam signed with the Gators because of his connection to Meyer.

Elam, who was among the first five players to verbally commit to UF as a high school junior, actually decommitted from the Gators in December 2009 when Meyer first stepped down. After Meyer assured him that he was in fact returning to Florida, Elam recommitted about a month before National Signing Day.

When asked how he felt about Meyer leaving, Elam just smiled and said, "I don't want to talk about that."

He proceeded to say he was getting along well with Muschamp and the rest of the new coaching staff.

Just how well they get along with him, however, could depend greatly on whether Elam can fill Black's shoes. After a year of serving as Black's understudy, Elam feels confident the transition will be smooth.

"He helped me a lot," Elam said. "I learned a lot from him: the way he practiced, the way he handled his situations, things like that."



Football



+



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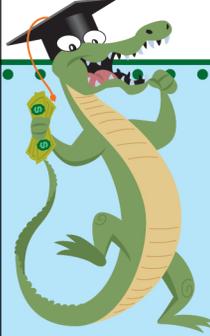
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Gators men in disappointing ninth after Day 2

■ FLORIDA IS 17 STROKES BEHIND THE LEADER IN THE HOOTIE AT BULLS BAY COLLEGIATE.

By **ALEX PECKHAM**
Alligator Writer

The Florida men's golf team came into the Hootie at Bulls Bay Collegiate hoping to get one last tournament victory before moving on to postseason play, but that goal seems nearly impossible now.

The Gators find themselves in ninth place, 17 strokes behind tournament leader Augusta State after Monday's action in Awendaw, S.C.

Florida shot a combined 8-over-par on Day 2, bringing its score to 12-over for the tournament.

Sophomore Phillip Choi and junior Michael Furci were the two bright spots for the Gators, as both turned in 1-under-par 70s.

Choi's under-par round was due to a solid back nine that included two birdies and no bogeys. Choi is tied for 10th overall.

Furci's stellar showing was a welcome sign for the junior, who has had trouble cracking the starting lineup all year.

The DePaul transfer not only impressed with his play but also his resiliency, as Monday's round came on the heels of a discouraging 6-over-par 77 on Sunday.

UF coach Buddy Alexander included Furci in the "couple of guys who played really well today" and added that Michael's round was "very encouraging."

Unfortunately for the Gators, the rest of the squad was unable to replicate their success.

Senior Bank Vongvanij had a disappointing round on Monday, as did sophomores Tyler McCumber and Tommy Mou.

McCumber, whose game had progressed nicely in last week's Schenkel Invitational and to start the Hootie, shot a 5-over-par 76. The sophomore struggled on his way to a 3-over-par front nine but regained his form before a double-bogey 5 on the par-3 12th set him back to 5-over.

Mou has had trouble putting together a complete round all year, and that trend continued Monday when he shot a 5-over-par 76.

Mou's day was done in by a seven-hole stretch on the front nine that included five bogeys.

The biggest surprise for the Gators was the high score

of Bank Vongvanij. The two-time Southeastern Conference Golfer of the Week shot a 6-over-par 77, his worst round of the season. Alexander said Vongvanij's struggles "show that even the best players can play poorly on occasion."

Alexander added he is "pretty sure that (Vongvanij) will bounce back (on Tuesday)."

Although the Gators' chances of winning the Hootie at Bulls Bay Invitational are likely finished, Tuesday's round

will be very important for Florida.

A strong conclusion could help the Gators regain some confidence before the SEC Championship begins on April 15.

Alexander didn't seem concerned about his team's play going into the most critical part of its schedule.

"I'm pretty sure our team will bounce back," Alexander said.



Matt Tripp / Alligator Staff

Florida senior Bank Vongvanij played a disappointing second round in the Hootie at Bulls Bay Collegiate on Monday, shooting a 6-over-par 77, his worst round of the season.

Randall's success draws Maddux comparison from Gamecocks coach



Max Reed / Alligator Staff

Florida sophomore right-handed pitcher Hudson Randall threw a gem in his first-career complete game Saturday, improving his record to 4-0 and dropping his ERA to 0.66.

BASEBALL, from page 13

better job."

O'Sullivan said the most frustrating issue with his hitters is that they are missing hittable pitches in offensive counts.

"We get into a 3-1 count, we hit a weak ground ball to first," he said. "You got to turn on it. You got to barrel up and do something with it. We're not doing a whole lot in offensive counts right now."

O'Sullivan hinted at possible lineup changes after Sunday's defeat, but said he would rather rest on it than make an announcement right after a loss.

RANDALL THROWING LIGHTS OUT: Although the Gators' lineup had issues this weekend, their right-handed ace did not.

Hudson Randall continued his outstanding work Saturday, tossing a gem in his first-career complete game as Florida won 2-1.

The sophomore from Atlanta is 4-0 and has a miniscule 0.66 ERA.

In two conference starts against top-five competition (LSU and South Carolina), Randall has thrown 15.2 innings, without al-

lowing a run or a walk.

"I just try to be as competitive as possible on the mound and be a bulldog out there," Randall said. "I don't strike many people out. I pitch to contact. Using the defense, using our team, that's what I do."

Through six starts this season, Randall has thrown 40.2 innings, striking out 25 and walking just one.

Randall was dominant in his Saturday start, as he used pinpoint control to retire the final 19 Gamecocks.

South Carolina coach Ray Tanner was extremely impressed, comparing Randall to Greg Maddux.

"He's very, very good," Tanner said. "He's so efficient. He doesn't waste a lot of pitches."

ETC.: Anthony DeSclafani (3-0, 1.12) is scheduled to toe the rubber tonight against Florida State. In the junior's last start against the Seminoles, he allowed five runs in the first inning without retiring a batter. ... The game will be played at the Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville, home of the Florida Marlins' Double-A affiliate.

ADAM, from page 13

in Saturday's loss against a hopelessly undersized Bulldogs frontcourt.

Don't get me wrong: Young is exceptionally gifted and will be a great NBA player someday, and I think Donovan will eventually be proven correct in his comparison of Murphy to former Florida forward Matt Bonner.

But they're not Macklin, Tyus and Parsons.

Those three, the surest things on Florida's roster, will be gone.

Erving Walker and Kenny Boynton led the Gators with 14.6 and 14.2 points per game, respectively. But they did so on a combined 811 shots. The frontcourt trio combined for 911.

As much as people criticized Tyus for his career-low scoring average of 9.1, he

did so while playing the fewest minutes of any member of the starting five, hitting 50 percent of his shots and taking 106 fewer attempts than Erving Walker — 173 fewer than Boynton.

Macklin, meanwhile, was Florida's most offensively efficient player, making a staggering 59.3 percent of his attempts.

And everyone knows Parsons took home the SEC Player of the Year award this season, becoming one of the most versatile players in the country. His 2-for-9 shooting Saturday isn't indicative of the season he had.

Next year, without that trio, it will be almost unfair to say Florida will be guard-heavy.

Walker and Boynton will likely continue to shoulder the load and step into increased leadership roles.

But they might be the third and fourth

best guards on the Gators' roster.

Mike Rosario, the Rutgers transfer often forgotten about during the season, will suit up for Florida next year.

It's safe to assume Donovan is excited to utilize the 6-foot-3 guard's ability to create and put the ball in the basket — he scored 16.7 points per game in the Big East in 2009-10.

And perhaps most intriguing, the Gators will add super-recruit Brad Beal.

The 6-foot-4 shooting guard from St. Louis (Mo.) Chaminade does a little bit of everything — and he does it all well.

It will be impossible to keep him from playing significant minutes immediately.

Plus, barring another rush of postseason transfers, Florida will return Casey Prather and Scottie Wilbekin in the backcourt.

Wilbekin certainly performed far above

and way beyond expectations, especially as he became the team's second-best on-the-ball defender, while Prather drew a lot of praise for his athleticism, even if he didn't get a chance to show it on the court.

That leaves Young, Murphy, Will Yeguet, a no-longer-redshirted Cody Larson and three-star freshman Walter Pitchford in the frontcourt.

The Gators will certainly have enough talented guards to carry them to another successful season next year, and Young and Murphy are capable of developing into a reliable starting frontcourt.

But they won't have a ton of experienced big men.

Not a whole lot of known quantities.

Not many sure things.

They're all on their way out the door. Hopefully the Gators enjoyed them while they could.

1. Kenny Boynton, So.

With a third-place finish in the Week 11 rankings, Boynton broke a three-way tie atop the season-long standings. The sophomore guard didn't lead the team in any statistical category except free-throw percentage (82.3 percent), but our voters gave Boynton some extra respect for being the team's best defender. The sophomore also came up big in the NCAA Tournament, holding BYU's Jimmy Fredette to 11-of-29 shooting from the field. Boynton was a potent scoring threat in the UF offense, notching 14.2 points per game, good for second on the team. He was also reliable, reaching double figures in scoring in each of the team's final 16 games despite a 38.5 field goal percentage and 33.1 three-point percentage.

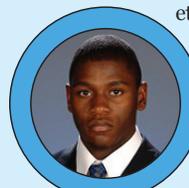


HOT SHOTS

1. Kenny Boynton	17 points
T-2. Erving Walker	16 points
T-2. Chandler Parsons	16 points
4. Vernon Macklin	8 points
5. Alex Tyus	4 points

T-2. Erving Walker, Jr.

Walker finished tied for second with Chandler Parsons in the season-long standings with 16 points, but the junior guard received first-place honors in four of our weekly polls. Walker was the team's leading scorer at 14.6 points per game and provided a spark to an offense that was sometimes stagnant and out of sync. The junior scored in a variety of ways, recording 148 points from two-point range, 237 points from three-point range and a team-best 154 points from the free-throw line. Walker was Florida's primary ball handler, but he finished the season second with 125 assists while leading the Gators with 87 turnovers. Still, Walker was often called upon to take, and usually make, clutch shots.



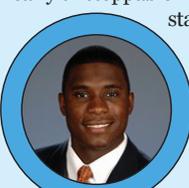
T-2. Chandler Parsons, Sr.

Parsons was named the SEC Player of the Year after leading the Gators in rebounds and assists per game with 7.8 and 3.8, respectively. Regardless of the national praise he received, the senior forward only tied for second in our standings because he finished fourth on the team in scoring at 11.3 points per game and underwhelmed in his final games. Although he put together solid marks of 48 percent shooting from the field and 36.8 percent from three-point range, he struggled at the line, hitting just 55.7 percent of his attempts. While the forward was a valuable presence as a senior leader, he had a propensity for disappearing for long stretches.



4. Vernon Macklin, Sr.

Macklin came into his own as a low-post scoring threat during his senior season, finishing third on the team with 11.6 points per game. The center shot a team-leading 59.3 percent from the field with his nearly unstoppable hook shot from the field. Despite his 6-foot-10 stature, Macklin finished third on the team with 5.4 rebounds per game. He also ended the year third in blocks with 26, and his minutes were limited in clutch situations by his 45.1 free-throw percentage. Still, the senior center gained respect from his teammates for fighting through nagging injuries and providing a humorous presence in the locker room.



5. Alex Tyus, Sr.

Tyus finished the season playing better than anyone on the team, recording double-doubles in the team's final two games. This included an outstanding 19-point, 17-rebound showing in the team's Sweet 16 victory over BYU. But up to that point in the season, Tyus had been a relative disappointment, averaging just 8.6 points and 5.7 rebounds per game prior to the final two contests despite his superior talent and athleticism. Still, the senior forward shot an impressive 50 percent for the season and finished second on UF with 29 blocks.



Jocelyne Sanchez and Greg Luca / Alligator Staff

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