

Gordon Watson
 clinched Florida's
 4-2 home win
 against South
 Carolina on Sunday.
 Read the story on
 page 14.



CRIME

Peeing-on-pedestrians trend trickles through town

JENNA LYONS

Alligator Staff Writer

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Gainesville Police are looking for a mystery man suspected of peeing on at least four unsuspecting victims, which prompted a UF Alert sent to faculty, staff and students Wednesday afternoon.

GPD is investigating four counts of battery and exposure of sexual organs ranging from Feb. 22 through March 1.

Four victims reported suddenly feeling

someone urinating on them at different times between the 100 and 200 blocks of Northwest 17th Street and the 900 block of West University Avenue.

The suspect exposed himself and left whenever victims confronted him, the alert stated.

Victims describe the suspect as a 6-foot black male between 25 and 30 years old with a medium to large build, according to the alert. They reported he has short curly hair, a

dark complexion and was last seen wearing a dark hoodie and baggy jeans.

Gainesville Police encourages anyone with information to call the department at 352-955-1818 or text keyword GPDFL with the tip to 274637.

Gainesville Police also reported another incident of public urination over the weekend.

Officers arrested 24-year-old Michael Edwin Wilks on Sunday on charges of public

urination, according to an arrest report.

At about 1:30 a.m., Wilks peed on a car in a parking lot at 200 E. University Ave.

Officers reported it was in a well-lit area in full view of people walking downtown.

He was "extremely intoxicated," according to the report. Wilks is also on probation as of March 2013 for burglary.

Officers booked Wilks into the Alachua County Jail at about 3:29 a.m. As of press time, his bond had not been set.

Police shoot suspect in campus stabbing

NO OFFICERS WERE HARMED.

STAFF REPORT

editor@alligator.org

On the first day of Spring Break, UF students — most of them miles from Gainesville — woke up to UF Alerts about crime in the city.

The first message about an on-campus stabbing went out at about 7 a.m. Hours later, the suspect, 28-year-old Michael Matthew Cravey, died from officer-inflicted injuries after he charged at police with a hatchet.

The morning began when Cravey stabbed a man in the parking lot behind Leigh Hall near Library West, said University Police Maj. Brad Barber.

Cravey left in a black

Jeep; a car chase ensued.

When Cravey began running red lights and driving the wrong direction on Newberry Road, police deemed it too dangerous to continue.

At about 9:50 a.m., the Jeep crashed into another car on Archer Road, injuring that driver. Cravey ran on foot into Butler Plaza.

Roughly 10 minutes later, Gainesville Police Lt. Mike Schibuola saw Cravey hiding a hatchet in front of Best Buy, according to a GPD press release. The officer confronted him.

Cravey ran with the hatchet in the air, "coming within feet of striking" Schibuola, according to the release. The officer fired shots that hit Cravey, who later died at UF Health Shands Hospital.

No officers were harmed.



Jordan McPherson / Alligator Staff

Fantastic Four

Gators basketball seniors Scottie Wilbekin, Will Yeguete, Casey Prather and Patric Young embrace after leaving the floor of the Stephen C. O'Connell Center for the last time during Florida's 84-65 win against Kentucky on Saturday. The Gators became the first team to go 18-0 in the SEC.

UF health care center now requires photo ID at all locations

PREVIOUSLY, A UFID NUMBER AND INSURANCE PAPERS WERE NEEDED.

RACHEL CROSBY

Alligator Staff Writer

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Before you check in at the Infirmary, the Student Health Care Center needs to check you out.

Starting today, students seeking treatment on campus must show a photo ID at all loca-

tions — clinic counters, the blood-work lab and the pharmacy.

Toni Ratliff, the center's associate director, said the measure is an effort to prevent fraud.

In the past, students could check in with only their UFID number and proof of health insurance.

"It's just an attempt at doing a better job at verifying a patient's identity," Ratliff said.

Now, if students forget their ID, she said

"It's just an attempt at doing a better job at verifying a patient's identity."

Toni Ratliff

Student Health Care Center associate director

they must also provide a phone number and current address as a placeholder.

Ratliff said pharmacy labs already asked for photo identification because of potential narcotics fraud.

"It's becoming a standard," she said. "Rather than having it in some parts, we're doing it systemwide."

Alex Barshel, a 21-year-old UF environmental science junior, said she wasn't asked for an ID during a checkup before Spring Break but wouldn't mind showing it in the future to streamline the process.

"Those services are for UF students only, and they should be able to make sure that's who they are serving," she said.

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UF alumni create searching web app

It aggregates results from multiple search engines, pg 3.

Meet the Gainesville City Commission candidates

Nine candidates are running for three seats, pg 4 and 5.



Gushue crushes homer to lead Gators

Taylor Gushue hit a game-tying home run in the ninth inning in Florida's 6-5 win against Connecticut on Sunday, pg 12.



News Today

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Florida Civil Rights Struggle:

Past and Present

On Wednesday, the UF Samuel Proctor Oral History Program will host a public panel, The Florida Civil Rights Struggle: Past and Present, at 6 p.m. in Pugh Hall. The panel will discuss the history of civil and human rights organizing in Florida. It will highlight movement activity throughout the state in towns such as Ocala, St. Augustine, Tallahassee, Miami and Gainesville. Audience members will receive a CD anthology of African-American oral histories of segregation and civil rights with an accompanying educator's guide.

LGBT leadership panel

LGBT Affairs will be hosting a leadership panel comprised of present and past LGBT identified leaders on campus and around the Gainesville community to discuss their experiences as leaders on campus and how their sexual or gender identities impacted their experience as student leaders. Please join us at the Ustler Hall Atrium on Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Purchase a hamentaschen cookie-gram for Purim

Come to Turlington Plaza to purchase a sweet treat for your friends for Purim. They will be sold Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursday from noon to 1:30 p.m. and Friday from noon to 2 p.m. Hamentaschen are triangle-shaped cookies with three points to represent the evil Hamen's hat. To participate in the custom, send a friend a Hamentaschen Gram, and the cookie will be delivered to them on campus. Orders can also be placed at Melissa@uf-hillel.org.

March for farmworkers

Join Chispas UF, Gainesville's Interfaith Alliance For Immigrant Justice and local activists to pressure Wendy's and Publix to join the Fair Food Campaign to raise wages and guarantee human rights for Florida farmworkers. The march will take place in Lakeland on Saturday. If you would like to carpool, meet at the Gale Lemerand parking

FORECAST

TODAY



SUNNY
77/52

TUESDAY



PARTLY
CLOUDY
79/59

WEDNESDAY



THUNDER-
STORMS
73/45

THURSDAY



PARTLY
CLOUDY
58/36

FRIDAY



CLOUDY
65/41

garage on UF campus at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 831-334-0117.

Florida Museum hosts 'Can You Dig It?'

Dig into geology and discover the ground beneath your feet at the Florida Museum of Natural History's "Can You Dig It?" event Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Enjoy hands-on activities, and watch demonstrations of volcanic eruptions. For more information, visit flmnh.ufl.edu/canyoudigit or call 352-273-2062.

Global Health Case Competition

The first Global Health Case Competition at UF is set to take place April 19. However, it needs the support of UF and community sponsors in order to be a success. If you represent a UF department, college or community organization, consider becoming an official sponsor of the interim UF Global Health Case Competition. The event is open to UF students of all majors, graduate and undergraduate, to compete. Sponsorship forms can be downloaded from the event's website at UFghcc.org and are due today.

Multicultural & Diversity Affairs

MCDA is hiring. Applications for student ambassadors are now available online at tinyurl.com/MCDAapp and are due Wednesday at noon. We are looking for both volunteer and Federal Work-Study positions for the Summer and Fall semesters. If you're looking to join an organization tasked with change, this is your chance.

GatorWell focus group

GatorWell Health Promotion Services is looking for UF students to participate in a

one-hour confidential focus group about interpersonal violence issues on campus. These focus groups will occur today until March 20 at the GatorWell location on Radio Road. Participants will receive a \$20 UF Bookstore gift card and free pizza. To participate, email GatorWellProjects@mail.ufl.edu. Use subject line "My Campus." Participants must be 18 years or older and currently enrolled UF students.

Got something going on?

Want to see it in this space? Send an email with "What's Happening" in the subject line to kgriffis@alligator.org. To ensure publication in the next day's newspaper, please submit the event before 5 p.m. Please model your submissions after above events and keep them 150 words or fewer. Improperly formatted "What's Happening" submissions may not appear in the paper. Press releases will not appear in the paper.

Have an event planned? Add it to the Alligator's online calendar:

alligator.org/calendar



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 email editor@alligator.org.

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Monday, March 17th

Boeing 777 jet among most popular, safest

► THE JET IS UNDER SCRUTINY AFTER THE MH370 INCIDENT.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The Boeing 777 flown by Malaysia Airlines that disappeared Saturday morning over the South China Sea is one of the world's most popular — and safest — jets.

The long-range jumbo jet has helped connect cities at the far ends of the globe with flights as long as 16 hours. But more impressive is its safety record: The first fatal crash in its 19-year history only came last July when an Asiana Airlines jet landed short of the runway in San Francisco. Three of the 307 people aboard died.

Airlines like the plane because it is capable of flying extremely long dis-

tances thanks to two giant engines. Each engine is so massive that a row of at least five coach seats could fit inside it. By having just two engines, the plane burns through less fuel than four-engine jets, like the Boeing 747, which it has essentially replaced.

"It has provided a new standard in both efficiency and safety," said Richard Aboulafia, an aviation consultant with the Teal Group. "The 777 has enjoyed one of the safest records of any jetliner built."

Besides last year's Asiana crash, the only other serious incident with the 777 came in January 2008 when a British Airways jet landed about 1,000 feet short of the runway at London's Heathrow Airport.

Malaysia Airlines did have an incident in August 2005 with a 777 flying from Perth, Australia, to Kuala Lum-

pur, Malaysia's largest city. While flying 38,000 feet above the Indian Ocean, the plane's software incorrectly measured speed and acceleration, causing the plane to suddenly shoot up 3,000 feet. The pilot disengaged the autopilot and descended and landed safely back in Perth. A software update was quickly made on planes around the world.

"It has provided a new standard in both efficiency and safety."

Richard Aboulafia

Teal Group aviation consultant

Malaysia Airlines has 15 Boeing 777-200ER jets in its fleet of about 100 planes. The first was delivered on April 23, 1997, and the most recent on Dec. 13, 2004, according to Boeing. The 200ER is one of four versions of the 777.

GATOR GRADS

UF alumni create searching web app

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Two UF alumni are looking to change the way people surf the Internet with their new web app Searchlet.

Mark Fazzini and Spencer Simonsen were featured on TechCrunch on Friday for the app they released in December. Once a user highlights text on any web page, the app pulls up a sidebar of results from multiple search engines relating to the selected word or phrase.

Fazzini, a 25-year-old alternative investments associate for Tampa-based company Raymond James, said the app helps users avoid opening dozens of tabs when researching a topic.

"We thought about how nice it would be to consolidate all the information you needed in one area," he said.

The search engines currently include Grooveshark, Google and Twitter, but he said the pair plans to add more search options for the app as it progresses. They intend to eventually open the code to the public so anyone can personalize the app.

Jonathan Burnett, a 21-year-old UF computer engineering junior, said he isn't sure how the two entrepreneurs plan to make money off the app, but the concept is unique.

"This is useful as a research tool and kind of a life hack as far as doing things faster," he said. "It just doesn't seem like something I'd use all the time."

..THIS WEEK in GAINESVILLE..

March 14, 1995

Students were calling UF to sign up for Summer classes. The pilot program TeleGator allowed students to register for the classes they wanted by dialing in the section numbers using their telephones. However, the system had some bugs to work out. Then-UF associate registrar Steve Pritz said some students had problems using the correct PIN numbers assigned to each class, and some had difficulty registering for classes without the necessary prerequisites. UF sophomore Lauren Hoyt who used the system said the TeleGator hung up on her when she first used it, but she was able to sign up for all of her first-choice classes. Another UF sophomore, Anna Tang, was able to sign up for 10 credit hours, at the desk in her dormitory, and got through on her first call.

March 14, 2001

At the groundbreaking ceremony for UF's Honors Residential College at Hume Hall, then-UF President Charles Young joined representatives of the Division of Housing, Honors Program and Academic Affairs Division wearing Gator hard hats and carrying gold shovels. The \$18.1 million project was scheduled to be completed by Fall 2002 and would house about 600 students and areas for faculty housing as well, according to Alligator archives. The student suites would consist of two double rooms joined by a bathroom. The rooms were priced at about \$2,300 per semester. "Students will have the opportunities that a large university offers, but at the same time they will have the close-knit community which allows for character building that a small college offers," said David Duncan, a member of the committee developing the new facility. The old Hume Hall was demolished.

— STEVEN KATONA

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Meet the 2014 Gainesville City Commission candidates



Annie Orlando

KATHRYN VARN
Alligator Staff Writer
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Annie Orlando sat in her office holding a purple tote bag advertising her City Commission At-Large Seat 2 campaign screenprinted on the front.

"I've got them on the merchandise side of campaigning, that's for sure," she said.

Orlando, owner of Atlas Screen Printing in southeast Gainesville, said she plans to use her business experience to carry out her commission platform, which consists of holding the commission to a higher standard, supporting the development of east Gainesville and getting Gainesville Regional Utilities back on track.

Orlando, 59, said she became involved in city government after watching it change during the 25 years she has lived in town. To hold the commission more accountable, Orlando said she's going to encourage more resident involvement by

extending citizen comment privileges during commission meetings.

"You can't make good decisions unless you keep an open mind and listen to all points of view," she said.

As Orlando's involvement in local government grew, she became a founding member of the East Gainesville Development Task Force, now called the East Gainesville Development Corporation. Although she's not involved in the non-profit now, she said she plans to continue building up that area of town.

Additionally, Orlando said she wants to find a new GRU general manager, one who will help the city "get back on its feet" after energy prices skyrocketed.

Sam Collins, 67, said he decided to head Orlando's campaign because of her ability to bring people together.

"We forget sometimes we're really all trying to get the same thing. We don't need to be so toxic," he said. "Annie brings an antidote to that kind of politics."



Helen K. Warren

ALEX HARRIS
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To Helen K. Warren, holding political office is a lot like buying a house. To make the buyers happy, a realtor has to listen to what clients need, find solutions to problems that arise and negotiate a compromise.

Warren, 60, has been a realtor for 11 years, but this March marks her first foray into government as she seeks election for the At-Large Seat 2 in Tuesday's Gainesville City Commission elections.

She hopes to bring the skills she has gained selling homes to local government, particularly the ability to bring in experts on the city's more technical problems.

Warren's platform seeks to make Gainesville a city that encourages sustainable growth, energy-efficiency and job creation. She said she hopes to encourage Gainesville Regional Utilities to help resi-

dents find ways to lower their utility bills with energy-efficient measures.

This is part of Warren's goal to plan for intelligent growth within the city, which includes improved bus routes, more walkable areas and multiple-use roadways.

"Growth is going to happen," she said. "We need to put our services into place for the growing population."

As the former president of the local chapter of the National Audubon Society, an environmental nonprofit, Warren said she made many friends and supporters, including Stacie Greco.

Greco, an environmental professional, bought a home through Warren before becoming an avid supporter.

Greco said she believes Warren's skills as a creative problem-solver and communicator will help her in political office.

"She finds common ground and brings people together," she said. "We need someone who can work with others, not cause more conflict."



Donald Shepherd Sr.

STEVEN KATONA
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If there is money going into or coming from the City Commission,

Donald Shepherd Sr. wants to understand how and why each cent is allocated.

One of five candidates running for the At-Large Seat 2 chair, 60-year-old Shepherd said he wants to restructure the commission's budget.

"I first would look through the financial budget and then address how it is handed out to each department so more housing and jobs can come to Gainesville," he said.

Shepherd, who's looking to take over incumbent Thomas Hawkins' seat, is running on a platform of balancing the commission's budget, increasing workers' wages and fixing Gainesville's damaged roads such as 61st Street, Tower Road and Eighth Street.

A Gainesville resident since 1997, Shepherd worked at UF's Physical Plant Division until 2011, contributing to design plans for the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center Gainesville on Southwest 34th Street, according to Alligator archives.

If elected, he said he wants to help students by changing operating standards for landlords. He also said he wants to see tuition lowered for students.

Additionally, Shepherd said he wants to put meters on Gainesville's water towers to measure organizations' use so the city doesn't exhaust its aquifer.

His campaign manager and wife, Nancy Shepherd, 60, said her husband is a step ahead of the other candidates because he's attended nearly every board, commission and committee meeting since 2012.

"He is the best candidate because he's been learning this for the past three years," she said.



Susan Bottcher

HANNA MARCUS
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Even though she grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Gainesville will always be her home.

Susan Bottcher, the District 3 city commissioner, has lived in Gainesville since she was a UF student. After serving almost a full three-year term as a commissioner, Bottcher is running for a second term.

Bottcher said she didn't plan to get involved in city politics, but as she wove together a life in Gainesville, it naturally developed with community volunteering. Then, her small scale involvement grew in the political direction.

"After a while, when the District 3 Seat came open, people sat me down, and they said 'You're a good fit for the district, you know the district — you need to run for this seat,'" she said.

As a UF alumna, Bottcher emphasizes

the importance of student involvement. Her first campaign was run almost entirely by UF students.

"There are people in Gainesville who believe that students are part-timers," she said. "That has not been my experience. To me (UF students) are some of the most intelligent, motivated individuals I have ever encountered."

The biggest issue Bottcher hopes to correct is growing Gainesville's property tax base. About 60 percent of property in Gainesville is associated with UF, Santa Fe and churches, and those entities do not pay property taxes, Bottcher said.

"That means we have to do a whole lot with an extraordinarily small revenue," she said.

Nath Doughtie said he's noticed the commissioner always provides logical rationale for her suggested policies.

"I might not always agree with her vote, but she always comes up with a good reason for her position," he said.



Mark Venzke

KELCEE GRIFFIS
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Mark Venzke has turned his energy to utilities reform.

The 56-year-old Gainesville resident who ran for mayor last spring is now making his bid for City Commission At-Large Seat 2, and his platform focuses on revamping Gainesville Regional Utilities operations.

He wants to add a paid board of directors comprised of experts to oversee city utilities, he said, because it would relieve city commissioners of dealing with issues they may not have time for or fully understand.

Venzke is also calling for a higher level of accountability in city government.

"What we need and what I publicly call for is full protection for any whistleblowers who want to talk to the city commissioners or managers," he said.

Venzke said if elected, he would push the commission to pursue an investigation of management practices and decisions surrounding the biomass energy project.

"That contract was negotiated irregularly and has many provisions that are highly disadvantageous to Gainesville and GRU ratepayers," he said.

Overall, Venzke said he believes there is "much good" in Gainesville, and he is invested in bringing a higher level of organization to local government.

"The issues are so important ... and the effects are so far-reaching, and they get so little quality attention that I feel I cannot ignore them," he said.

Levi Colson Sr., one of Venzke's neighbors, said he supports Venzke's efforts to revitalize the community. He said Venzke would be a voice for "the homeless, the helpless, the poor people."

"He's been helping the whole neighborhood out," he said. "It would be real good if he were part of the commission."



Craig Carter

KELCEE GRIFFIS
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Craig Carter wants to get down to business. That's one of the reasons he's running in Tuesday's election for Gainesville City Commission District 3.

Carter, 54, has been a small-business owner since he moved to Gainesville two decades ago, and he's calling for a better business focus and accountability in local government. He said he'd like to see the commission adjust its priorities.

"We don't need fancy trolleys, fancy buses, bad contracts," he said. "What we need are business people."

That focus would include promoting a climate that's conducive to small businesses, which he said can provide better training experiences and wages than large chains.

"If we were to buy local as much as we

can, it would be self-curing," he said.

Carter, who founded Craig Carter Golf Carts and Craig Carter Mobility, said his main mission is to lower electric rates and make the city more transparent.

"Gainesville is a wonderful place," he said. "It's a beautiful place. It's so diverse. It has everything you ever want. But we're spending money poorly."

He also prioritizes investing in students. As a volunteer with UF campus ministry Reformed University Fellowship, he said he's probably hosted a couple thousand students for gameday parties and socials at his home during the last decade.

"That's my passion — young people and students," he said.

Gainesville Mayor Ed Braddy said Carter takes a reasonable, common-sense approach to resolving issues.

"He's a problem-solver," Braddy said. "It's in his nature. When he hears there's a problem, he doesn't sit around trying to find someone to blame."



Cheri Brodeur

JENNA LYONS

Alligator Staff Writer jlyons@alligator.org

Win or lose, District 2 candidate and former UF Faculty Senate chairwoman Cheri Brodeur will soon say goodbye to the university. She plans to retire in

2015.

But as city elections near, she said she would like to see a more unified Gainesville — starting with residents and students.

"I really see the value in using your Student Government," said Brodeur, 65. "It's your town too, and there needs to be some input from the students."

Brodeur, who also serves as coordinator for the UF IFAS program development and evaluation center, said her ties to students and the university set her apart from the competition. She has lived in Gainesville for 30 years and said the city needs advisory groups to talk about points of contention between students and residents.

"People need to understand what students are going through and what they need," Brodeur said. "It goes both ways."

Her other platform focuses on Gainesville's infrastructure, particularly roads and transportation, as well as rising Gainesville Regional Utilities rates.

Sue Alvers, an administrative assistant through the Faculty Senate, said Brodeur's strength is representing groups of people. She said Brodeur "basically just asks people to work together."



Todd Chase

SEAN STEWART-MUNIZ

Alligator Staff Writer sstewart-muniz@alligator.org

Three years ago, Todd Chase ran for City Commission because of his mother. A retiree living on a fixed income, Chase's mother felt the bite of Gainesville's fire

assessment fee, which was adopted by the commission in 2010 to plug a hole in the budget.

"She was sitting there, she had tears in her eyes, and she said 'Where am I gonna get this money?'" Chase said. "That's when the light went off for me, and I realized local government affects our lives more than any other level."

Chase, 47, is running for re-election in the District 2 race in Tuesday's city elections. With rising utility rates and a roughly \$20 million city deficit looming, Chase said he's looking to lend his business expertise gained from his Harvard MBA and leadership in about a dozen start-up companies.

During his first term, Chase butted heads with other commissioners over issues such as the Gainesville Renewable Energy Center, Gainesville Regional Utilities rates and red-light cameras. In this race, his main goal is maintaining GRU's viability as a business because it provides almost half of the city's roughly \$100 million operating budget.

Sam Coons, Chase's best friend of 25 years, said Chase's business experience and integrity make him a great fit for the office.

"He brings a common-sense perspective that's very unique," Coons, 52, said.



Sheryl Eddie

SHAYNA POSSES

Alligator Staff Writer sposses@alligator.org

The first vote Sheryl Eddie's youngest daughter casts will be for her mom. At least, Eddie hopes so.

After raising three girls in Gainesville and spending years working in nonprofits, Eddie, 48, is now running for the District 2 City Commission seat to help kids and families in her adopted home.

"I love this community, even though I'm a Seminole," said the first-time candidate at a Feb. 11 fundraiser.

Eddie said in her 25 years as a resident, she's noticed a disconnect between the commission and residents. She said she hopes to draw on her background in the communications field to bring civility back to the commission and focus on her district's most vulnerable.

Improving bus service in areas beyond UF's campus would help both families and students, she said.

"Just because the budget comes from UF doesn't mean the students want to stay in that little circle," Eddie said.

She said she also wants to push for more streetlights to help reduce criminal activity. As community outreach coordinator for the Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County, Eddie has seen poverty up close. She said simple things like lights will help those in need.

Longtime friend Lewis Mazzarella said Eddie's city understanding makes her a natural for the commission.

"She'll go out there and knock on doors and get people's attention," he said.

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announces the openings for the positions

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Opinions

MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2014
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Editorial

Spring Break: Great for economy, not for state image

USA Today reported Sunday that Florida remains the go-to Spring Break destination for American students, and for good reason. South Florida residents live in a perennial tropical paradise, which explains why so many people from New York and New Jersey tend to retire — read: drive badly and complain about the lack of good pizza — there. And, of course, Panama City Beach in the panhandle remains a popular Spring Break destination, famous for its cheap accommodations, wild beach parties and inevitable drunken falling-off-balconies incidents.

This year, as record cold temperatures in the Northeast have college students looking to Florida for a warm escape, Florida tourism experts are predicting 2014 to be a record-breaking year for Spring Breaks spent in the Sunshine State.

“Though Florida’s spring break hot spots evolve, with some cities dropping off students’ radar and others popping back on, statewide tourism continues to grow during January, February and March,” USA Today writer Rick Neale reported. “Out-of-state visitors during those months have increased from 19.4 million in 2000 to an all-time high of 26.3 million last year, Visit Florida data shows. That’s a 36 percent jump.”

The history of Spring Break in Florida is nothing if not political.

While Panama City Beach, Cocoa Beach and the Orlando area are currently among the biggest hot spots for in- and out-of-state students, according to USA Today, it hasn’t always been that way. Fort Lauderdale — nicknamed “Ft. Liquordale” back in its Spring Break heyday of the 1970s — had enough of the hordes of students wreaking havoc on the city. According to TIME, toward the end of the ‘80s, a combination of stricter public-drinking laws and hotel-occupancy standards limiting college students from cramming large groups into single rooms drove Spring Breakers to other areas of the state.

Last year, the Walton Sun reported, the Walton County Sheriff’s Office deputies issued 1,098 Notice to Appear — mostly for underage drinking. Walton is located just outside Panama City in the Bay area. This year already a Texas student has gone missing in Panama City.

Although popular Spring-Break destination cities increase law enforcement and make noises about aggressively cracking down on college students’ bad behavior, cities such as Daytona Beach, Orlando and Panama City are in a bind: Though students cause damage to both the facilities and reputations of the cities they clamor to, those city officials aren’t likely to attempt a Fort Lauderdale-style exorcism of Spring Breakers.

Indeed, sleepy beach towns like Panama City rely on the tourism dollars that college students bring every year from January to March.

Unfortunately for lovers of peace, quiet and pristine beaches, Spring Breakers will flock to Florida regardless of one or two cities’ efforts to push them away.

We just have a little advice for those out-of-state Florida newbies: wear sunscreen, and stay away from balconies.

Reader response

Today’s question: Will you vote in Gainesville city elections?

Friday’s question: Do you use tanning beds?
10% YES
90% NO
171 TOTAL VOTES

Vote or post a message at www.alligator.org

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Column

Conservatives fail to accept changing US

Conservatives flocked to Washington, D.C., last week for the Conservative Political Action Conference to rally behind conservative leaders and discuss their core ideological beliefs. Sadly, the week produced the same rhetoric spouted by conservatives — most of whom identify as Republicans — that many young Americans and minorities, more often than not, reject.

Conservative writers like Ann Coulter denounced any effort by the American government to reform its immigration system, decrying the “browning of America.” Yes, the woman said something that appears horribly racist on the surface, yet continually receives an invitation to speak at CPAC.

In a panel on minority outreach, a picture hit the Web that showed an empty room with hardly a soul in sight.

It’s pretty much a given that in order to win national elections, minority voters are key — especially Latino voters. Instead of courting them, we hear conservatives make seemingly racist remarks about immigrants and minority groups, and a minority outreach panel fell on deaf ears — or, more likely, no ears at all.

Although they might summarily reject them, studies show that conservative positions on major social issues look less favorable with each passing day. The Pew Research Center just released a study on the millennial generation and its political views. This generation tends to identify as independents but lean Democratic — the party most often identified with liberals. This generation is less religious than its older peers, and the majority of millennials supports gay rights.

Why is it important for conservatives change their tune — or at least adjust their tune — on many major social issues? Votes.

Conservatives believe — as all ideologies do — that they have the right beliefs for our country to succeed; yet younger voters reject those core beliefs. If conservatives want to win the White House in 2016, they need a message they can sell to a majority of the country. Hoping the same trite message of social conservatism inspires enough voters to knock a more liberal, Democratic candidate like Hillary Clinton from her path to the White House, conservatives continue to bash the LGBT community, immigration reform and almost every-



Joel Mendelson
opinions@alligator.org

thing accomplished by President Barack Obama.

Based on what happened at CPAC, it appears that conservatives once again have a message that appeals to a significant group of voters but not one large enough to put a conservative Republican in the White House.

The portion of the American electorate comprised of millennials and minority voters continues to grow, and conservative messages are less appealing to those groups. Think about this: 80 percent of minority voters cast ballots for Obama in 2012. Their numbers in the electorate are only going to grow, and there is no way a growing portion of the electorate will ever cast a ballot in favor of a conservative candidate if large conventions of conservatives demonize minority groups.

A whopping 67 percent of the youth vote — who continue to trend Democratic and liberal — cast ballots for Obama in 2012, and 50 percent of eligible voters 18-29 years old, voted.

To my conservative friends: What’s your strategy for winning an increasingly important and growing portion of the American electorate?

From what I heard at CPAC last week, the strategy is stay the course, and the votes will come.

In gerrymandered congressional districts throughout the country, that philosophy may work quite well. A district made up of mostly conservative Republicans will certainly send conservative Republicans to Washington, D.C., but those conservative Republicans will end up having to work with — or against — a fairly moderate Democratic president.

Conservatives seem deathly afraid of a Clinton presidency in 2016.

If they continue this “stay the course” mentality and don’t adjust their views to meet a changing country, their worst dreams may very well come true.

Joel Mendelson is a UF graduate student in political campaigning. His columns appear on Mondays.

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

Letters to the Editor

Mayor Braddy out of touch with interns, residents

Mayor Ed Braddy's recent pledge to "revamp" the City of Gainesville internship program is nothing new. I interned for the City of Gainesville in the summer of 2011 and did much more than "shadow the City Commission," as Braddy claimed in the Feb. 26 edition of the Alligator.

My fellow interns and I did significant amount of independent research, toured city facilities, met with city staff and learned a significant amount about public policy and urban planning. I never felt unwelcome in City Hall and never saw the student voice ignored while working with Democratic commissioners.

In fact, the worst treatment of students has always come from local Republicans like Ed

Braddy, who have continually proposed scaling back transit options for students, opposed environmental protections and LGBT rights initiatives that students overwhelmingly support and fought against using the Reitz Union as an early vote location.

Braddy's claim that he's the first to "give students an idea of how their local government works and give them an opportunity to participate in a more hands-on manner" is, frankly, disrespectful to every hard-working student who has interned or participated in our City Government.

It's part of a pattern for this mayor: He's out of touch with the priorities of the average citizen.

Kay Mitchell

UF alumna and a political organizer

Don't blame the bag — recycle

That darn plastic bag!

It's in trouble again.

Apparently, it has jumped out of someone's hand or escaped from the car and yelled, "I'm out of here, and I am going to litter the beach, the park or the highway!"

Well, we shouldn't blame the plastic bag simply because a person didn't dispose of it properly.

Instead of blaming the bag, let's remind our friends, family and neighbors to recycle their plastic bags.

Not sure where to take your plastic bags — no problem!

Many retailers will take them back.

For example, your local Publix has a convenient receptacle right at the entrance, so you

can drop them off.

Plastic bags are then recycled and made into items like shopping baskets or planters.

To find other locations go to abagslife.com and then click on the "Find the Location" icon.

You will find several other retailers who will be happy to take the plastic bags back and recycle them.

Make sure you recycle the plastic bags at your business, too.

So let's stop blaming the plastic bag for littering.

Instead, let's give that plastic bag a new life.

Keyna Cory

executive director of the Florida Recycling Partnership

Column

Oral sex app ignores body intricacies

How was your Spring Break? Meet anyone fun? Get a tan? Learn how to perform oral sex from your phone?

Lick This, an app released this week, supposedly teaches users just that. The app is available on your mobile browser at lickthisapp.com, so you don't even have to download anything and potentially explain to someone that you need an app to learn how to perform oral sex.

The app specifically focuses on going down on the ladies. There are three different exercises that supposedly increase cunnilingus skills. Because, you know, your ability to bounce a beach ball with your tongue directly correlates to your ability to make a girl orgasm.

Now, let's state the obvious — ew.

I know exactly how many bars and frat houses my phone has been in, and I can say with certainty that there is no way I'm putting my tongue on it unless it's thoroughly covered in plastic wrap, which the app creator actually suggests.

Even if I were guaranteed not to catch something, this is still ignoring the fact that, let's face it, my iPhone screen is nothing like a vulva.

The flat glass screen doesn't compare to the warm skin of a lady, nor can it give me feedback.

I asked a friend of mine who has more experience performing cunnilingus if he could tell me his thoughts. He said that the app is entertaining but not actually helpful because females all want different things.

Some want more pressure, some want a lighter touch, and some want you to go faster. But according to the app, as long as you can sharpen a pencil with your tongue, you're an oral sex wizard.

This is the biggest problem with sex apps. Sure, they're fun, but they aren't a substitute for the real deal.

If you want to learn how to improve your oral sex ability, find a willing partner to practice on. They can probably give you better tips because they, you know, can actually talk to you.



Robyn Smith
opinions@alligator.org

This applies to any sex-related app. Apps like Tinder and Grindr are popular for finding hook-ups, but what's wrong with doing that in person?

It's cool that I can meet hot singles in my area from the comfort of my home — and from the comfort of

my pajamas — but we're in college, guys! Go to a club or a party. Talk to that cute person in your class.

Don't get me wrong: I do get the appeal. I'm never separated from technology for more than a few hours. I sleep with my phone under my pillow, and, to be honest, I'm already practically dating my computer.

These apps interest us as millennials because we already rely on technology for so much.

However, I think that relying on it for interpersonal relationships, which sex very much is, is dangerous.

Tech-based sex is a good way to bring up the conversation and make sex more mainstream, but I think ultimately it detracts from the personal intimacy that is sex.

How are you going to get to know someone, emotionally or physically, if you spend all your time staring at your phone screen?

If you are unsure of your oral sex ability, or anything sexual for that matter, discuss that with your partner rather than turning to an app.

If we as a society aren't careful about our technological improvements, use of these apps will turn straight into a scene from "Her." Imagine walking in on your significant other going down on his or her phone, but for real and not just for instruction.

If Lick This interests you and you do choose to get intimate with your phone, remember to use protection. Lay down some plastic wrap and make sure your device has a virus blocker — you don't want to catch anything.

Robyn Smith is a UF journalism sophomore. Her columns appear on Mondays.

UWire

Bitcoin disappearance shouldn't be surprise

Bitcoin, defined as a "peer-to-peer technology," was designed for the purpose of

Alex Meyer
UWire

virtual wallets. In a circulating document reported to be reflective of Mt. Gox's real position, more than

744,000 Bitcoins were missing due to relentless cyber attacks over the expanse of several years. Although many are infuriated by Bitcoin's present instability, some have chalked up the downturn as just another crash, to be expected of "high-risk investments." Hopefully, the standstill Mt. Gox is undergoing will foster the "solutions" it claims to be working toward. This extensive breach should serve as a warning to those choosing to invest in virtual currency, as this technological era births new loopholes for danger.

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission is now contemplating the establishment of rules for Bitcoin's digital trading. Federal prosecutors in New York have subpoenaed Mt. Gox. Japanese authorities are also reported to be looking into the matter. There's no telling what will become of Mt. Gox's future and the millions lost to its investors.

A "massive hack" is rumored to be the cause of customer outrage following the shutdown of Mt. Gox's site on Feb. 25. Also at this time, the Mt. Gox Tokyo office was seemingly deserted by its employees. The following day, Mt. Gox chief executive Mark Karpeles released a statement on the site for concerned capital investors.

With the inability to retrieve funds, many Mt. Gox users are left in the dark. When the site went offline, a handful of protesters gathered outside the corporation's Tokyo office, despite it being vacant, claiming they had suffered significant losses in their management. This is where we are, or should be, today.

Unfortunately, in the years of bad lake management, water levels were allowed to reach heights for water supply purposes that led to deterioration of the Dike. As a result, the Corps had to institute new regulation schedules to protect the Dike's primary purpose of flood prevention. Additionally, SFWMD practiced favoritism for water supply deliveries while shunting flood waters to communities that were not normally in the lake's flood zones. Only in these last few years have these adversely affected communities on the east and west sides of the lake able to get the Corps to consider their needs, often contrary to SFWMD recommendations.

The quality of the environment is key to the economies of east- and west-coast com-

munities. Without the creative tension of the state-federal partnership, both partners receiving input from affected parties, that one agency will be swayed to the interests of favored stakeholders and lobbyists, to the detriment of the other stakeholders, notably the silent stakeholder: nature. Trying to co-opt the federal role in management while expecting the federal dollars indicates that the lessons of the lawsuit have been forgotten.

West-coast needs have not been addressed except through temporary and discretionary relief, and we need equitable attention from both partners. Eliminating one will only result in further harm to our communities, our economies and our environments.

Wayne Daltry is president of Riverwatch, the Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association. Other versions of this column appeared in other newspapers.

Guest column

Lake Okeechobee restoration efforts shouldn't be turned over

The Florida Legislature is attempting to seize total control of Lake Okeechobee, eliminating the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from the process and giving total water management control to the South Florida Water Management District. This proposal is a bad idea, as it overlooks the history of the management of the lake and related water bodies in regard to the Clean Water Act.

First, Florida petitioned the federal government for the construction of the Herbert Hoover Dike and the Central & Southern Flood Control Project to provide flood relief and water-supply sources for agricultural and urban development. This expensive effort, in conjunction with navigation projects for the Kissimmee, St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers, resulted in a fair-weather water management system that is unable to adapt to increasingly common drought and

flood conditions.

SFWMD managed water for the benefit of agriculture and urban water supplies — a reasonable effort until it abandoned any concept of environmental water supplies for estuaries or preserved wetland systems such as Everglades National Park. Additionally, public waters were allowed to be degraded by the actions of public agencies that were supposed to be adhering to the provisions of the CWA.

Eventually, the deterioration reached such extremes that the federal government sued Florida to prevent further degradation and restore national resources. The lawsuit dragged on for years until former Gov. Lawton Chiles symbolically surrendered the state's sword. The parties agreed to a restoration plan calling for cost sharing and joint consultation in

Wayne Daltry
Speaking Out

New Lib West room to give study breaks, breaking news

► IT WILL REPLACE THE WEIMER HALL LIBRARY.

LOURIANNE APOLLON
Alligator Contributing Writer

UF's College of Journalism and Communications is opening a news reading room at Library West.

The Allen H. Neuharth Reading Room will open today at 2 p.m. with a reception to honor the founder of USA Today and Florida Today who made significant contributions to the college.

The room will replace the original library on the first floor of Weimer Hall, which was also named after Neuharth. Furniture from the original library has been washed and will be placed in the new room.

"It's great because hopefully it tells the students that there is a place for you," said Patrick Reakes, chair of humanities and social sciences at Library West.

The new reading room, located on the third floor of Library West, will model the old room in size and display, he said.

There will be a big screen TV streaming live news, as well as local and national newspapers and magazines for students to peruse.

Frances Rivera-Pacheco, a 19-year-old UF public relations freshman, said she looks forward to the new reading room but said her only request is that the library staff "make it colorful."

"Make it something that will inspire students," she said.

STATE

Tee time part of Obama's vacation

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KEY LARGO — President Barack Obama got out on a Florida golf course Saturday with two former professional athletes and the cousin of one of his top advisers.

Obama's foursome included Ahmad Rashad, Cyrus Walker and Alonzo Mourning, the White House said.

Rashad is a sportscaster and former NFL wide receiver. Mourning is a former center for the NBA's Miami Heat who has helped raise money for Obama's campaigns. Later this month, Obama is scheduled to headline a fundraiser for the House Democrats' campaign arm at Mourning's Miami home.

Mourning is also helping the administration promote Obama's new health care law. He played golf with Obama in Florida last November.

Walker is a cousin of Obama senior adviser Valerie Jarrett.

Obama, his wife, Michelle, and daughters Malia and Sasha, arrived Friday afternoon at the Ocean Reef Club for a weekend getaway. The private, by-invitation-only membership club has two championship 18-hole golf courses.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Obama was looking forward to some warm-weather downtime with his family.

Before escaping the cold weather in Washington, Obama recorded

his weekly radio and Internet address. In the message, Obama said he's hearing from business owners across the country who are voluntarily paying their workers more than the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour.

Congressional Republicans are resisting Obama's pleas to raise the wage to \$10.10 an hour, saying it will lead employers to eliminate jobs.

In the Republican address, Ohio Sen. Rob Portman says Obama's proposed 2015 budget taxes too much and spends too much. Portman says Senate Republicans have a plan to spark economic recovery by getting government out of the way.

Skydiver, pilot have midair accident

► THE PLANE'S WING GOT TANGLED IN PARACHUTE STRINGS.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MULBERRY, Fla. — A plane became entangled in the strings of a skydiver's parachute sending both crashing into the ground near Tampa and both the pilot and jumper to the hospital with minor injuries.

Polk County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Carrie Eleazer said 87-year-old pilot Shannon Trembley

was doing takeoff and landing maneuvers Saturday in his Cessna at the South Lakeland Airport in Mulberry.

On his third landing pass, the wing of his plane became entangled in the strings of 49-year-old Gainesville skydiver John Frost's parachute about 75 feet above the ground.

Frost was flung to the ground, and Trembley's plane nose-dived to the surface.

Eleazer says neither sustained serious injury, but both went to the hospital. Frost was treated and released. Trembley was held for observation.



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3-14-14-72-13

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4-23-72-18

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20 Event Notices

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21 Entertainment

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24 Pets

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25 Lost & Found

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

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS
1 "Famous Potatoes" state
6 Speak drunkenly
10 Addition word
14 "___ what?": "What next?"
15 Adhesive strip
16 Shopper's memory aid
17 Porky's girlfriend
19 Impressionist
20 Very ___ yours
21 Utter mess
22 Tire inflater
24 Feigns sleep, say
28 Pitt of "Troy"
30 Three-note chord
31 Aboveground trains
32 Per ___: for each person, as income
35 Got one's uniform dirty, perhaps
36 Runs away from military duty
38 Israeli parliament
43 "Exodus" author Leon
45 Haughtily terse
46 "From ___ Zinc": vitamin slogan
49 Skimpy skirts
51 Cut out, as coupons
52 Either of two of the Inspector Clouseau films, with "The"
56 Cooler cubes
57 World book
58 Like a lummoX
60 Lamb serving
61 Yipping adoptee
66 Pile
67 Undersized 61-Across
68 Sharp-crested ridge
69 Novelist Ferber
70 Twistable cookie
71 Leavening agent

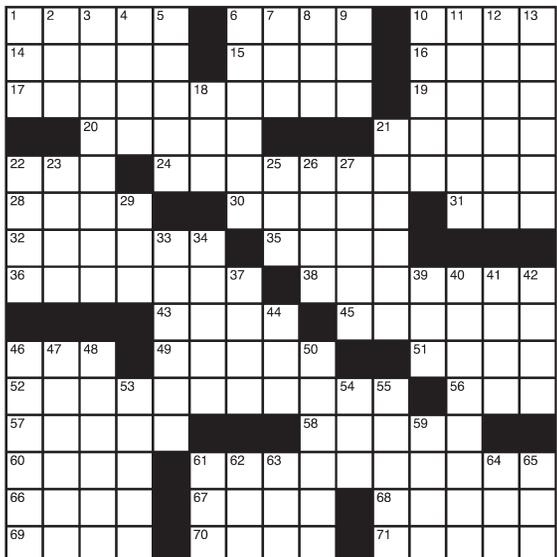
DOWN
1 AOL, for one
2 Deer girl
3 Devices to stop tiny invading armies

4 Semiannual time-change amount
5 Admit (to)
6 Patronize, as a hotel
7 Spot for a cat, or drink like a cat
8 Wire service initials
9 Coffee order: Abbr.
10 Thinks ahead
11 Enzyme that breaks down fats
12 Handy
13 Plays the banjo, like someone "in the kitchen with Dinah"
18 Unwell
21 Wetter than wet
22 "The Alphabet Song" start
23 "Dies ___": Latin hymn
25 Mos. and mos.
26 Fancy tie fabric
27 "Growing" difficulties
29 Craps cube
33 Spades in a four-spades bridge contract, say
34 Sunlit courtyards

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

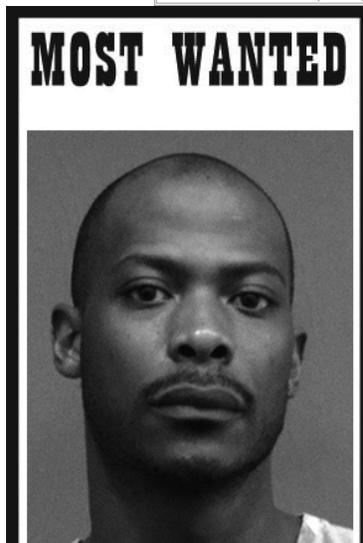
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xwordeditor@aol.com 03/10/14



By Brom Hart
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16 Health Services

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V ₄	E ₁	S ₁	T ₁	U ₁	R ₁	E ₁	RACK 2 =	60
U ₁	P ₃	S ₁	W ₄	E ₁	P ₃	T ₁	RACK 3 =	92
W ₄	H ₄	E ₁	N ₁	A ₁	S ₁	.	RACK 4 =	16
							TOTAL	227

PAR SCORE 145-155
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Florida defeats Kentucky to close out perfect SEC season

LONDON WATNICK

Alligator Staff Writer @LandonWatnick

After No. 1 Florida sealed an 84-65 win against No. 25 Kentucky in the O'Connell Center on Saturday, senior forward Will Yeguete hoisted a sign that read "18-0 and more to go."

Following the victory, Florida's seniors made sure to relish their achievements — a list that includes the only 18-0 record in Southeastern Conference history, the winningest regular season in program history (29-2), their third outright SEC regular-season championship in four seasons and 23 straight wins.

"We've been accomplishing a lot of things this year, but that's just a result from hard work and everything we've invested from early this year. This is the fruit of all that hard work."

Patric Young
UF center

First, they cut down the nets with their teammates and coaches. Once the ladder climbing was done, seniors Casey Prather, Scottie Wilbekin, Patric Young and Yeguete knelt down and kissed the Gators logo at center court.

It was a coordinated celebration by the Gators for their most successful senior class in school history.

"We've been accomplishing a lot of things this year, but that's just a result from hard work and

everything we've invested from early this year," Young said.

"This is the fruit of all that hard work."

Added coach Billy Donovan:

"This is the greatest regular season I've ever been a part of."

Despite a strong first-half showing, Saturday's win did not come easily for the Gators.

Entering the half with a 49-28 advantage, Florida shot 61.5 percent from the field — including a 7-of-12 clip from three-point range — and forced Kentucky (22-

9, 12-6 SEC) to 34.8 percent shooting and 11 turnovers.

But coming out of halftime, the

SEE HOOPS, PAGE 13



Jordan McPherson / Alligator Staff

Scottie Wilbekin, Casey Prather, Patric Young and Will Yeguete huddle together after Florida's 84-65 win against Kentucky on Saturday in the O'Connell Center. The Gators are the first team to finish their Southeastern Conference regular-season schedule 18-0.

Pair of home runs leads Gators to win against Rebels

JORDAN MCPHERSON

Alligator Writer @J_McPherson1126

Ole Miss right-hander Carly Hummel could not slow down the Gators on Sunday.

After handing Florida its first shutout loss on Friday since the Gators' 3-0 loss to Texas on June 2, 2013, in the Women's College World Series, the Rebels senior fell flat in Game 3 of UF's first Southeastern Conference series of the season.

UF Softball

The No. 1 Gators (24-1, 2-1 SEC) plated six hits from six different batters as they topped the Rebels 2-0 on Sunday at Katie Seashole Pressly Stadium to take the series.

"We came out determined to win because we weren't going to let them beat us again," senior Stephanie Tofft said.

SEE SOFT, PAGE 13

BASEBALL

UF sweeps UConn in extras

ADAM LICHTENSTEIN

Alligator Staff Writer @alichtenstein24

The Gators have struggled to hit for power throughout non-conference play this season, but they needed a couple big hits to secure their first series sweep of 2014.

On the backs of only its second home run and third triple of the season, Florida (10-6) defeated Connecticut (4-8) in extra innings for the third straight game, needing an extra frame of baseball to scrape across the final run in its 6-5 win at McKethan Stadium on Sunday.

"I think today was our best offensive day of the year," coach Kevin O'Sullivan said.

After taking the lead on two separate oc-



O'Sullivan

casions in the first four innings, the Gators fell behind 5-4 in the sixth and looked like they would continue the run-averse trend that has befallen them for much of this season. After losing its lead, UF went 0 for 4 with runners in scoring position through the next four innings.

Luckily for Florida, its pitchers kept it in the game. After two games in which the staff gave up one run combined, the pitchers struggled a little more on Sunday but kept the game within reach.

SEE BASE, PAGE 13



The UF gymnastics team defeated WVU in its last home meet. Read the story online at alligatorSports.org.



Quotable

"I'm going to take a shower with it and everything."

Casey Prather

UF forward on the O'Connell Center net the team cut down

Poll question

Will the No. 1 seed Gators win this weekend's Southeastern Conference Tournament? Vote online at alligatorSports.org.

Gushue hit tying home run in ninth

BASE, from page 12

Making his fourth start of the season, redshirt junior Karsten Whitson lasted only 3.1 innings and gave up three runs, but the seven pitchers who relieved him went a combined 6.2 innings while giving up only two runs.

"This should be a big confidence boost for a lot of guys out of the pen," O'Sullivan said. "You can't create this type of environment during practice. This should build character."

By the ninth, the entire lineup had cycled through and struggled to string enough hits together to plate the tying run. But in that inning, they needed only one hit.

After first baseman Peter Alonso flew out to begin the inning, catcher Taylor Gushue launched an 0-1 pitch well past the left-field bleachers. Instead of landing in an outfielder's glove — like most of UF's deep fly balls — it bounced off a car windshield, shattering both the glass and UConn's lead.

"I was hoping it was gone, because I did a little bat flip," Gushue said. "I kind of watched it a little bit. About three-quarters of the way there, I knew it was going to stay fair."

Added O'Sullivan: "That was a big-time at-bat from a big-time player."

The Gators could not capitalize on getting the winning run on in the ninth after left

fielder Justin Shafer reached base due to an error, but they were almost forced to score in the 10th.

Third baseman Josh Tobias, who came into the game batting .212, knocked his second hit of the game — a hard triple to left-center field.

With a runner on third and no outs, Florida was poised to score and end the game quickly, but it needed three batters.

Center fielder Buddy Reed lined out softly to second baseman Vinny Siena, who was playing in to stop the runner from scoring on a ground ball. Shortstop Richie Martin followed, working a 3-2 count before walking.

Second baseman Casey Turgeon came up next. He had already grounded into one double play in the game, and O'Sullivan was determined for that not to happen again.

Turgeon attempted a squeeze drag bunt. It went foul. Although the element of surprise was gone, Turgeon dropped down another. This time, it stayed inside the line as Tobias raced toward home.

UConn first baseman Bobby Melley fielded the rolling ball, but Tobias was already crossing the plate.

Melley didn't even attempt a throw.

"We're starting to break out a little bit," Gushue said. "Bats are getting hot. Pitchers are absolutely carving up the other hitters."



William A. England / Alligator Staff

Taylor Gushue runs toward first base during Florida's 4-0 win against Maryland on Feb. 14 at McKethan Stadium.

Herndon, Tofft hit solo home runs

SOFT, from page 12

"It was good. They put up a good fight. They're a good team, but it was just an overall great team effort on our part."

Added coach Tim Walton: "Against a good pitcher, when you find a way to score, you've got to do it and take advantage of some opportunities."

That's exactly what Florida did. With the game scoreless in the fourth inning, Tofft blasted her fourth home run of the season to center field to give the Gators a 1-0 advantage.

"I thought it was kind of a pop-up, but I was hustling, too, just in case she dropped it," the third baseman said. "But it ended up going over, so it worked out."

One inning later, freshman Chelsea Herndon — making just her sixth start of the season — hit a lead-off home run to right field to wrap up the scoring for Florida.

"Chelsea did a great job coming up the next inning and keeping it going, not just letting us go flat after one run," Tofft said. "She kept it going a little bit, even if it was only one more run. She did a really good job staying on it and driving one."

While Florida was able to generate production at the plate, Delanie Gourley made sure Ole Miss (15-9, 1-2 SEC) remained stagnant in her first conference start. The freshman left-hander threw a three-hit complete game shutout, logging four strikeouts while walking only two batters.

"I was just really excited and ready to go," Gourley said.

"This morning, I was just preparing myself and I was like, 'Hey, it's my first start. I'm just going to show them what I have and pitch how I

know how.'"

To close out the series, Walton utilized a different lineup than he has used all season.

Herndon and junior Briana Little, who have mostly contributed from the bench, started in right and left field, respectively. Freshman Justine McLean moved from her usual spot in left field to center.

Herndon and Little have thrived in their minimal playing time this season.

Herndon is batting .348 and has a .652 slugging clip to go along with seven RBIs and nine runs.

Little leads the team with a .609 on-base percentage and has a .333 clip at the plate. Against the Rebels on Sunday, the Middleburg na-

tive made it to base each time she stepped up to the plate.

"We've got to find a way to get Chelsea in the lineup, and that was the way to do that," Walton said. "Obviously, taking Bailey [Castro] out, Bri goes into the lineup because you can't play them both."

In the infield, sophomore Kirsti Merritt took the start at second base, while Kelsey Stewart moved from second to shortstop over regular starter Katie Medina.

"I took Katie out and tried to get a little more production out of our offense," Walton said.

"What we're trying to do is just find a way to put the best team on the field on that given day to win the game."



Jordan McPherson / Alligator Staff

Chelsea Herndon swings during Florida's 8-0 win against Indiana on Feb. 22 at Katie Seashole Pressly Stadium.

Seniors score 31 of 35 second-half points

HOOPS, from page 12

Wildcats clawed their way back into contention.

Thanks to a 15-0 run by UK, UF saw itself ahead by only six points after leading by as many as 22 previously. Donovan thought the Gators entered half-time drained.

"I knew Kentucky was going to make a run," he said. "They're too talented not to. Give them credit — they battled and fought their way back in there."

"I thought we got spread out on defense and played into their hands a little bit, in terms of opening up driving gaps for them and them getting the ball at the front of the rim offensive rebounding."

With its back against the wall, Florida needed a spark. Then, the seniors came to the rescue.

Prather, Wilbekin, Yeguete and Young scored all but four of UF's 35 points in the second half and made key shots down the stretch to finish the game on a 19-8 run.

"Like we've always done this year, we just tried to fight through and weather the storm," Wilbekin said.

During the game's final 12 minutes, Prather scored 10 points, Yeguete threw down an open two-handed flush, Young sunk a hook shot and Wilbekin drained two three-pointers.

His final attempt from beyond the arc iced the game to put the Gators ahead 77-60 with 2:33 left.

"Once he hit that one," Young said, "we all knew it was over."

Young finished with a game-high 18 points on 8-of-13 shooting, while Prather made all five of his shots for 15 points. Wilbekin added 13 points and four assists.

"I knew Kentucky was going to make a run. They're too talented not to. Give them credit — they battled and fought their way back in there. I thought we got spread out on defense and played into their hands a little bit, in terms of opening up driving gaps for them and them getting the ball at the front of the rim offensive rebounding."

Billy Donovan
UF coach

The No. 1 seed Gators now have four days to regain focus and prepare for their first game in the SEC Tournament on Friday at 1 p.m. in Atlanta against either No. 8 seed Missouri or ninth-seeded Texas A&M.

Saturday, Florida reveled in the moment. Now, the Gators are ready to regain focus on what's ahead.

"Would you say this is mission accomplished? My answer is no," Young said. "We're in the right direction right now. The ultimate goal is to be national champions."

"We can say, 'Yeah, we accomplished something,' but the sun's hopefully going to come back up tomorrow, and then we've got to get back to work."

Sophomore clinches comeback win against Gamecocks



Jordan McPherson / Alligator Staff

Gordon Watson returns a ball during Florida's 5-2 win against North Florida on Jan. 22 at the Ring Tennis Complex. Watson clinched Florida's match against South Carolina on Sunday.

► WATSON WON IN THREE SETS.

BRITNEÉ MCCOY

Alligator Writer

@TheReporterGirl

Sophomore Gordon Watson showcased his skills Sunday when he defeated No. 55 ranked Tsvetan Mihov in three sets to clinch Florida's 4-2 win against South Carolina at the Ring Tennis Complex on Sunday.

After falling to Texas A&M 2-4 in College Station, Texas, on Feb. 28, Florida looked forward to Sunday to tilt its 5-5 record above .500. Both the Gators and Gamecocks finished with a 7-5 record in Southeastern Conference play last season, leaving the teams in a tie for the third spot.

On the doubles court, Florida's No. 9 duo of Elliot Orkin and Gordon Watson fell to Chip Cox and Tsvetan Mihov 8-5. Senior tandem Mike Alford and Florent Diep were defeated in a tough 8-6 decision by Andrew Adams and Kyle Koch, giving South Carolina the doubles point and a 1-0 lead.

But in singles, the Gators got off to a great start.

Diep was first to win for the Gators.

He defeated Adams in a quick 6-1, 6-2 decision to tie the match at 1.

Diego Hidalgo gave Florida a 2-1 lead over South Carolina when he defeated Thiago Pinheiro in two sets, 6-4, 6-1.

USC began to rally back when Chip Cox defeated Mike Alford in straight sets, 4-6, 6-7, tying the match at 2.

But Orkin gave the Gators the advantage, defeating Andrew Schafer in three sets, 1-6, 6-1, 6-4.

"Orkin has been through a lot," assistant coach Mark Merklein said in a release. "He wasn't playing, and all of a sudden, he's put into the SEC scene in a battle down there."

Watson's match was a roller coaster ride. After winning his first set 6-1 with ease against doubles opponent Mihov, he dropped his second set 6-4. With the match on the line, he found a second wind and won the final set 6-3.

Next up for Florida (6-5, 1-1 SEC) is a match against Tennessee on Friday at 5 p.m. in Gainesville.

"We look to build confidence and ingrain a certain identity into our team," Merklein said. "We're young and we're, in my mind, trying to be the best team in the SEC."

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Florida looks to qualify divers for NCAA Championships

LOGAN MCGUIRE

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Diving hasn't been one of the strengths for Florida's No. 1 men's (8-0, 5-0 Southeastern Conference) or No. 8 women's (5-3, 3-2 SEC) swimming and diving teams in recent years.

But the Gators will have a chance to qualify a diver for the NCAA Championships at today's Zone 'B' Diving Regional Championships in Greensboro, N.C., for the first time since Michael Lewark competed for the men in 2012 and Monica Dodson was part of the 2011 women's national championship.

Redshirt senior Chris Jones' return has helped the men's diving effort in the second half of the season. Jones finished a team best on the platform and 1-meter springboard at SECs in February; however, none of Florida's men made an event final.

But the women's team has had more success. Sophomore Kahlia Warner qualified for finals on the 1- and 3-meter springboards at SECs, coming in fifth on the latter event, and has been a consistent point scorer all season.

"Our confidence level is high," diving coach Donnie Craine said. "Now it is just a matter of going into this meet and competing to the best of their abilities."

"One of the things that I encourage them to think about is diving for themselves, because there are not team points for this event."

Florida's roster boasts six divers — three on each side — heading into the regional championships with a field of nearly 70 divers — around 40 athletes for the women and about 30 divers for the men.

They will all be competing for a little more than a handful of spots. Only seven male divers and nine female divers will advance to the national championship meet.

"I think our confidence level is high. Now it is just a matter of going into this meet and competing to the best of their abilities. One of the things that I encourage them to think about is diving for themselves because there are not team points for this event."

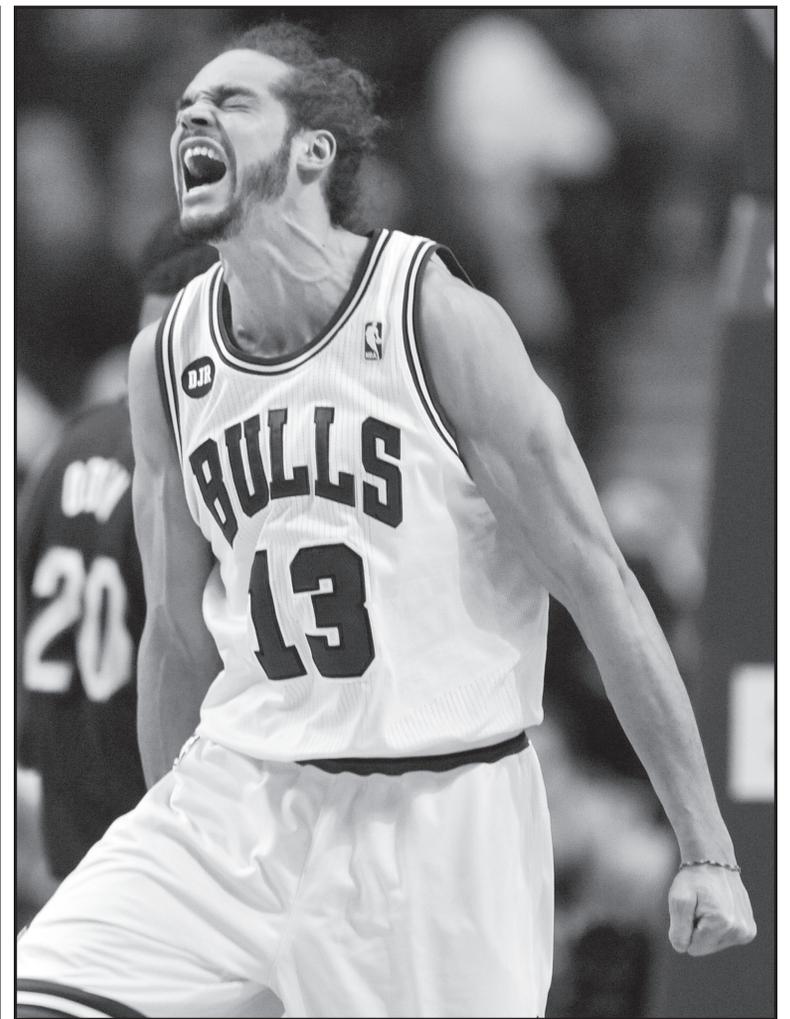
Donnie Craine

UF diving coach

"This is an opportunity for the divers to get to the NCAA Championships," Craine said. "It is a very competitive competition."

If the Gators can qualify a diver, he or she will join either the 14 swimmers on the women's team in Minneapolis, Minn., on March 20-22, or the men's team a week later in Austin, Texas.

Both squads have qualified all five relays, but the men's NCAA Championships meet list of invited swimmers won't be released until March 19. The most swimmers a team can qualify is 17.

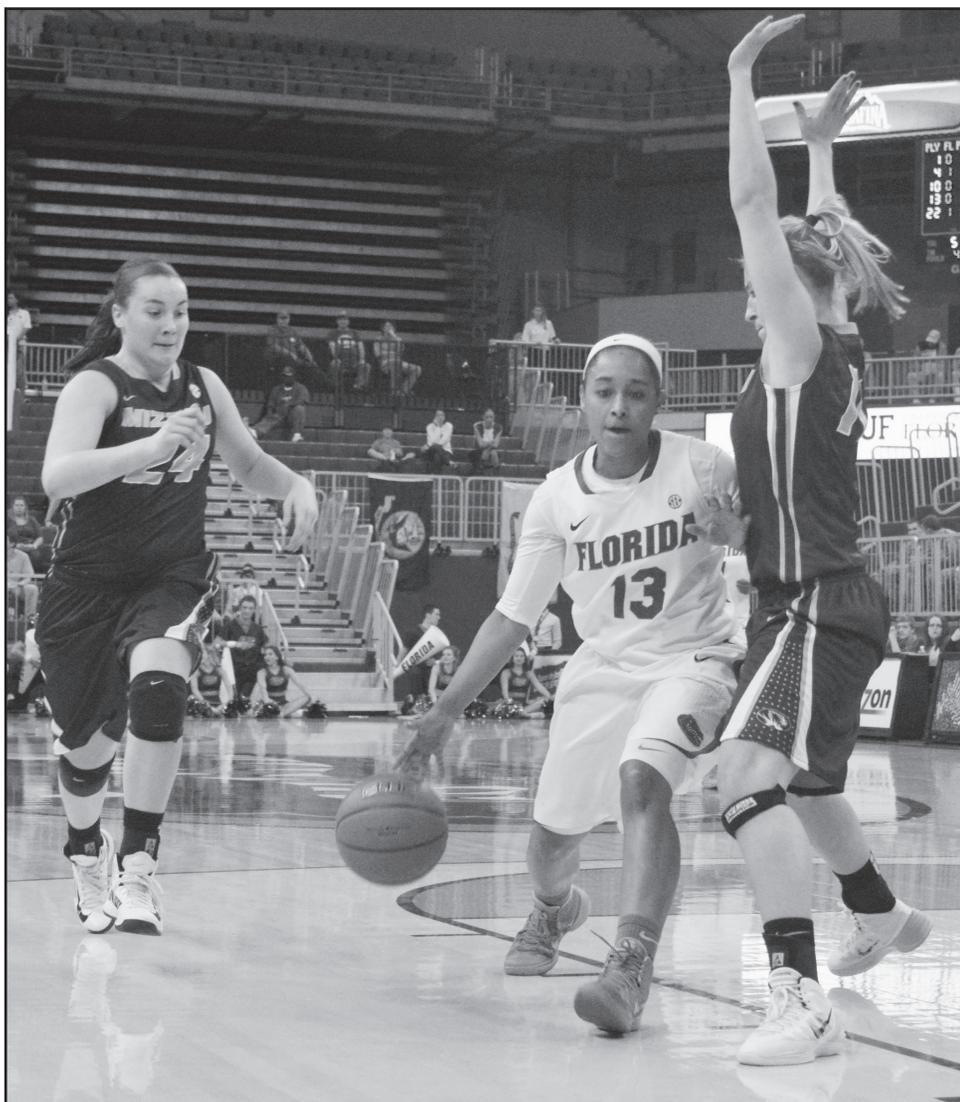


AP Photo

Noah and the Wail

Former Gator Joakim Noah reacts after being fouled by the Heat's Greg Oden during Chicago's 95-88 home win against Miami on Sunday.

Florida falls to Kentucky in conference tournament



Jordan McPherson/Alligator Staff

Cassie Peoples drives to the net during Florida's loss to Missouri on Feb. 20 in the O'Connell Center. Peoples averaged 8.9 points per game at the SEC Tournament.

FLORIDA DEFEATED MISSISSIPPI STATE IN SECOND ROUND OF SEC TOURNAMENT.

GORDON STREISAND

Alligator Writer

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After two games in as many days, fifth-seeded Florida was bounced from the Southeastern Conference Tournament by No. 12 Kentucky on Friday following a strong showing against Mississippi State on Thursday.

After earning a first-round bye, the Gators faced off against the Bulldogs for the second time this season.

The first time the teams met — in Gainesville on Jan. 2. — Florida came out with an 82-72 win.

The results were similar the second time around, with the Gators winning again on Thursday, 71-67.

A strong first half propelled Florida to victory, thanks to a 59.3 percent shooting effort in the half, not to mention outscoring Mississippi State 22-8 in the paint.

The Bulldogs rallied back in the second half, but thanks to the efforts of senior Jattera Bonds and redshirt junior Kayla Lewis, the Gators held on to advance to the quarterfinals.

Lewis recorded 17 points, six boards and five blocks against Mississippi State.

"I think that Kayla's athleticism is what you see because that's the most obvious thing," coach Amanda Butler said. "That's much more about Kayla's desire, the plays that she made. That's what makes me proud of those numbers. It's not, 'Can she jump higher than someone or is she stronger than someone?' It's about, 'I'm not going to be denied, I'm not going to let you score on this.' It comes from a positive, team-oriented place."

The Gators didn't have much time to relish in their win against the Bulldogs, as a matchup against the Wildcats in the quarterfinals was a mere 24 hours later.

Florida enjoyed success against Kentucky in the regular season, winning both contests 83-73 and 86-80 in Lexington, Ky., and Gainesville, respectively.

Fortunately for the Wildcats, the SEC Tournament offered another chance for redemption, and they took advantage of it despite a strong first half by the Gators.

Florida went 5 for 10 from beyond the arc, and Lewis had another strong showing, scoring a team-high 11 points in the half.

Unfortunately for the Gators, there was an extra 20 minutes they had to play.

After entering halftime down by seven with the score 36-29, the Wildcats stormed back.

With 8:35 remaining in the game, Florida lost its lead and never regained it, despite later tying the game at 70 with only 1:29 remaining on the clock.

Florida saw its lead dwindle away thanks to a strong rebounding effort from Kentucky, who won by five points in the 75-70 affair.

The Wildcats doubled up the Gators in offensive boards, 18-9.

Against Mississippi State, Florida was also badly outrebounded on the offensive side, but the Bulldogs' inability to capitalize in the paint allowed the Gators to hang on.

"The rebounding battle, one of our goals is to neutralize that," Butler said. "We're trying to always scratch around and make plays off the boards as much as we can. We didn't do a good job with that. In the second half, that was really what was keeping them afloat. I thought we were playing great basketball, but kept giving them second chances. A good team's going to take advantage of that."

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Gators tear down nets after perfect conference season

JONATHAN CZUPRYN

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On Feb. 21, 2007, the Gators cut down the nets in the O'Connell Center to celebrate their Southeastern Conference title despite having

three more regular season games on the schedule.

They lost their next two games. "I regret that," coach Billy Donovan said after being put in a strikingly similar situation nine days ago.

Florida entered its matchup with

LSU on March 1 with the SEC's best record already sewn up, but Donovan wasn't going to make the same mistake he made seven years earlier by celebrating prematurely.

"To me, when you cut down a net, that's finality," Donovan said in the March 1 postgame press conference. "There's still two games left, so there's no finality right now."

But on Saturday, Florida finalized its regular season, finishing 18-0 in league play. And in the words of the four seniors being honored in their final home game, it was perfect.

When Kentucky cut its 21-point halftime deficit to just six with 12:24 in the second half, Scottie Wilbekin sunk a three to extend the Gators' lead to nine.

Six minutes later, Patric Young broke out of his 16-minute scoreless streak to bring his team's lead back to double digits.

Casey Prather's contested layup 30 seconds afterward resulted in a three-point play, padding the advantage.

And then Will Yeguete joined the party with his fourth dunk of

the year, sending the bench and the crowd into a frenzy.

The Gators' four-man senior class finished the contest by recording 31 of the team's final 35 points.

"This is the way to go out," Young said. "You cannot script it any better."

But Florida's fairytale finale to its most successful regular season in school history almost never came to fruition.

Wilbekin, whose 12.9 points per game and 2.1 assist-to-turnover ratio make him a leading candidate for SEC Player of the Year, was given the opportunity to transfer by Donovan after being suspended twice for violating team rules.

Prather said switching schools crossed his mind after struggling with injuries and limited playing time during his early years at Florida. Young had to battle to find his identity amid the downpour of criticisms and comparisons.

And Donovan said he was concerned Yeguete wouldn't even have a senior season because of his off-season surgery on his right knee.

"When you invest four years like these guys have invested, it means something to them," Donovan said. "They're going to carry it with them for the rest of their lives. They've done something that has not happened here before and has not happened in our league before. To me, there were a lot of emotions and I'm proud of the way they handled themselves leading up to this game."

"This is the way to go out; You cannot script it any better."

Patric Young
UF center

When Donovan handed Wilbekin a framed jersey during the pre-game festivities, the point guard said if it had gone on for just a few more seconds, he would have shed a tear.

"I thought all of us were going to cry, actually," Prather said.

"I'm surprised no one [did]. I knew if one of us started crying, then everybody was going to bust out crying."



Rachel Crosby / Alligator Staff

Scottie Wilbekin cuts down the net after Florida's 84-65 win against Kentucky on Saturday in the O'Connell Center.

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