

alligator



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FEATURE FRIDAY:

Mama Kitty's legacy: A look at stray cats around the city



Taylor Marks / Alligator Staff

Callie is one of several stray cats that have been regularly fed and cared for by Gainesville natives over the years. This group of felines regularly wander the streets and sewers of the University of Florida.

By Amanda Rosa

Alligator Staff Writer

When Libby Rowell started feeding Mama Kitty in 1997, she never expected to bury the stray in her backyard nearly 15 years later.

Mama, a black tortoiseshell cat who lived by the UF Physical Plant buildings on Radio Road, knew the sound of Rowell's voice and the time she got to work. The small stray would meet Rowell at her office door every day around 8 a.m., looking up at Rowell with her "pug-like" face and upturned nose.

Even after 15 years of feeding her, Mama wouldn't let Rowell touch her — not until about a week before she died in 2012, looking up at Rowell for one of the last times with her golden eyes.

"After all those years, she never let me pet her until she knew she was sick," Rowell said, tears in her eyes. "I guess she knew she was loved and I would take care of her."

Mama, who cared for generations of orphaned kittens like her own litter, inspired Rowell's interest in helping the colony of about 15 cats living along Radio Road, she said.

Rowell, a senior fiscal assistant for UF's Central Stores, has fed the colony every day for 20 years, despite UF's policy against feeding feral cats. She brings whatever cat

food she can find on sale, spending about \$15 a week.

After bonding with Mama, she found homes for three of her litters and kept the last three of Mama's kittens, Gracie, Buddy and Casey, for herself.

"I never wanted to draw attention to myself," Rowell, 56, said. "I've never asked for help, never asked for money."

Rowell is one of many UF staff, faculty and students who feed cats on campus despite UF policy prohibiting it.

"I know some people discourage it," Rowell said. "I feel like me taking them, trapping them and finding so many homes for them is more of a service than a disservice."

Although UF bans feeding feral cats on campus, employees are not punished for doing so, UF spokesperson Steve Orlando said.

The number of stray cats on campus is unknown, said UF Pest Management Coordinator Don Orth.

Orth said he sees cats all over campus but complaints are rare. Pest management receives calls to help kittens stuck in pipes less than once a month.

To enforce UF's policy, the employees also pick up bowls of food left out for cats, which Orth said could attract other animals like raccoons.

Strays tend to congregate at

SEE FEATURE, PAGE 8

Gainesville man convicted of drugging, sex trafficking

By Meryl Kornfield

Alligator Staff Writer

A Gainesville man was convicted Wednesday of sex trafficking by force and promoting prostitution, the Department of Justice said.

Arthur Larange Lee Jr., 34, was convicted in the U.S. District Court in Gainesville for abducting a drug-addicted woman from the parking lot of a Gainesville church where she was attending a Narcotics Anonymous meeting in August 2016, according to a DOJ press release.

He took the woman's phone, ordered her to drive to a nearby hotel and photographed her for an advertisement on a personal advertisement website, according to the press release.

After Lee told the woman he would "break her in," he raped, burned and committed other acts of violence against her, the DOJ said.

For two days, Lee forced her to engage in sexual acts in local hotels and private residences with customers, keeping the money.

According to the DOJ, the woman was able to escape after a customer agreed to help her.

She fled with Lee's phone and called police, who arrested Lee at the hotel she escaped. The Alachua County Sheriff's Office and Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated the case.

For the sex trafficking charges, Lee faces a minimum of 15 years and maximum of life in prison. Lee faces a maximum of 5 years in prison for the promotion of prostitution charge.

GPD: UF student arrested for sexual battery

By Robert Lewis

Alligator Staff Writer

A UF student was arrested Tuesday for sexual battery more than a year after the incident, Gainesville Police said.

Christopher James Podlin, 21, raped his date in the Kappa Sigma Fraternity house, located at 1120 SW 9th Rd., on Dec. 7, 2016, according to an arrest report. Podlin had met the victim through Instagram about a month earlier when she was 17, police said.

Four days before the alleged rape,



Podlin

the victim refused Podlin's romantic advances when the two met to study together, according to the report.

In the early morning hours of the next day, the victim responded to Podlin's texts and said, "I'm fine, I just don't want to give you the wrong impression (because) I'm not going to hook up with you," according to the report.

Podlin and the victim attended

SEE BATTERY, PAGE 5

GATORS WRAP UP RECRUITMENT

Columnist Ethan Bauer names four Florida football recruits who could see playing time next season, pg. 14



City considers building international center

It is looking at the land where Leonardo's Pizza is located, pg. 10

Norman Hall renovations continue

The renovations are expected to finish in 2019, pg. 4

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Today's Weather



AM



NOON



PM

HIGH 77° LOW 61°

Local Events / News in Brief

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Camp GatorNights

The Reitz Union will hold Camp GatorNights today. The event will feature four square, tetherball and an obstacle course, as well as a tent-building contest. A Campus Movie Fest premiere will take place 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom. GatorNights is always Friday and always free for UF students with their Gator 1 Card. Attendees must be current students, and they're allowed to bring a maximum of one guest.

Talking Gators Toastmasters

Want to get more comfortable speaking in front of a group? Talking Gators Toastmasters meets at 5:45 p.m. every Tuesday in Entomology Building, Room 1031. Meetings are free to attend and open to all. For more information, visit talkinggators.toastmastersclubs.org.

American Association of University Women Meeting

The Gainesville Branch of the American Association of University Women will meet 10 a.m. Saturday in Meeting Room A at the Millhopper Branch Library. The program topic, "Implicit Bias," is in commemoration of Black History Month. The presenter is Katheryn Russell-Brown, professor of law and director of the Center for Studies of Race and Race Relations, UF College of Law.

Tango classes

Want to learn Argentine tango? The UF Argentine Tango Club will hold free classes for all UF students. No dance experience is necessary. Join them from 6:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. Sundays at the Reitz Union, Dance Studio A.

RZIM Free Lunch and Talks

Ravi Zacharias International Ministries is coming to UF next week, Feb. 12 to Feb. 16. They'll be hosting free lunches at the Reitz Union at 11:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., engaging students in topics regarding spirituality and God. Talks are given by RZIM team members, addressing questions such as "is God sexist?" "can the Bible be trusted?" and "who is Jesus?" centered around a theme of "hungry." The talks will be Monday through Friday in the Reitz Union Chamber. For more information, visit facebook.com/HungryUF/.

Florida's Jewish Community Centers at Midcentury: Southern, Northern, or Exceptional?

Civil rights activists against discrimination in public accommodations and civic institutions prompted Jewish Community Centers in both northern and southern cities to debate whether to admit black members. Abigail Oren will present the topic at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday in the Judaica Suite inside Smathers Library.

Free Citizenship classes

The Latina Women's League will offer free citizenship classes 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. every Thursday until March 29 at the Millhopper Library Branch, located at 3145 NW 43rd St. To register, email info@latinawomensleague.org.

Stomp the Swamp for Autism

Impact Autism, a UF organization, is holding Stomp the Swamp for Autism to benefit the UF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 17 at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. CARD supports individuals with autism and their families through training and assistance. To learn more about autism and to register for "Stomp the Swamp," visit card.ufl.edu or search the Facebook event page.

LifeSouth Community Blood Centers' race

Registration is now open for LifeSouth Community Blood Centers' Five Points of Life Race Weekend on Feb. 17 and Feb. 18 at fivepointsoflife.com. Gainesville's largest running race begins on the UF Cultural Plaza. Both days will include food, free massages and music. All proceeds go to the Five Points of Life Foundation, which educates people on ways to share life with others, including the donation of blood, organs and tissue.

Student Government Elections

Spring Student Government Elections will be held 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 20 and 21 at locations across campus. Visit sg.ufl.edu/elections to request an absentee ballot before the deadline.

Words on Canvas: Harn Museum Writing Competition

Words on Canvas is a poetry and prose writing competition at the Harn Museum of Art, located at 3259 Hull Road, for UF and Santa Fe College students



Have an event planned? Add it to the **alligator's** online calendar: alligator.org/calendar

inspired by art. The selection of artwork features a variety of media, including pieces from Asian, Contemporary and Modern collections. Winning contestants will be awarded prizes. See guidelines at harn.ufl.edu/wordsoncanvas. The deadline is Feb. 25.

Law in the Library: Restoration of Civil Rights Workshops

The Alachua County Library District is partnering with the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association to present Law in the Library: Restoration of Civil Rights Workshops 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. March 22, at Cone Park Branch, 2801 E. University Ave., and 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. April 5 at Tower Road Branch, 3020 SW 75th Street. Attorneys from Josiah T. Walls Bar Association and students from the UF Levin College of Law will provide one-on-one assistance to persons who have been convicted of a felony and are interested in applying to have their civil rights restored. Also, the attorneys will meet with people who are interested in having their records sealed or expunged. These presentations are free and open to the public. Registration is not required. For more information, visit aclib.us/law or call 352-334-3900.

Got something going on?

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

Correction

In an article published Feb. 7 titled "Free concert downtown to celebrate Black History Month," The Alligator incorrectly reported one band would be performing. Two bands will be performing during the concert: The first band is Dr. Neu & BlujaFunk and the second band is Billy Buchanan with his Rock 'n Soul Revue.

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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Student Government parties prepare for Spring elections

Two parties released platform points, one will release next week

By Christina Morales
Alligator Staff Writer

Student Government political parties met with students to come up with campaign platform ideas Thursday.

While Challenge Party released its entire platform, Impact Party only released five platform points. Inspire Party has yet to release its platform.

Challenge Party released its entire platform on social media Thursday.

Janae Moodie, who is running for Student Body president, said Challenge would like to pilot an online sexual assault reporting program, which will track reported sexual assault on campus and ensure privacy in reporting.

"We're hoping this will ultimately make our campus more safe for students," Moodie said.

Impact released its first five platform points through social media Wednesday and Thursday.

Omarley Spence, Impact president, said the party wants to focus on diversity by revitalizing the Student Government Diversity and Programming Committee under the executive branch.

"That's going to be an amazing program that's going to focus on all of the different ideas that would focus on diversity," Spence said.

Spence said he's excited to advocate for online students in the Pathway to Campus Enrollment program and Innovation Academy programs

when they're away in the Fall. He suggested creating virtual office hours with Student Body executives.

"We realized that there's not a huge platform for students that may not be on campus," Spence said. "It will be a revolutionary step to engaging with students on a whole other level."

Nick Poindexter was approached by Impact while walking to the Reitz Union.

The UF electrical engineering junior said he stopped to ask them to lobby for a better student health care plan. After he dislocated his left shoulder two weeks ago when he fell from the bleachers at a gymnastics meet, he needed an MRI that would cost him about \$1,300 after the copay.

"I know that they have the ability to lobby with the health care provider on our behalf to make that plan better," the 20-year-old said.

Ashley Grabowski, Inspire's campaign manager, said they expect to release their official platform next week. She said they've seen about 300 students each day.

Grabowski said students have talked about online voting, Multicultural and Diversity Affairs and more dance space for UF dancers.

"We definitely want to make sure we're advocating for all students across campus," Grabowski said.

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Steph Strickland / Alligator Staff

William Hataway, a 19-year-old UF biochemistry freshman, shares how he wants to see greater speed in renovations to restaurants.

Impact Party

- Introduce a textbook donation and rental program
- Promote the African American Studies Program to departmental status
- Implement virtual office hours with Student Body executives
- Develop a scholarship for caps and gowns cost
- Launch a financial literacy program with the Student Financial Affairs Office

Challenge Party

- Offer student legal services for undocumented students
- Create a Living Learning Community for LGBTQ+ students
- Launch a minority recruitment program
- Increase accessible parking for the Disability Resource Center
- Subsidize off-campus tutoring services



Take these steps to prevent the spread of influenza (flu) to you and others:

- Wash your hands often!
- Cover your cough or sneeze into a tissue.
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose or mouth).
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean surfaces frequently. (Door handles, work areas, keyboards)
- Practice self-care for a good overall health!

Most people with the flu have mild illness and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs. If you get sick with flu symptoms, in most cases, you should follow the CDC's advice and **stay home for the first 24 hours** until after your fever is gone. Additionally, avoid contact with other people except to get medical care.

For more information on preventing and treating flu, visit shcc.ufl.edu/flu

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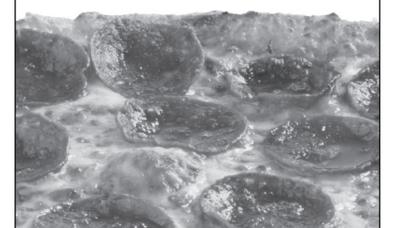
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Norman Hall renovations to add study rooms, outlets

By McKenna Beery

Alligator Contributing Writer

Erin Mistry's back always aches after sitting in Norman Hall's "ancient" plastic chairs for three-hour classes.

In the dimly lit and musty classrooms, it's hard to concentrate.

"You want to be comfortable when learning," she said.

The 44-year-old UF education doctoral student said she appreciates the building's nostalgia but is ready for its modern updates. The two-part \$29 million renovation started with the Education Library in December, said Thomas Dana, the education associate dean of academic affairs. The second phase, Norman Hall, will start in May when the first phase ends. It is expected to be completed in August 2019.

The old Norman building will be gutted and rebuilt with modern offices, classrooms and research labs, said Dana, who helps oversee the renovations. It will include new windows, air conditioning, heating systems and plumbing. On the ground level, a Starbucks will be added.

"We have very useless classrooms," Dana said. "Most of our building is just not suited for the kind of learning and teaching we do nowadays."

Norman Hall has had problems with mold, poor air conditioning and overflowing toilets, Dana said. The 1932 building is now out of date.

The college has wanted to renovate the building for about 20 years but had trouble finding funding, Dana said. In 2016, the Florida Legislature gave \$14.1 million to start the project and appropriated the rest the following year.

The building will be better adapted to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Dana said. This will include new restrooms, ramps and signage to make the building easier to navigate.

During the renovation of old Norman, several large rooms in new Norman will be converted into smaller offices, and staff will also share offices, Dana said. Classes will be held in other buildings on campus.

Rachael Elrod, head of the Education Library, said the library has not been renovated extensively for 38 years other than adding four study rooms in the summer of 2016.

Some improvements to the library include better lightning, new furniture, a computer lab, more electrical outlets, new security gates and two additional study rooms, Elrod said. In addition, the Education Li-



Courtesy to the Alligator

The Education Library has been undergoing renovations since December and will be finished in May. The library will have better lighting, more seating and more outlets. Above is a model of the library with renovations.

brary will also include two ADA-outfitted restrooms as well as an ADA circulation desk.

Elrod said while the library is closed for construction, its course

reserves and journals are available for checkout at Library West. All other Education Library materials are in an off-site storage facility and are unavailable to be checked out.

"I'm really looking forward to opening the doors again to the library and welcoming students into this beautiful new space," Elrod said.

UF student arrested for smoking from bong

By Meryl Kornfield

Alligator Staff Writer

A UF student was arrested for smoking a bong behind Jennings Hall early Wednesday, University Police said.

Benjamin Alan Benson, 19, and three students were sitting at a park table in the woods behind Jennings Hall, which is near the University Police Department office, at about 1 a.m., according to an arrest report. A police officer noticed what looked like a flame from a lighter and smelled burnt marijuana. The officer walked to the table and saw a large bong, police said.

Police said they also found less than 20 grams of marijuana and drug paraphernalia in a backpack at the scene



Benson

and on the ground. Officers didn't arrest the other students but charged Benson for possession of the marijuana and paraphernalia, which are misdemeanors.

Benson was taken to the Alachua County Jail, where police found a fake driver's licence in his wallet, according to the report. He was also charged with fraud, which is a felony. This is Benson's first felony charge.

Benson is a materials science and engineering freshman, UF spokesperson John Hines wrote in an email.

He was released from jail on his own recognizance Wednesday afternoon.

Benson could not be reached for comment.

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UF Health physician performs new life-saving surgery

By Kaylee Weber

Alligator Contributing Writer

Carla Collins keeps her composure.

She kept it when she found she had a heart condition that could kill her, and she kept it when she became the first to undergo a new medical procedure this year.

Dr. John N. Catanzaro, an assistant professor of medicine at the UF College of Medicine - Jacksonville, performed the world's first regenerative bio envelope implant Jan. 8. The \$1,200 implant is a pouch made out of pig intestine that goes around a defibrillator, or battery-powered heart device, to help it heal more naturally and keep it in place. The pouch and

surgery combined cost \$24,000.

"I am driven by the opportunity to bring cutting-edge technology to my patients," Catanzaro said.

Collins, 39, of Jacksonville, said she needed the defibrillator and pouch because she carries the gene for Long QT Syndrome, a life-threatening heart-rhythm condition, which causes fast heartbeats that can trigger seizures and sudden death. She was diagnosed two years ago, and both her mother and uncle suffer from the same syndrome.

The heart device, or cardiac defibrillator, that was placed in her has two parts: a generator and a coil that are placed on either side of the heart, Catanzaro said. When a patient goes into

cardiac arrest, the device delivers a shock to the heart.

The bio envelope disguises the generator so the body accepts the device without inflammatory responses like scarring and calcium build-up that may get in the way of a shock to the heart, Catanzaro said.

"It's like having a guardian angel with you all the time," Collins said.

Since Collins' procedure was successful, Catanzaro performed the bio envelope and cardiac defibrillator procedure a second time on an 18-year-old patient Jan. 12.

Collins said she hopes research will help the technology evolve further because her two sons, ages 18 and 8, will also need to be tested for the gene.

Shake Smart to replace Freshens in the Reitz Union

By Stephanie Gonzalez

Alligator Contributing Writer

More vegan, gluten-free and lactose-free options are coming to campus in April.

The Reitz Union's Freshens, located in the POD Market, will undergo a nine-week renovation into a Shake Smart, said UF spokesperson Steve Orlando. The construction is projected to cost \$327,801, which is funded by UF.

Shake Smart will offer acai bowls and signature shakes that can include more than 30

grams of protein, fruits and vegetables, Jill Rodriguez, the marketing program manager for Gator Dining services, wrote in an email. Menu items cost \$10 or less.

The UF location will be the first Shake Smart in Florida, Rodriguez said.

Eddie Daniels, the assistant vice president of UF's business services division, said UF Student Body President Smith Meyers approached them with the idea.

Meyers could not be reached for comment. "In comparison to Freshens, Shake Smart is

allegedly healthier, and that's something that students expressed," Daniels said.

Jowie Papa, a 21-year-old UF biology senior, said he didn't go to Freshens often, and when he did, it was only for protein shakes.

"But if they're people that do go there for the (frozen yogurt) and stuff," Papa said, "I imagine they'd be pretty disappointed about that."

Papa said the remodel won't have an effect on him, but having more dietary options can be a good thing for students who need those

food substitutes.

Roman Siddiqi, a 20-year-old UF philosophy junior, said he went to Freshens about once every two months.

He said he wasn't upset to find out Freshens was leaving because there are plenty of frozen yogurt places in Gainesville, but getting an acai bowl is less common.

"This might be a good thing because there's only one other place on campus that does this kind of thing, like Jamba Juice," he said.

County and city to negotiate power over redevelopment

By **Amanda Rosa**
Alligator Staff Writer

City and county officials will meet Monday to decide the future of Gainesville's redevelopment agency.

The Community Redevelopment Agency provides the vision for modernizing Gainesville. In the past, it has helped create the DNA Bridge and Depot Park. Currently, the board overseeing the agency is made up of city officials. But a proposed bill could add county officials.

County commissioners have argued the representation on the board should reflect the funding the agency gets from the county and city. The county commission funds two-thirds of the agency, and hopes the bill will allow them to sit on the board.

The county commission met Tuesday and the city commission met Thursday to prepare to negotiate their proposals.

In addition to negotiating board representation, county officials will ask the city to decrease the county's tax increment financing, which is a public financing method to fund infrastructure projects, County

Commissioner Ken Cornell said.

Gainesville city commissioners discussed the county commission's requests and approved their own proposal which was organized by City Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos on Thursday.

The city is willing to reduce the county's millage rate for the CRA project behind Midtown and discuss the project's deadline. The CRA also determines for how long the agency assists areas, and city commissioners plan to offer the county part of the power of those decisions.

The city commissioners voted 5 to 1 in favor of the motion. Commissioner Charles Goston was absent from the meeting.

City Commissioner David Arreola said he voted against the motion because he is opposed to negotiating CRA policy outside of the board.

"I want to see formal action on (the county's) part before I make policy negotiations," Arreola said.

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SG engineering candidates hold debate, talk funding

By **Christina Morales**
Alligator Staff Writer

Engineering Senate candidates answered questions from students they hope to represent at Thursday's debate.

About 70 engineering students asked about communication, funding and representation among other departments to better gauge who to vote for Feb. 20 and 21. Benton Engineering Council, a student organization in the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering, hosted the debate. This was the first debate in five years the council has hosted.

Representatives from each political party spoke to students about their policies and values for three minutes, then two engineering candidates from each party had one minute to answer students' questions.

Impact Party engineering candidate Anthony Temeliescu said students voiced their concerns about their ability to talk with their senators.

"It's hard to get out to office hours with the burden of the schoolwork,"

Temeliescu said. "I think oftentimes that ends up leading to engineering students not feeling engaged."

Amy Emerson, a Challenge Party engineering candidate, said students mentioned concerns about a lack of funding.

Emerson said a lot of engineering teams, like Solar Gators, have to ask companies for parts because they can't pay for them themselves.

"I wasn't expecting those questions, but I know it's important," Emerson said.

Inspire Party engineering candidate Gantt Meredith said the senators representing the college could fix communication problems with an electronic mailing list.

"It seems like the engineering communication pipeline is very clogged right now," Meredith said. "That Listserv will be a way for everyone to be as transparent as possible."

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Police said it took place in the Kappa Sigma Fraternity house

BATTERY, from pg 1

a social function at Boca Fiesta through his fraternity, police said.

In a group chat, the woman texted her friends and said, "I'm scared he's going to assault me (to be honest)," according to the report.

At the event, the victim became extremely intoxicated, ac-

ording to the report.

Podlin brought her back to his fraternity's house at about 11 p.m., police said. He offered her a T-shirt to change into from her dress.

While she changed, Podlin began aggressively kissing her and carried her to his bed, where he began to have sex with her against her will, according to the report.

The woman repeatedly begged Podlin to use a condom and pretended to be unconscious in hopes that he would stop, she told police, according to the report.

When she seemed to be asleep, he removed the condom and began having sex with her again, according to the report.

The victim then started screaming and left Podlin's room, police said.

"Listen I'm so sorry," Podlin texted her. "I had no intentions of hooking up until you basically got fully naked."

He is a UF biology senior, said UF spokesperson John Hines. Hines said he was not sure if Podlin is being investigated by the school to decide what his punishment would be.

Podlin, who was over 18 at the time of the incident, was charged

with sexual battery of a 17-year-old. He was taken to the Alachua County Jail from where he was released Thursday on a \$50,000 bond.

He could not be reached for comment.

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23
Men's Basketball, Gymnastics, Softball

FRIDAY, MARCH 2
Men's Basketball vs. Kentucky, Baseball

MONDAY, MARCH 12
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FRIDAY, MARCH 23
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FRIDAY, MARCH 30
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It's been four years since you took the time to sit in front of the television and excitedly watch figure skaters twirl and jump across smooth, glass-like ice rinks or ogled in amazement as professional skiers glide through pristine white snow and leap into the sky off of seemingly terrifying ramps. The time has finally come for you to do it again. That's right: It's time once again for the Winter Olympics.

For some reason, your friends don't quite understand or relate to your excitement about the games. Nonetheless, you convince them to come to your apartment to watch the opening ceremony together. As expected, you go all out. You have snacks themed to each region competing and beers imported from every major country. Yeah, maybe it was a little over the top, but it only happens once every four years.

As the Parade of Nations kicks off, your elation only intensifies — and so does the judgment you're getting from your friends. The President of the Organizing Committee soon signifies their traditional speech is about to begin. Much to your surprise, however, the words out of their mouth take a different turn than they have in past years. Their speech begins with ...

Darts & Laurels

The Alligator's popularity recently blew up. Dear readers, we must inform you we were featured on "Jeopardy!" on Wednesday night. When a contestant picked the Newspaper category and found the Daily Double, he was asked what city the Independent Florida Alligator covered. He correctly answered "Gainesville." In the spirit of Alligator trivia, we give our first laurel to "Jeopardy!" and the contestant who answered correctly, John Giambrone.

Now, we have a question for our female readers: When you tear open a bag of Doritos chips and get a whiff of the cheesy deliciousness, are you concerned at all about the orange dust staining your fingertips or the crunching from biting into the chips being too loud? Indra Nooyi, chief executive of PepsiCo — which owns Frito-Lay, the manufacturer of Doritos — seems to think you are. On a Jan. 31 episode of the "Freakonomics Radio" podcast, she said women "don't like to crunch too loudly in public. They don't lick their fingers generously, and they don't like to pour the little broken pieces and the flavor into their mouth."

After laughing for a while, we realized the company was serious about manufacturing a snack geared toward women, and we were flabbergasted. For this, we award a **dart** to **PepsiCo**. We're embarrassed a woman is championing such an offensive initiative for her female peers. Each lady can decide for herself what it means to be one; they don't need society's discriminatory standards.

Representation in the media matters. Ensuring viewers and readers are being exposed to people from the LGBTQ+ community, racial minorities and individuals with disabilities is important. Gerber, the baby food corporation, reminded us of that this week. After 91 years, the company chose the first baby with Down syndrome to represent its brand. One-year-old Lucas from Georgia and his contagious smile will appear in commercials and billboards beside the pureed bottles. We're hoping this will show people babies with disabilities have just as much value as babies without them. We're giving a **laurel** to **Gerber** for **recognizing children with disabilities should be celebrated, not shunned**.

Earlier this week, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi staged an eight-hour speech Wednesday in an effort to pressure Republicans to allow a vote on protecting "Dreamer" immigrants. According to the Associated Press, it was the longest continuous speech in the chamber on record. The California Democrat read personal letters from young immigrants and quotes from the Bible and Pope Francis throughout her monumental speech. Members of her party also took turns sitting behind her in support.

And guess what: She did it all while wearing four-inch heels. Talk about woman power. We're feeling generous this week, so we're going to award **Pelosi** with a **laurel** because of her efforts to help the Dreamers of America instead of handing out another dart.

Melissa Gomez	Abby Miller	Caitlin Ostroff	Jimena Tavel
EDITOR	OPINIONS EDITOR	MANAGING EDITOR, ONLINE	MANAGING EDITOR, PRINT

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Column

YouTube drama is a sign it's time to change

In 2005, YouTube was born into existence and would forever change the digital world as we know it. Even though that was only 13 years ago, the internet was still in its infancy. As the first of its kind, YouTube has transformed from a time-killing rabbit hole, filled with cat videos and people "failing," to a legitimate medium of creation and a source of entertainment poised to surpass traditional television.

The only website with more web traffic than YouTube is its parent, Google, who bought the site in 2006 for a price that now seems like highway robbery: \$1.65 billion. It seemed absurd at the time, but when you consider YouTube is now speculated to be worth up to \$40 billion, it could very possibly be considered one of the most brilliant and strategic business moves ever.

YouTube changed the internet forever, and I'd argue no website has grown in parallel with the internet so organically. YouTube has maintained its core competency as a video sharing service but also slowly added pieces that have made it into the media behemoth it is today.

In the early years, YouTube's community largely governed itself. Users reported bad/inappropriate content and promoted the good. Now YouTube has taken over the role as governing body in a move that has resulted in some serious turmoil on the site. When popular YouTubers aren't calling each other out and having their fan bases clash, they are often complaining about something YouTube did to their accounts.

Be it unreasonable censorship or random demonetization, YouTube has been wildly slipshod and inconsistent at monitoring content. The company has been accused of having political motives behind its censorship power. Recently, popular talk show host Dave Rubin experimented with YouTube's monetization system. A video he posted titled "Socialism Isn't Cool" was quickly demonetized by YouTube, so to test the theory of YouTube being against conservatives, he posted a video titled "Capitalism Isn't Cool" to illustrate the bias and inconsistency in treatment.

It's not just politics. YouTube has been poor at censor-



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ship of inappropriate content. Just last month, massively popular creator Logan Paul got in hot water for posting a video that included the dead body of a suicide victim. YouTube was incredibly slow to remove the video, causing many to question the motives of the site. Are the most popular users immune? Do they get special treatment?

Whenever conservatives are complaining about bias and censorship by YouTube, it is important to remember YouTube is a business with its own terms and conditions all users must abide by. YouTube reserves the right to control what is and isn't shown on its site, but a problem arises when you consider the site's sheer size and influence.

YouTube is really the only one of its kind. People can threaten to start their own video site, but it will never catch on. YouTube has a firm grasp on the entire market. Nobody is going to dethrone them or even come close to competing.

But, does YouTube, due to its size and influence that literally impact billions, have a greater social responsibility? One that transcends the typical responsibilities they have to their stockholders? I would say yes. YouTube needs to take up some corporate social responsibility and try to act in the interests of all shareholders, particularly consumers/users, instead of just owners.

Though it is its own company, YouTube, through promoting certain videos and channels and censoring or demonetizing others, is enacting a tyrannical level of oversight and control, leaving users in a bind. Creators can't leave the site due to its massive reach, core base of viewers and worldwide familiarity. But staying on the site is becoming more difficult due to the heightened regulation and shoddy oversight.

Apart from being consistent in its use of powers, YouTube, due to its size and influence, needs to start considering the community at large if it wants to improve its deteriorating image.

Andrew Hall is a UF management senior. His column focuses on entertainment and music.

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

Column

Water scarcity is an issue we face today

In "The Wealth of Nations" from 1776, Adam Smith wrote, "Nothing is more useful than water." As much as the father of modern economics believed in a free market, that invisible hand occasionally reached for a glass of water like any other.

Adam Smith wrote the line above to describe the diamond-water paradox, explaining the difference in price and value between products. More than 225 years later, considering a monetary price for water does not justify the true value of water for each and every one of us. Like air, water is one of the few tangible things on Earth that are truly priceless, yet people do not treat it as such.

Water resources are an environmental issue. As with all environmental issues, people will unfortunately continue to prioritize their everyday activities and ignore future problems. The thought of possibly apocalyptic changes from future environmental problems can put a damper on anybody's day, so many choose to hope rather than plan. Nevertheless, water conservation is a manageable problem if simple concepts like taking five-minute showers and decreasing recreational water use move beyond a catchy Earth Day campaign.

Water scarcity may have been viewed as a problem to address in the future, but it can't be viewed as such anymore. According to researchers at MIT, more than half of the world population will live in water-stressed areas by 2050.

South African officials predict that Cape Town will become the first major city to run out of water, turning off the valves for about a million homes in April of this year. City officials are preparing for Day Zero, the day when the city's six-dam reservoir system will reach below 13.5 percent capacity. Some scientists point to climate change for the exacerbated water shortages, but what matters now is what we can do today to directly improve water management.

Water is a finite resource, yet some believe humans can just increase the potable water supply through desalination plants. Desalination, the process of removing salt from seawater, seems like a grand idea to solve the world's



Joshua Udvardy
opinions@alligator.org

water crisis, and South Africa is scrambling to finish three plants before Day Zero comes. However, water desalination has some drawbacks. Water supply will diminish to the point where the costs and energy necessary for desalination become feasible, but water drinkers of the world must also think of the treatment of water itself.

As much credit as people may want to give engineers, they can't feasibly treat everything under the sun. In South Africa, researchers warn about the level of contamination in seawater from treated wastewater dumped into the ocean. Unlike the Safe Water Drinking Standards of the United States, other countries like South Africa require minimal, if any, treatment to wastewater before it is discharged. South Africa's national water standards don't go much further than the removal of sizable objects like diapers. Once South Africa turns on their desalination plants, city officials may be doing nothing more than giving their citizens a choice of dehydration or E. coli.

In a time when the nightmare of running out of water might become reality, experts still think the best solution to preventing Cape Town's Day Zero lies with what most of us learned in elementary school. Ian Neilson, civil engineer and deputy mayor of Cape Town, estimates that decreasing daily water consumption by 25 percent will keep the water supply at a functional level until the rainy season starts in May. No matter how far technology develops or how much money investors pour into new ideas, simply conserving water was, is and always will be the most effective solution.

Some argue that humans insignificantly impact their environment. Some may even argue that climate change is just a scientific hoax. But, no one can argue the importance of water to all life. Water needs to be accurately treated to its value. If not, we will have to start planning for the realistic scenario where we turn a faucet handle and nothing comes out.

Joshua Udvardy is a UF environmental engineering junior. His columns focus on science.

Column

It's time for Florida to end cash bail

In our current system, the rich who are arrested quickly post bail, but those who are poor can spend extended periods of time in jail without a conviction. Our justice system must understand that while the punishment should fit the crime, cash bail disproportionately impacts poorer people, making it inherently unfair. In other words: It's time for Florida to end cash bail.

Recently, Atlanta approved a change to the cash bail system which would eliminate cash bail for low-level offenders. The Atlanta mayor justified it by saying it made no sense to hold these low-level offenders when it may cost more to keep them in jail than the bail would have brought in. Washington, D.C., has also taken on similar policies.

Some charges, like disorderly conduct, may disproportionately affect those who have bigger problems such as the homeless or mentally ill. Bail is often assigned without a thought about the person's ability to pay. A \$1,000 bail could be a drop in the bucket for some, and for others it can mean their family not being able to eat for the next couple of months. This is not equality. There's little regulation of what judges can charge for bail, and some may have a standard bail they issue without really considering the facts of the case. In a country where few people could come up with \$2,000 without borrowing, bail can greatly increase financial stress on families.

Being in jail for an extended period of time, even if just for a few months for a crime one did not commit, can ruin a person's life. Considering this, here are other countries that have come up with more equitable systems of punishment.

In Finland, traffic fines are calculated based on a formula that takes into account the amount of spending money the person has for the day then divides it by two, according to the Atlantic. This is considered



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a reasonable amount for a fine based on their income, and then the system governs how many days a person will be deprived of their spending money. For a speeding ticket, this would be based on how many miles over the speed limit the person was driving. Countries like Sweden, Denmark and Australia have similar systems.

Those who are rich end up getting out of jail quickly by paying bail. Anyone who does not have savings could be stuck sitting in jail, and those are often the people who cannot afford to lose their jobs. A more equitable system would release nonviolent offenders without bail, and remand the violent offenders to jail. According to The Nation, arrestees who have not yet been convicted of anything make up 79% of the jail population nationally and are one of the reasons the U.S. has such a high incarceration rate. If "innocent until proven guilty" is supposed to be the standard, spending an extended time in jail undoubtedly taints a person and can get them fired from a job or mean they lose their living arrangements.

It's unfair to ask those who are charged with nonviolent crimes — who should be presumed innocent — to put their life on hold. A system with cash bail puts too much power in the hands of judges, who often do not take into account the person's financial situation, and end up punishing the offender before they've been convicted of any crime, even if they may have no history of prior offenses.

Like many other issues, this disproportionately affects minorities. Florida should take initiative in making our justice system less about punishing people who have yet to be convicted and more about crime that has a negative impact on society.

Nicole Dan is a UF political science and journalism senior. Her columns focus on race and culture.

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University policy prohibits staff, students from feeding stray cats

FEATURE, from pg. 1

night in quiet area on campus, like Lakeside Residential Complex, Gerson Hall and the law school, according to readers who contacted the Alligator.

Sam Lack, a UF political science senior, has been trying unsuccessfully to befriend a tuxedo cat by Gerson Hall for two years. Lack, 21, likes seeing his "little buddy" after class, even though the skittish cat runs away before Lack can pet him.

"I know stray cats get a bad rep, and probably it's a problem if they get into stuff," he said. "But I don't have a problem seeing a cat running around."

Along with Rowell feeding the cats in the morning, two other women take care of them on evenings and weekends, she said. The women have named the daily group.

Tiger runs the show. Speckle Beans gave birth to Little Specks, who once chased off a hawk attacking the colony. Callie is a Calico cat, and Chatty wouldn't shut up as a kitten. Prancy prances. Bob, a fat tabby, has an attitude, and he won't leave Prancy alone.

Clippy was named after his clipped ear, a sign he was neutered and vaccinated for rabies by Operation Catnip, a nonprofit. The organization has neutered 53,000 cats since 1998, said the executive director, Audrey Garrison.

Garrison said cats on campus have lived in the same areas for years, long before caregivers began feeding them.

"People think it's some crazy cat guy or gal feeding the cats and that's why the cat is there, but that's not the case," she said. "They didn't put food out saying, 'I wish a cat shows up.' They started feeding the cats that live there."

She said many community cats have feral personalities, meaning they rarely interact with humans and hide during the day.

About 40,000 feral cats live in Alachua County, Garrison said. Rather than relocate or shelter the cats, the group releases the cats back to the area in which they live, neutered and vaccinated.

Sterilization slowly decreases the cat population as less females give birth, but Garrison said work still needs to be done before Alachua County's cat population stabilizes.

Mason Mellot, a UF mechanical engineering sophomore and self-proclaimed cat lover, said he doesn't mind the cats living by his dorm at Lakeside Residential Complex.

The 20-year-old remembers seeing the Radio Road colony the day before Hurricane Irma on his way to buy milk. He only had 30 minutes to get to Publix before it closed. As he frantically rode his bike up the hill, he noticed the colony standing next to the Counseling & Wellness Center in the drizzling rain.

"At first I was like, I have to do something about these cats because they were about to experience a hurricane," he said. "Then I realized that I'm only one person on one bicycle with one backpack. I cannot carry 15 cats."

Mellot told himself he would call someone if he saw the cats on his way home, but when he passed later, they were gone.

He was relieved to find out the colony, which Rowell still cares for, is okay.

Despite growing up on a farm, Rowell never grew attached to many animals until she met Mama Kitty.

When Mama got sick, Rowell took her to the vet and stayed with the cat as she was put to sleep. She laid the old, then-fat cat to rest in the backyard of her farm next to an infamous non-neutered male, Big Daddy. The two strays are in the same yard as all of her childhood pets.

Rowell said she'll keep caring for the cats as long as she's around.

"It just breaks my heart to see an animal running wild with no family and no food," Rowell said. "It just breaks my heart."



Taylor Marks / Alligator Staff

A group of about eight to 10 cats regularly gather at a gate behind the University of Florida's Counseling and Wellness Center.



Courtesy to the Alligator

Photo of a cat submitted by a reader.



Courtesy to the Alligator

Photo of a cat submitted by a reader.



Courtesy to the Alligator

Photo of a cat submitted by a reader.

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'Midget wrestlers' take to the ring at the High Dive

Emma Green
Alligator Contributor

"Midget wrestlers" made an appearance in Gainesville on Wednesday night. The High Dive in downtown Gainesville hosted the Micro Championship Wrestling event, where about 150 people cheered on some of the smallest athletes with boisterous personalities. Cowboy Kidd Quick emerged as the micro champion, besting his fellow pint-sized performers, like the "Tiny Terror" and Huggy Cub. The night culminated with a "six-midget royal rumble," and the traveling show's tagline, "half the size, twice the violence," was apparent.



Referee Jimmy Mac counts while Cowboy Kidd Quick pins down Huggy Cub during a "midget wrestling" event on Wednesday. The High Dive hosted the Micro Championship Wrestling for about 150 screaming, inebriated onlookers.



Emma Green / Alligator

A group of friends wearing wigs watches Micro Championship Wrestling inside the High Dive on Wednesday.



Emma Green / Alligator

Blix uses Huggy Cub's belt as a whip during the Micro Championship Wrestling inside the High Dive on Wednesday. A crowd of about 150 cheered on the face-painted "Tiny Terror" after Huggy Cub dissed the food and women in Gainesville.



Emma Green / Alligator

The host of Micro Championship Wrestling introduces Blix, the "Tiny Terror," weighing in at 75 pounds of "pure terror." The 38-inch wrestler hyped up the crowd before hoisting himself into the ring inside the High Dive in downtown Gainesville on Wednesday.

International Center being considered for development

IT WILL COST BETWEEN \$16 MILLION AND \$30 MILLION.

By Christina Morales
Alligator Staff Writer

To reach across cultural barriers in businesses, a proposed seven-floor international center may be built across the street from UF.

The International Council of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce is considering building the center on the corner of Southwest 13th Street and West University Avenue, where Leonardo's Pizza and the Circle K gas station are located, said Steve Kalishman with the Sister City Program of Gainesville Inc. The council will research the city's needs for the center over the next eight months.

No concrete plans have been determined for that space yet, and it remains unclear when they will decide what to do with it, said UF spokesperson Margot Winick.

Kalishman said the cost for the center is expected to be between \$16 million and \$30 million, but it could bring billions of dollars in economic growth

to Gainesville.

"I don't know how you put a number on the potential," he said. "It could change everything about the city of Gainesville in a few years."

It will offer executive training in cultures so businesses can work internationally. The center's plan includes a museum, international restaurant, hotel, event space, parking garage, office space for businesses and more.

"We would have a place to showcase all of Gainesville's global connections," Kalishman said. "We have to have a facility to show foreign visitors that Gainesville is serious about global connections."

The thousands of international students at UF and Santa Fe College present an opportunity to connect the city to the rest of the world, said Susan Davenport, the president and CEO of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce.

"The greater Gainesville region is a global hub of talent, innovation and opportunity," Davenport said.

*@Christina_M18
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POTENTIAL PLAN FOR BUILDING

- 7. Rooftop terrace, restaurant, kitchen
- 6. Training, classrooms, hotel rooms
- 5. Meeting, conference, hotel rooms
- 4. Parking
- 3. Parking
- 2. Parking, office
- 1. Parking, lobby, retail, museum, hotel

College of Engineering hires two chairmen

By Hannah Maggioro
Alligator Contributing Writer

The second-largest UF college has hired two department chairs after months of searching.

The UF Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering promoted Carlos Rinaldi to chairman of the chemical engineering department, said the college's dean, Cammy Abernathy. He started the position Jan. 1, after previously serving as the interim chair of the department.

David Kaber, a North Carolina State University engineering professor, was also hired as chairman of UF's industrial and systems engineering department, Abernathy said. He will begin July 1.

Both chairs will receive annual salaries of \$285,000, UF spokesperson John Hines said.

"They made great candidates because they are both good teachers, student mentors and scholars," Abernathy said.

Previous chemical engineering department chairman, Rich Dickinson, left in August to start a three-year research assignment for the National

Science Foundation, Abernathy said. The previous industrial and systems engineering department chairman, Joseph Geunes, left in Fall 2016 to teach at the University of Arkansas.

Rinaldi said he plans to fill at least two positions at the assistant professor level.

He said he wants to decrease class sizes by offering all senior courses every semester and giving students who complete internships a chance to stay on track for graduation. He also wants to improve the department's web and social media presence, Rinaldi said.

"I think we are already doing great research that contributes to society," Rinaldi said, "but we could do a better job of publicizing it."

Kaber wrote in an email he plans to have the industrial and systems engineering department work with others in the college and other university departments, including computer science and psychology.

"I think everyone is excited about the expansion of the department into new research areas with additional faculty and graduate students," Kaber said.

Worship guide

Methodist

Trinity United Methodist Church
Wed: Contemporary service @6:35p in Trinity Chapel, followed by Coffee Talk for young adults @ Hunters Crossing Starbucks 8-9p Sunday services: 8:15, 9:40, 11a 352-376-6615 | TrinityUM.org

Catholic

St. Augustine Church & Catholic Student Center
Mass: Sat. 5:30 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m., 11:30, 1:30 (español), 5:30, 7:30 M-F 12 & 5:30 p.m. Get Involved! www.catholicgators.org

Metaphysical

The Seraphim Center
A Spiritual Center Serving the Light in all traditions Sunday Service 11am Spiritual Classes and Discussions through the week 1409 NW 6th St #110 3527928075

Quaker

Gainesville Quaker Meeting
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Pentecostal

Deeper Life Bible Church Gainesville
We invite you to our weekly meeting. Bible Study: Tuesday 6:30 pm Location: 2911 SW 13th St., 46 Gainesville, FL 32608 Call Emmanuel at 850-345-2844

Jewish

Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Student Center
Your home away from home Friday Night Live! Services & Shabbat Dinner. 7:30 p.m. Spring/Fall, 8:30 p.m. Summer 352-336-5877 2021 NW 5th Ave (5 blocks north of the stadium) www.JewishGator.com

UF HILLEL
Join the UF Hillel family for Shabbat Friday nights for student-lead services at 6:30pm followed by a free meal at 7:30pm All are welcome! Students eat for free.

Lutheran

First Lutheran Church
1501 NW 5th Ave. Sun: Bible Study @ 9 am, Church @ 10am Free lunch for students after church! Student Bible Study @ 7:30 pm on Tue. Join LCMS-U Events!

Non-Denominational

University City Church of Christ
Gators for Christ campus ministry college group meets at University City Church on Sundays at 9 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Practical application from God's word, plus service projects, large group events, free meals and much more... (directions and events calendar at www.gatorsforchrist.org) For rides, please call: 352-514-8261

Episcopal

Chapel of the Incarnation
The EpiscoGators Welcome You! Sunday Worship: 5:30 p.m. followed by a free home cooked meal for students. 1522 W. University Ave. Across from Library West

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A ₁	I ₁	O ₁	Y ₄	N ₁	L ₁	M ₃	
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02-09

Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

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SOFTBALL

Gators open season against Illinois State



Alligator File Photo

While the Gators have five upperclassmen on the Preseason All-SEC Team, a slew of freshmen are set to make immediate contributions. "I'm really excited to see how it's going to piece together," senior Aleshia Ocasio said.

By Mark Stine
Sports Writer

Last year, the Gators turned to their underclassmen to fill pivotal roles. This year could prove to be similar.

Florida's softball team is opening its season today at 4:45 p.m. against Illinois State, the first matchup of a five-game weekend at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

While UF has five upperclassmen on the preseason All-SEC Team, it is also eager to showcase its depth and younger players in these opening matchups.

"We have different players who can do a lot of different things," senior Aleshia Ocasio said. "I'm really excited to see how it's going to piece together."

The Gators are expected to be strong defensively this spring, despite starting a red-shirt sophomore at shortstop and a freshman at second base.

In her debut season, Sophia Reynoso brought desperately needed stability at shortstop. Reynoso started all 68 games for Florida and recorded a .957 fielding percentage.

Hannah Adams will attempt to bring a similar impact this season. The freshman's defensive prowess has been good enough so far to get the nod from coach Tim Walton at second, bumping senior Nicole DeWitt over to third base.

Junior Kelly Barnhill will see a bulk of the playing time on the mound this season along with Ocasio. Behind the pair of upperclassmen are two promising young pitchers in sophomore Katie Chronister and freshman Natalie Lugo.

Chronister made the decision this offseason to focus exclusively on pitching and pinch running instead of playing first base.

SEE **SOFTBALL**, PAGE 16

Sweet and Bauer / Opinion

Four Florida football signees likely to make an impact in 2018



Ethan Bauer
twitter: @ebaueri

Florida's football team returns 10 starters on offense and nine on defense in 2018. That doesn't leave much room for freshmen to see valuable playing time, but with a new coaching staff, new evaluations and new goals, those starters are vulnerable to replacement.

And even if not, some members of Florida's 2018 class are sure to see the field this season. After the class was largely assembled on National Signing Day, here are four of the most likely standout candidates.

4. Evan McPherson, Kicker

McPherson, as the saying goes, has big shoes to fill at Florida. Big, powerful, popular shoes.

With fan favorite Eddy Pineiro's departure for the NFL Draft, it's unclear if McPherson will face competition for the starting job.

Jorge Powell, a rising redshirt senior, is still listed on the roster, but so is Pineiro, and it's unclear if Powell will return to the team for his fifth season.

If he doesn't, McPherson should claim the starting spot easily and make an immediate impact. And if he does, McPherson, the nation's top-ranked kicker recruit, should be able to challenge.

Florida's last high school kicking prodigy, class of 2012's Austin Hardin, didn't pan out well for the Gators and led to widespread fan frustration. McPherson will look to reverse that trend and keep fans chanting, this time for Evan instead of Eddy.

3. Justin Watkins, Wide receiver

Dan Mullen called Watkins electric and said he's capable of not only playing wideout and slot receiver, but also running back and even corner.

That's the kind of athlete Mullen wants. Someone who can step in and make plays in the mold of Kadarius Toney a season ago. Watkins, rated the nation's 16th-best receiver and 89th overall, according to 247Sports, should at least get a chance to show his athleticism early.

Florida's receiving corps was largely a disappointment last year. The team's best wideout — rising junior Tyrie Cleveland — managed a team-best 410 receiving yards, while then-senior Brandon Powell led the group in touchdown grabs with three.

Cleveland should have a lock on his starting spot, but with Powell and former leading receiver Antonio Callaway gone, there's room for new faces to make an impact when returning faces have rarely been able to do so.

SEE **COLUMN** PAGE 16

MEN'S BASKETBALL

UF hits road for rematch with South Carolina

By Andrew Huang
Sports Writer

Florida point guard Chris Chiozza has been posting career numbers all season. He's scoring, rebounding and assisting at his highest rate since he stepped foot in Gainesville four years ago. The Gators men's basketball team has needed all of it in a topsy-turvy 2018 campaign.

Chiozza struggled as of late though, managing four points in an 18-point loss to Alabama on Saturday and three in Wednesday's 73-64 win over LSU.

UF coach Mike White has faith in Chiozza, saying he thinks the senior is due for a breakout, hopefully in Saturday's noon game at South Carolina (13-11, 4-7 SEC).

"(Chiozza has) been so good all year and law of averages kicks in," White said. "Surely, he'll be good in Columbia and we'll be OK."

After handing Florida a 77-72 loss when the teams first met on Jan. 24 in Gainesville, the Gamecocks have dropped games against then-No. 14 Texas Tech, Mississippi State, Texas A&M and Arkansas.

One thing all four of South Carolina's recent defeats have in common is strong guard play from its opponents, something White may find encouraging in light of Chiozza's recent struggles.

Texas Tech's Keenan Evans accounted for roughly half of the Red Raiders' total offensive output, finishing with 31 points and three assists as the Gamecocks fell 70-63.

Mississippi State guards Quindary and Nick Weatherspoon combined for 35 points and six assists in an 81-76 win over South Carolina.

SEE **BASKETBALL**, PAGE 16



Alfredo Perez and the Gators men's tennis team begins a two-game road stretch tonight when it faces No. 13 Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Pro Sports Roundup: Wade back in Miami, Thomas traded

Cavaliers shooting guard **Dwyane Wade** was traded to the Miami Heat on Thursday. Cleveland received a 2024 second-round pick for Wade. The Cavs also traded **Isaiah Thomas**, **Channing Frye** and a 2018 first-round pick to the Los Angeles Lakers for **Jordan Clarkson** and **Larry Nance Jr.**

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MISSISSIPPI STATE 98, FLORIDA 50

Gators crumble in turnover-ridden loss to Mississippi State

By Justin Ahlum

Sports Writer



Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Funda Nakkasoglu turned the ball over six times in Thursday night's loss. "If our turnovers come off aggressive play, we can kind of live with that," she said. "But they were just all up in us tonight."

With under a minute to go in the third quarter and the game well out of reach, Mississippi State's Zion Campbell drove through the lane. Her layup went off the glass and through the bottom of the net, giving the Bulldogs a 36-point lead to double up Florida's point total.

Campbell's bucket was the last field goal of the third quarter and ended a frame that saw Mississippi State outscore UF 30-7, as the No. 2 Bulldogs defeated the Gators women's basketball team (10-14, 2-9 SEC) 98-50 at the O'Connell Center on Thursday night.

"They're phenomenal defensively," coach Cameron Newbauer. "Their pressure just got to us. What it does is it speeds you up mentally, physically."

Florida struggled with anything and everything that came its way throughout most of the game. The suffocating press defense from the Bulldogs (25-0, 11-0 SEC) forced the Gators to commit 23 turnovers during the game. MSU scored 37 points off Florida's mistakes.

Despite a strong second quarter from the Gators in which they scored 16 points, Mississippi State found a way to bully UF on both ends of the floor.

"We need to be aggressive," guard Funda Nakkasoglu said. "If our turnovers come off aggressive play, we can kind of live with that. But they were just all up in us tonight."

After going into halftime with a 13-point advantage, the Bulldogs used a 30-point third quarter to pull away from the Gators. Only one player, freshman Chloe Bibby, was held scoreless for the No. 2 team in the nation.

"I think we still had a lot of defensive miscues," forward Haley Lorenzen said. "When we

started deviating from (our game plan), that's when they started getting their open shots. They had their drives and different things like that from the beginning."

Leading the way for Mississippi State was redshirt senior Roshunda Johnson. She led all scorers with 22 points on 9-of-13 shooting. Johnson shot 4-of-7 from downtown and grabbed six rebounds during the contest.

The Bulldogs' inside game was led by junior Teaira McCowan. The 6-foot-7 forward had 10 points on 4-of-7 shooting, though her presence was felt more on the glass during Thursday's contest. McCowan had 11 rebounds, including five offensive boards in the first half.

Guard Victoria Vivians had 17 points and shot 6 of 12 from the field. She was also among the five players that scored in double figures for Mississippi State.

Not much went Florida's way Thursday night. Despite a solid 17 points from Nakkasoglu, the Gators were stuck trying to avoid Mississippi State's press defense.

Lorenzen and sophomore Delicia Washington were the only other Gators to score in double figures. The pair put up 12 apiece and added a combined 12 rebounds.

With the loss, Florida falls to 1-43 all-time against top-three opponents. It is also the Gators' sixth loss this year to a top-25 team.

They'll attempt to defeat their first ranked opponent this season on Sunday when they travel to Columbia, South Carolina, to take on the No. 7 Gamecocks.

For Newbauer, he's already looking forward to it.

"We're gonna turn the page and move on," he said. "On to the next."

@justinn_case1
jahlum@alligator.org

GYMNASTICS

UF, 'Bama square off tonight at O'Connell Center

By Alana Gomez

Sports Writer

Jenny Rowland was all smiles in the Florida gymnastics team's practice facility Tuesday morning. Her excitement about returning home for the Gators' sixth match of the season was evident as she laughed and joked with reporters. Her demeanor, however, took on a more serious tone when she talked about the chemistry and dedication of her team.

"Everybody's ready," Rowland said. "Everybody's willing to do whatever it takes for the team."

No. 5 Florida will take on No. 9 Alabama tonight at home with the Gators competing in the nation's top gymnastics dual meet of the weekend.

UF is on a three-match win streak and its second SEC victory of the season. In the Gators' last meet on Feb. 2, they defeated then-No. 17 Auburn 197.400-197.000 at Auburn Arena.

"There's just one thing that we need to improve on that I saw last competition and it's our stuck landings," Rowland said. "We gave away over a point in stuck landings. That's something I feel can easily be fixed."

Alabama and Florida will compete in a top-10 matchup for the 55th consecutive time. When the teams met in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, last year, the Gators returned home with a 197.825-197.425 loss to the Crimson Tide. A month later on March 18 at the SEC Championships, the Gators

traveled to neutral ground with a renewed passion and took Alabama down by a .425 margin.

"Bama's always been a great team, so we know it's hard to go to 'Bama with thousands of their fans," senior Alex McMurtry said. "I think it's just easier on home turf and we have that momentum."

Alabama returns to action off a home win over then-No. 8 Arkansas 197.000-196.35.

Both the Gators and the Crimson Tide bring a combined total of three gymnasts who posted a 10.0 in the 2017 season. This includes senior Kiana Winston for Alabama, and seniors Kennedy Baker and McMurtry for Florida. McMurtry recorded a 10.0 on beam against No. 1 Oklahoma on Jan. 26 to become the second Gator to post perfect scores in each event. She isn't letting her own achievements or the team's top-5 national ranking get to her head.

"We try not to pay attention too much to rankings," McMurtry said. "We know we're one of the top teams in the country, and that's just reinforcing it."

Her fellow senior Rachel Slocum has her mind set on less concrete matters and looks forward to competing in front of what could potentially be the Gators' third O'Connell Center sellout in program history.

"Can't wait to have a hopefully, crossed fingers, another sellout crowd," Slocum said. "(We) definitely feed off that energy."

@alanaa_gomez
agomez@alligator.org

LACROSSE

Big East-favorite Florida opens season at home vs. Colorado

By Tyler Nettuno

Sports Writer

The Florida lacrosse team has not reached the second round of the NCAA Tournament since 2015.

Despite heartbreaking losses in the first round of the tournament the past two years, the Gators aren't worried about suffering the same fate in 2018.

The defending Big East champions are the unanimous pick to win the conference title once again and are the preseason No. 5 team in the country.

And for good reason.

Ninth-year coach Amanda O'Leary's squad returns three of its five leading scorers from a year ago, the 2017 Big East Goalkeeper of the Year in Haley Hicklen and six preseason All-Big East team members.

Coming off a season in which Florida finished 17-3, including a 9-0 mark in conference play, it's easy to see why the team is confident.

While the Gators return bona fide offensive stars in attackers Lindsey Ronbeck and Shayna Pirreca, as well as Shayna's sister, midfielder Sydney Pirreca, they still have a lot of production to replace.

Florida's points leaders, Sammi Burgess and Mollie Stevens, have graduated. Due to this, several newcomers will need to step up quickly.

O'Leary said she expects to play six freshmen in Florida's season-opening game against No. 16 Colorado on Sunday at Donald R. Disney Stadium. Senior defender Aniya Flanagan believes the young players are ready for the challenge.

"At practice, we always go 100 percent," Fla-

nagan said. "We don't go light on them because they're freshmen."

Two of those freshmen, attackers Cassidy Bresnahan and Grace Haus, could start on the offensive end. Freshman midfielder Shannon Kavanagh is expected to take the first draw of the game and see extensive playing time Sunday.

The Gators know Colorado won't be an easy game. O'Leary summed up Florida's opponent in one word: explosive.

Explosive might be an understatement.

The Buffaloes, tabbed to finish second in the Pac-12, return their leading scorer from last year in Darby Kiernan. In 2017, Colorado had the 17th-best scoring offense in the country, as well as the third-best scoring defense. Despite having only four seasons under its belt as a Division I program, CU has quickly established itself as one of the best teams in the country.

The Buffaloes' season begins tonight, as they take on Michigan in Jacksonville.

Considering the fact that the Gators' schedule includes six games against teams ranked in the preseason top-25 — highlighted by a bout with No. 1 Maryland on Feb. 17 — Florida could easily look ahead to tougher opponents and the post-season. But Shayna Pirreca does not think that will happen.

She said in the past, the team's goal has been to win a national title. While this ambition remains, after two consecutive disappointing finishes in the NCAA Tournament, she said the team has simplified its approach.

"We have to go 1-0, 17 times," she said.

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Koulechov leads UF in rebounds

BASKETBALL, from pg. 14

The Aggies took down the Gamecocks 83-60 with a more balanced approach, led by junior guard Admon Gilder's 15 points and three steals.

Then on Tuesday, Razorbacks guards Daryl Macon (25 points) and Jaylen Barford (24 points) helped pace Arkansas to an 81-65 victory.

This could also bode well for Florida guards Jalen Hudson, Egor Koulechov and KeVaughn Allen.

Hudson and Koulechov are first and second on the team in scoring, respectively, while Koulechov's 6.9 rebounds per game leads the Gators and is tied for ninth in the SEC.

Allen's play has been up-and-down during his junior season, but he remains a threat to lead all players in scoring on

any given night. Against a Gamecocks defense that gives up just 68 points per game, a big performance from Allen could be a key to success.

Another area of focus for Florida will be South Carolina forward Chris Silva, who had a double-double in the first meeting with 18 points and 12 rebounds.

Koulechov, who spends large portions of games at the power forward spot due to frontcourt injuries, said he looks forward to matching up with Silva.

"It's always fun," Koulechov said. "We'll have a good game plan. I'll do whatever I gotta do. Coaches are always gonna put us in great positions and it's up to us to execute."

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Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

Florida guard Egor Koulechov looks forward to matching up against South Carolina forward Chris Silva, who recorded a double-double against UF on Jan. 24. "We'll have a good game plan," Koulechov said. "I'll do whatever I gotta do."

Amanda Lorenz has a .395 career batting average

SOFTBALL, from pg 14

"She has the ability to get a lot of ground balls," Walton said. "She changes speeds. She throws down. She's left-handed. I think last year was not an indication of where she could be."

Lugo joins Chronister in the bullpen. The summer before coming to UF, Lugo dominated at the World Baseball Softball Confederation Junior Women's World Championship. She registered a 0.42 ERA with three wins, beating Japan in the championship game.

With plenty of depth at the plate, Florida will retain its status from last season as one of the better offenses in the SEC.

Behind players like junior Amanda Lo-

renz, who ranks first in school history in career batting average (.395), Florida has added freshman sluggers Haven Sampson and Josie Page.

Sampson hit .371 for her high school career with a .436 on-base percentage, while Page broke school records in career home runs and single-season home runs at Washington County High School in Chatom, Alabama. She also led Washington County to the program's first two regional playoff berths.

"We're just excited to get the new people out there in the Orange and Blue," Walton said. "(They) get to share in the passion with all of the returning players we have."

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COLUMN, from pg. 14

2. Jacob Copeland, Wide receiver

The same ideas that apply to Watkins apply to Copeland, only Copeland has more of an SEC-ready body.

At 6 feet, 192-pounds, his frame is larger than the 5-foot-11, 172-pound Watkins. Copeland also holds the higher rating of the duo at 69th overall, although when ratings are that close, it's hard to tell if one is much better than the other.

Nevertheless Copeland, like Watkins, should be offered the opportunity to contribute early. Especially if Ole Miss transfer Van Jefferson and Ohio State transfer Trevon Grimes aren't granted immediate eligibility.

1. Emory Jones, Quarterback

Could Emory Jones be the best quarterback to play at Florida since Tim Tebow?

It shouldn't be too hard considering the mediocrity that has accumulated at the position for

the Gators in recent years. However, that hasn't stopped other top quarterback prospects like Jeff Driskel, John Brantley and Feleipe Franks from tanking in Gainesville.

Maybe Jones will buck that trend, maybe he won't, but he'll certainly get the opportunity to do so early. Facing competition from Jake Allen, Kyle Trask and incumbent starter Franks, Jones should be near or at the top of the depth chart from day one.

It's hard to predict whether he'll win out. Who knows? Quarterback guru Dan Mullen could resurrect Franks and turn him into a respectable starter.

But after what Franks put on film last season, it wouldn't be surprising to see Jones get the nod as a true freshman. Especially with the recent success of true-freshman quarterbacks in the SEC, like Georgia's Jake Fromm and Alabama's Tua Tagovailoa.

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SATURDAY
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LIVE DJ

9 pm - Close

SATURDAY

NIGHT SPECIALS
7 pm - 12 am

\$3 Tequila Shots
\$4 Jager & Fireball Shots
\$4 Swamphead Drafts

LIVE DJ

9 pm - Close

SUNDAY

FUN DAY

\$3 Premium Wells
\$3 Pork Rinds
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\$4 First Mag Pints

LIVE DJ

9 pm - Close

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