

alligator



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STONEMAN DOUGLAS ALUMNI HOLD VIGIL

About 10 speakers participated; about 200 others attended

By Meryl Kornfield
Alligator Staff Writer

Zach Xu stopped to hug every alumnus from his high school clad in maroon, silver and burgundy on Turlington Plaza.

Standing there with him for a vigil he organized, the 20-year-old said he felt a sense of comradery.

The UF finance sophomore brought together the candlelight vigil at UF so his peers could express their grief after a shooter killed 17 people in the hallways and classrooms of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

After spending time with a friend who lost his sister in the shooting, Xu made a Facebook event, calling on alumni to come together for a candlelight vigil on Turlington Plaza on Tuesday night. Xu said he heard about the shooting from an online article that said there was a shooting at a South Florida school.

"Nothing can prepare you to see your hometown on that camera," he told more than 200 people at the vigil.

Xu organized to have about 10 other speakers, including alumni who lost friends. Xu said the most important part of the vigil was hearing from the Parkland community at UF.

Xu will also speak at UF's official vigil event Wednesday.

He said he is inspired by the efforts of current Stoneman Douglas students to address legislators and change the country's gun laws.

"It absolutely blows my mind that these senators think assault rifles should be legal," he said. "I'm waiting for someone with a brain to take over."



Will Clewis / Alligator Staff

Zach Xu, a 20-year-old UF finance sophomore and 2016 alumnus of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, spoke about his experiences while at the school and paid his respects to those involved in the shootings on Tuesday night.

By Elliott Nasby
Alligator Staff Writer

For 10 minutes, Andrew Steele felt alone when he found out his former school was under attack.

The 19-year-old UF business sophomore was at his girlfriend's home when a friend texted him from the school mentioning a school shooting. He checked online and saw nothing.

"The first time a story showed up, it was 2:50 p.m., and it was rudimentary," he said.

News was slow to come in. It wasn't until later that night he found out he knew one of the 17 killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. It was a former swimming and water polo teammate, Nicholas Dworet.

"I cried, and I cried," he said.

Steele spoke at the Tuesday vigil on Turlington Plaza about his connections to the victims of the shooting and his alma mater.

"It's been weird seeing people have to bury their siblings and have to run from a place they thought was safe," he said.

Wearing his maroon Stoneman Douglas water polo shirt, he remembered the life of his lost teammate, who he said was one of the best and most determined athletes he'd ever seen.

He told the crowd he visited Dworet's family Saturday and read from a note he found by Dworet's bed.

"I will give all that I have in my body and my mind to achieve this goal I have set," Steele quoted Dworet, who planned to go to the Tokyo Olympics. "I will let nothing stand in my way."



Will Clewis / Alligator Staff

Andrew Steele, a 19-year-old UF business sophomore and 2016 alumnus of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, speaks at a memorial event organized by fellow alumnus Zach Xu.

SG group didn't violate rules with extra members, officials say

By Christina Morales
Alligator Staff Writer

Although the Student Government codes specify the Elections Commission should be made up of six members, seven people acting as members discussed and voted on three election code violations at a meeting Monday night.

Early Tuesday, Elections Commission Chair Troy Mainzer confirmed there were seven voting members. Per election codes, the Election Commission is a non-partisan group of six law students who hear election violation complaints submitted by SG participants.

During the Monday meeting, commissioners decided Challenge

Party violated election codes and voted to recommend the disqualification of an Inspire Party candidate to the UF Supreme Court.

Supervisor of Elections Erica Baker confirmed seven people deliberated and voted on the first two hearings. Baker said she didn't count how many people were serving as commissioners.

Baker refused to say whether a code violation occurred. She said as a non-partisan official, commenting would be taking a party's side. She said it's up to the UF Supreme Court to decide whether a code was violated and if the commission's decisions were illegal.

Former commissioners Stefano Battistoni and Michael Livers were

present in the meeting while the first two cases of potential election code violations were argued. According to the SG website, their terms expired in Fall 2017.

Mainzer said when commissioners realized Battistoni and Livers' terms had expired, they were asked to leave. Both left before the third case was argued.

Commissioners Kingman Keating, David Walsh, Michael Bauman, John Reddin and Mainzer were present for the all of the cases.

Judiciary Chairwoman Emily Dempsey confirmed Battistoni was nominated by former Student Body President Susan Webster in November 2016 and Livers was nominated by Smith Meyers when he was Sen-

ate president in November 2016. Keating and Mainzer were nominated by UF Supreme Court Chief Justice Meagan McCarthy in December 2017. Reddin and Jacob Peek were both nominated by Meyers. Reddin was nominated in August 2017 and Peek was nominated in December 2017. Walsh was nominated by Jackie Phillips when she was Senate president in August 2017. Bauman was nominated by Senate President Ian Green in December 2017.

Mainzer said the codes weren't violated because Battistoni's and Livers' votes did not count. He said even without them, the first two cases are still 4-0.

"At most, it was just two other people sitting there," Mainzer said.

He said even if they had to re-hear the cases, the outcome would remain the same because people present with current terms voted affirmatively.

Here's a breakdown of each violation the commission heard at this meeting and how it voted:

IMPACT VS. INSPIRE

UF law student Blake Murphy, who served as the legal counsel for Impact, filed a complaint on behalf of the party against Patrick Brathwaite, the Inspire law candidate.

Murphy argued Brathwaite created a secret Facebook group that

SEE COMMISSION, PAGE 5

UF TOPS FAU TO REMAIN UNDEFEATED

Florida's baseball team beat the Owls 6-1 on Tuesday behind the performance of freshman pitcher Jack Leftwich. **pg. 13**



Voting for SG elections ends today

Find out where to vote. Polls close at 8:30 p.m., **pg. 4**

Heartwood Music Festival returns

Find out who to see and when in The Avenue. **pg. 8**

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HIGH 86° LOW 61°

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announces the opening of the following positions for the summer semester:

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a paid position as head of the Editorial Division
and as an unpaid member of the Board of Directors

Managing Editor/Print and

Managing Editor/Online

paid positions and unpaid members of the Board of Directors.

The applications for these positions are available at the Alligator office, located at 2700 SW 13th Street, **each weekday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. from now until Friday, March 2.** Look for the Alligator sign located in the lobby. Further written information is available at the time an application is picked up. No phone calls, please. Allow up to 15 minutes at that time to read information regarding the application process. The application must be returned to The Alligator by **Tuesday, March 13 at 4 p.m. THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE DEADLINE.** Interviews and selections by the Board of Directors will be held at the new Alligator offices in a meeting open to the public on **Friday April 6 at 9 a.m.** Applicants must be present at that meeting to be considered. Applicants must be degree-seeking college or university students. Preference will be given to those who have experience with The Independent Florida Alligator.

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Wednesday, February 21, 2018

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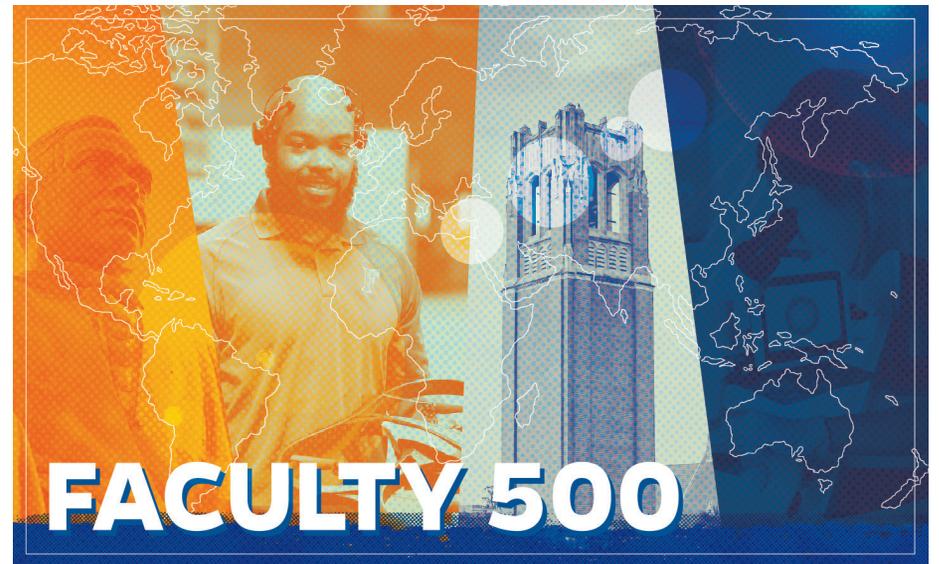
Last summer, UF announced it will hire 500 new faculty beginning this year to further enhance teaching and research and to continue to grow as one of the best research universities in the nation.

To support these efforts, UF Human Resources recently partnered with 160over90 and University Communications to develop a new recruitment brochure and has launched an accompanying promotional website: faculty500.hr.ufl.edu.

In addition, the UF Faculty Search Committee toolkit has been redesigned to better support departments undertaking faculty searches. The tool-

kit serves as a general guide and includes the steps of the faculty search process, as well as resources related to attracting the best candidates, understanding the market, engaging with and evaluating candidates, hiring the right candidate and supporting new hires as they transition into their roles.

Many searches are already underway, and the university expects to hire 200 new faculty members by this fall. Funding for the new hires will come from state allocations, alumni and friends, as well as university resources. To learn more, please visit news.hr.ufl.edu.



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Field & Fork Cooking Series

This spring, the UF Field & Fork Campus Food Program, in partnership with UFHR WorkLife, will present a series of monthly courses designed to demonstrate that cooking vegetables, especially when in season, can be easy, fun and delicious. In the Kitchen: Field and Fork Cooking Series is free and open to faculty, staff and students.

Anna Prizzia, UF campus food systems coordinator, will share tips and tricks for working with fresh veggies and provide participants with new recipes to take home and try.

“We’re all about experiential learning,” said Prizzia. “We grow fresh foods for our volunteers and our pantry, and we want to provide people with an opportunity to learn how they might prepare that food.”

All cooking will take place in the UF Dietetics Lab, Building 162 (adjacent to the Reitz Union) on the dates below from noon to 1 p.m. Attendees will have a chance to sample food, but should bring their own lunches.

Rethinking Root Vegetables, March 16
Spring Snacks and Sauces, April 13
Totally Tomatoes, May 18

The Field & Fork program is a campus-wide resource through which individuals can take courses, engage with demonstrations and participate in activities that focus on sustainable agriculture and food systems. From a home or community garden to an urban farm or large-scale production, the program explores food production at multiple scales and is home to the Alan and Cathy Hitchcock Food Pantry. Field & Fork investigates every aspect of food from food security and processing to consumption and nutrition.

Email aprizzia@ufl.edu to register for class no later than the Wednesday before the class you are interested in attending.

New Features Coming to One.UF

The ONE.UF information portal continues to evolve as UF’s self-service mechanism, with a number of new features rolling out in March through COMPASS (Campus-wide Modernization Program to Advance Student Services). Students, faculty and staff can look forward to new functionality related to action items (service indicators/holds), financial aid, registration prep, registration, schedule of courses, and a faculty/staff workspace. Read more in an upcoming article to be published in the February issue of COMPASS Update, available online as of Feb. 28 at compass.ufl.edu.

To keep up on all things UF, get social:



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UF COMMUNICATIONS

First day of SG elections has high turnout compared to 2017

THE LAST DAY TO VOTE IS TODAY.

By Christina Morales
Alligator Staff Writer

Anthony Neher collected four "I Voted!" stickers in Marston Science Library to take back to his fraternity, Delta Tau Delta, to win a prize. He said it's normal for Greek life students to vote for Impact Party.

The UF electrical engineering sophomore said his fraternity told him to vote for Impact, but he chose

Inspire Party.

"It's really not beneficial to just vote with an organization because the majority of the people believe in something," the 20-year-old said. "I think you should just vote for whatever you believe in."

Supervisor of Elections Erica Baker said 6,484 students cast their votes Tuesday. This is a 2,002 vote increase compared to Spring 2017, when 4,482 votes were cast on the first day of voting. In Spring 2016, 6,644 votes were cast, according to Alligator archives.

Today is the last day for students

to vote for the Student Body president, vice president and treasurer as well as 50 senators from each college.

Reid Hines, 20, said he feels he makes a small difference every time he votes in a SG election, which he's done every Fall and Spring.

"A lot of those little impacts add up," the UF biology sophomore said. "It's my duty as a UF student to try and have some input. It feels powerful because I'm having influence."

@Christina_M18
cmorales@alligator.org

Student Government Voting Locations

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Norman Rooms 171 and 173 | Floor |
| • Reitz Union Computer Lab | • Murphree Area Commons |
| • Law School (Bruton-Geer) | • Southwest Recreation Center |
| • Broward Basement (Recreation Room) | • Health Science Center C2041C |
| • Jennings First Floor Library | • Springs Area Office Room C202 |
| • Heavener 202 | |
| • Marston Science Library 1st | |

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Runoff election possible if no SG party wins majority vote

IT'S BEEN 12 YEARS SINCE THE LAST RUNOFF ELECTION.

By David Hoffman
Alligator Staff Writer

A UF Student Government party will have to win more than 50 percent of the student vote to avoid a second election next week.

If none of the three parties — Challenge Party, Impact Party or Inspire Party — wins a majority of the vote Tuesday and Wednesday for its executive tickets, no winner will be selected. Instead, there would be a runoff election for Student Body president, vice president and treasurer between the two parties with the most votes Feb. 27 and 28.

Because the treasurer is voted on separately from president and vice president, it is possible

to have a treasurer runoff election, but not a president and vice president runoff — and vice versa.

If there is a runoff, it would be the first in 13 years for the presidential and vice presidential ticket and the first in 12 years for the treasurer ticket.

Since 2000, only five Spring elections have had more than two parties with a full executive ticket, including president, vice president and treasurer candidates. Of these multiparty elections, three of the five resulted in runoff elections for the president, vice president and treasurer. One resulted in a runoff for treasurer only, according to SG election results records.

The Student Body Constitution mandates a runoff election be held the Tuesday and Wednesday immediately following the Spring general election in the event no party wins a

majority of the vote, according to Article VI Section 4. Ballots in the runoff would not count write-ins, according to the constitution. The supervisor of elections would send absentee ballots to everyone who requested one in the general election, according to elections codes.

This Spring is the first election since 2009 there has been more than two parties running executive candidates.

Jamal Sowell, UF's most recent black Student Body president in 2004, won in a runoff race between the independent party he started, Access Party (which has no affiliation with the Access Party formed in 2015), and the majority party Innovate Party.

In 2005, there was a full runoff election including all three executive positions. In 2006, there was a runoff for treasurer only.

Sowell said he thinks if the race turns into a runoff, an endorsement from the losing party to one of the parties advancing could play a big factor in the race.

On Feb. 25, 2004, when no executive ticket won a majority, the losing party, the Keg Party, endorsed Sowell and the Access Party the night results came out, Sowell said.

"I think that'll be the most intriguing thing," the 35-year-old said. "It'll show students where people's loyalties are and who has the best ideas."

Wayne Selogy, Challenge's campaign manager, said the party has not discussed who it would endorse in the event of a runoff.

"The possibility of not winning has not crossed our minds," he said.

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Impact Party filed two complaints

COMMISSION, from pg. 5

reached about 220 law students, which, according to Murphy, is about a quarter of the students in the law school.

The commission voted unanimously Brathwaite violated election codes because he didn't report the posts in the group to Baker. According to the SG election codes, candidates must report every single political advertisement to the Supervisor of Elections.

INSPIRE VS. CHALLENGE

The commission found Challenge violated the election codes when it used voter data from Inspire to contact students. Commissioners said they considered Challenge's actions unethical.

The commission punished Challenge by ordering the party to put out a Facebook post apologizing for using Inspire's data. The post must specify how many email addresses or names they obtained, and it should have been posted by midnight Tuesday, commissioners said.

Commissioners said Inspire's information was not stolen, but "given to" Challenge. Inspire and Challenge representatives and the commissioners acknowledged Branden Pearson, a senator who disaffiliated from Inspire two weeks ago, was somehow involved in the disclosure of the data. Pearson could not be reached for comment.

However, Mainzer said the party doesn't need to specify from whom it got the data so it doesn't damage the party's credibility ahead of the elections starting Tuesday.

"We thought with how close it is to elections right now, we felt that would be the most fair that we wouldn't do anything that would impact the election," Mainzer said.

Grabowski said they wanted to respect students' privacy and only communicate with students who express they would like that. She said this is why Inspire asked students for their contact information, rather than going into the UF directory and compiling emails.

"We do not collect their information unless they willingly volunteer it to us," Grabowski said.

Wayne Selogy, Challenge's Campaign Manager, said Challenge didn't know the data was from Inspire when received.

"When we found out via Inspire that it was their data, we ceased using it," Selogy said. "We've never used that data again, and we've had plenty of opportunity to."

IMPACT VS. CHALLENGE

In the final election complaint, Murphy argued Challenge did not register some of its political advertisements before posting.

The commission unanimously ruled there were various posts by Challenge on Facebook that were not registered. Murphy said it was about seven posts. Commissioners punished Challenge with a cease and desist order, telling the party to meet with Baker as soon as possible to discuss how to prevent future violations.

The party was allowed to resume posting further campaign material at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

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UF still considering what will replace Leonardo's Pizza by the Slice

By Amanda Rosa
Alligator Staff Writer

UF officials are still debating the future of the corner of 13th Street and West University Avenue.

UF Board of Trustees and President Kent Fuchs are considering options of what to build on the corner, which is located directly across from campus.

The 0.4-acre property was bought by the UF Foundation in August 2016, according to Alligator archives. Leonardo's Pizza by the Slice and Bistro 1245, both at 1245 W. University Ave., will close when a plan is finalized. The foundation already owns the next door Kangaroo Express gas station and convenience store.

UF spokesperson Steve Orlando said UF is considering a number of options, including a music building

or fitness center. The city considered a proposal for a seven-floor international center, but UF never did, Orlando said.

UF does not have a scheduled decision date for a plan or closing date for Leonardo's, Orlando said.

Leonardo's and the bistro, which are privately owned, remain open today.

Nick Johnson, a 23-year-old UF class of 2017 graduate, remembers going to Leonardo's once a week and eating with his former UF Fightin' Gator Marching bandmates after camp. It was the first restaurant he went to when he arrived at UF in Fall 2013.

"It's been a Gainesville staple for years, and it was always really convenient to go to," Johnson said. "I personally don't want to see it close."

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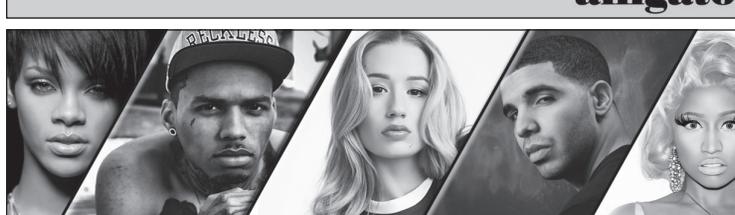
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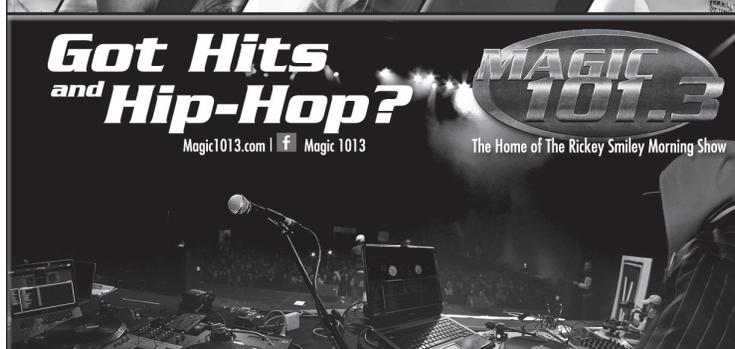
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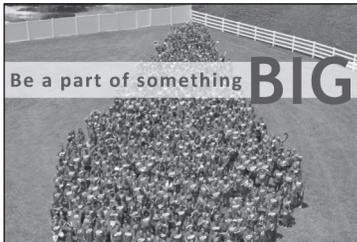


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Editorial

Vote to make a difference in this Spring SG election

Last Spring, the results of the Student Government Spring elections were decided before students made it to the polls. Only one party was running for the executive ticket, so no matter how many students voted, they only had one option.

It's usual to only see one party participate in the SG elections. It's also usual to see a two-party election cycle.

For the first time in almost 10 years, we find ourselves voting between more than just two parties. This means, for the first time in nearly a decade, UF students have the ability to shape the makeup of SG. You have the power to decide which party best represents your interests and vote for a Student Body president, a vice president, a treasurer and senators who will advocate for you. Above others in recent semesters, your vote really matters in this election.

On Monday, The Alligator's editorial board endorsed candidates for SG. While we believe our endorsements will serve the Student Body best, we recognize there's a greater importance of simply having students' voices heard.

It's worth a reminder that people have fought for the right to cast a ballot throughout history, and the progress for every individual to have that right has been slow. Even now, many students remain voiceless, unable to cast a ballot due to the physical distance that separates them from Gainesville. There are resources for these cases, but some lack knowledge of how to obtain a physical absentee ballot while others may not even know this is an option.

In the past, only a fraction of the Student Body has exercised that right. But if you want change to come, you need to make it happen. You have the option to choose who among the three parties will spend a \$20 million budget in a way that best supports you. You have the option to decide who shares your values. As for everyone else, you get to vote them out.

Perhaps there is a party that reflects what you wish to see in SG. With three choices, the options are there.

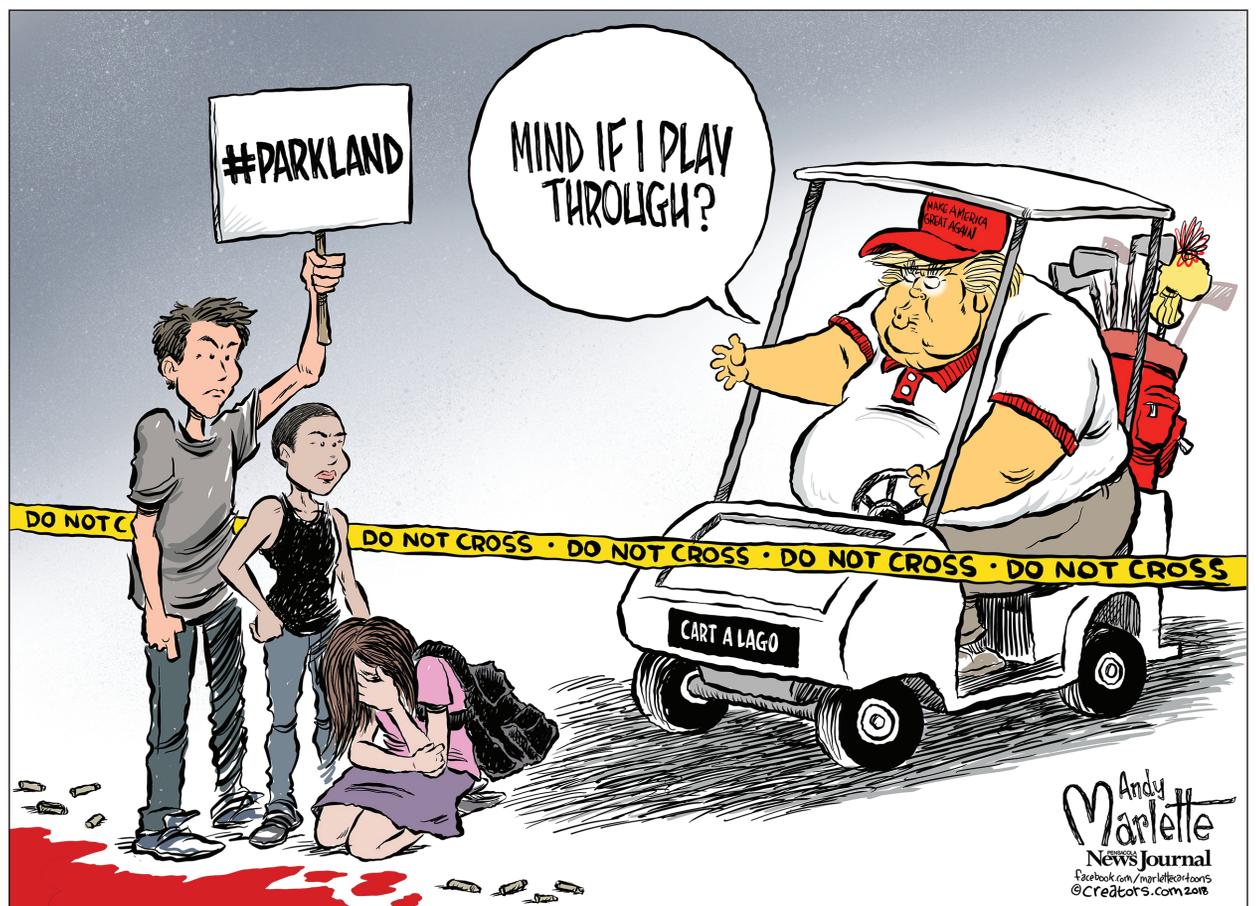
Another reason we at The Alligator encourage voters to go to the polls is, in the case of a run-off, it would mean at least another week of campaigning between the two parties who receive the highest percentage of votes. Should no party win at least 50 percent of the votes, it could mean another week of dodging campaigners in Turlington Plaza and at the Reitz Union.

On a more serious note, today, high school students are marching on the state capitol, demanding lawmakers be held accountable for their position on gun control in the wake of a shooting that left 17 people dead. Too young to vote, they're making their voices heard and driving nearly seven hours to do so.

All you have to do is walk into the library, the Broward Hall basement or one of the other nine locations and vote.

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

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Column

The flood of news makes it easier to forget tragedies

There was something different about the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooting — something in the coverage and public response that was more emotionally raw than any other shooting aftermath. Reporters were breaking down on the scene. Social media was a slew of angst directed at the eternally inept government. Stoneman Douglas students who survived the shooting have been speaking out against gun violence with urgency — as they should — because public officials have been lacking in that department.

Indeed, the passivity of everything seems to be driving people crazy. We are beginning to recognize the pattern: mass shooting, obsessive coverage, public sorrow, public anger, talks of change and then everyone forgets until the next national tragedy. Nothing changes. Perhaps what is most maddening about American shootings is the coverage, and I do not make this claim lightly.

I think coverage of national tragedies is a large part of the reason why these tragedies frequently occur. It just so happens that nothing changes, which gives shootings the freedom to happen again. Nothing changes after these events because of, or mostly because of, our media.

I want to argue this social paralysis is built into our media today.

The possibility of a national memory is excluded by our media; in other words, inactivity and forgetfulness are inevitable consequences of news today.

Fifty-eight people died in the Las Vegas shooting less than six months ago, but up until last week, you would've thought we had already forgotten about it. So much of the shooting has been covered since last October. Stephen Paddock could be labeled as old news, and, in today's times, anything considered old gets thrown away. There's always been a lot going on in the world, but there hasn't always been a CNN or New York Times to break the news to us live.

An effect of this constant flow of information is that nothing sticks in our minds. There is a difference between throwing one dart at a time and hurling a handful. Too much infor-



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mation is just as harmful as too little. There's so much coverage of news it's impossible to focus on or remember just one event.

This is a major problem. Memory is an essential ingredient of change. A person who reads 12 novels in three weeks dips their toes into the surface of each story, but the person who reads one novel in three weeks swims in it. The story has a deeper impact on the person. The same goes for media and social change.

We can't remember what happened six months ago because there is always more information each day, and because we can't remember, we don't care. Nothing changes because nothing has an impact anymore — it's all just news of the day. The Stoneman Douglas shooting, like all other shootings, deserves lamentation, but the problem is it won't get the nation's focus for more than 10 days. Our media literally cannot afford to dwell on individual events or people for too long, unless, like President Donald Trump, they perpetually manufacture content.

To us, there is no news of yesterday. You typically don't see anchors talk about news from a few weeks ago, or even the day before. They are always discussing the news of the day. The same goes for social media. This is why I don't understand how the cycle of passivity people are frustrated with can be solved in the very medium that causes the cycle. Any effort to fight for change from within the system risks becoming a part of the cycle: chewed on, spit out and forgotten like a piece of gum.

Trying to spark change through tweets or posts is like trying to lose weight by eating more. The intentions are good, but the methods will inevitably be fruitless. Sadly, and hypocritically, I'm not sure what the solution is, and I don't know how the cycle can be broken.

All I know is that two weeks from now, the Stoneman Douglas shooting will become mostly forgotten. That is unacceptable. Real change will start when we dwell on and remember things that deserve to be dwelled upon.

Scott Stinson is a UF English junior. His column focuses on popular culture.

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

Column

Don't let the fear of failure keep you from participating in discussions

One day, my professor brought his 8-year-old son to class. When the period ended and students filed out of the room, the boy asked his dad, "Why don't college kids like to talk?"

My professor laughed, but his curious son wanted an answer — and for a good reason. After all, children are notorious for participating and questioning without inhibition, so to this elementary school student, being in a classroom where the same three people answered every question was likely a form of culture shock.

Why do so many of us really shy away from speaking up in class, even if it's answering an opinion-based question or sharing reactions to a reading or film? Do we actually lose sleep about what the person next to us will think about our answer?

Losing sleep might be an exaggeration, but reflected appraisals — our perceptions of how other people see and evaluate us — do impact our behaviors and cause us to either speak up or stay silent.

Sociologists explain this in a concept known as the "looking glass self," which

states when we imagine how we're perceived by others, we start to believe those judgements even if they're false.

This causes us to change how we act based on how we think other people see us — so if we get the sense our classmates are annoyed by our frequent hand-raising efforts, we feel negatively reinforced, which makes us less encouraged to participate.

Psychologists also cite fear of failure and judgement as having negative mental, emotional and physical effects on college-aged individuals, especially in academic settings.

In a recent study published in the Journal of Student Leadership, researcher Jacob Christian of the Utah Valley University analyzed how today's college students have developed cognitive coping mechanisms to help them deal with fear of failure.

According to the article, most college students use a method called self-handicapping, which involves creating a mental barrier that essentially protects against the

negative emotional impacts of making a mistake.

Self-handicapping cushions an individual's self-esteem in anticipation of messing up or doing something he or she considers embarrassing, like answering a question incorrectly or not performing as strongly as he or she originally hoped.

Even though fears of failure and judgement certainly pave the path for self-doubt, in an era marked by phrases like YOLO and the sentiment we should be present and embrace the moment, I find it contradicting and frustrating there is still a sense of complacency when it comes to speaking up in the classroom.

It's especially telling when an 8-year-old makes an observation that rightfully suggests this generation of college students has a problem with classroom conversation.

Of course, it's likely the fear of speaking up in class is made worse by online classes and virtual discussion boards where we can complete an entire course without any

face-to-face conversations.

Even in a fast-paced, digital world, we can't hide behind the screen forever.

Instead of staying silent in the name of perfectionism, I think it's time we trade in our self-handicapping tendencies for feelings of self-acceptance. Once we embrace the fact we're not always right nor always wrong, we'll not only become better speakers, but also stronger and more empathetic listeners.

It's okay to be the person who asks the question everyone else was secretly thinking or to say something that wasn't exactly what the professor had in mind. As an avid hand-raiser myself, I can assure you class becomes more relevant, rewarding and, dare I say, fun when you share your stories and listen to those of others.

The truth is, in order to ensure the classroom is a place for all ideas and genuine conversation, we each have a responsibility to participate.

Darcy Schild is a UF journalism junior. Her column focuses on human behavior and sociology.



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Student Member at Large

This position may be filled by a graduate or undergraduate student.

The applications for these positions are available at the Alligator office, located at 2700 SW 13th Street, **each weekday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. from now until Friday, March 2.** Look for the Alligator sign located in the lobby. Further written information is available at the time an application is picked up. No phone calls, please. Allow up to 15 minutes at that time to read information regarding the application process. The application must be returned to The Alligator by **Tuesday, March 13 at 4 p.m. THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE DEADLINE.** Interviews and selections by the Board of Directors will be held at the new Alligator offices in a meeting open to the public on **Friday April 6 at 9 a.m.** Applicants must be present at that meeting to be considered. Applicants must be degree-seeking college or university students. Preference will be given to those who have experience with The Independent Florida Alligator.

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MUSIC

Meet Destination Okeechobee winners The Savants of Soul

By Emma Witmer
Avenue Writer

After High Dive's epic Battle of the Bands, which took place last week on Thursday evening, The Savants of Soul emerged as fan favorite and earned their spot on the Okeechobee Music and Arts Festival lineup. The festival, which conveniently falls over UF's spring break, will kick off in just one short week on Thursday, March 1.

The Battle of the Bands marked the second round of the Destination Okeechobee competition, in which six qualifying bands played their hearts out for what seemed to many like the largest crowd that High Dive has ever seen. The group of artists represented a vast group of music genres, from soul to electronic to indie to rock 'n' roll.

The huge crowd and the energy of competition put extra life into The Savants of Soul, whose performance exploded on the stage.

"That was one of the most intense audiences, and the whole band just brought it," said frontman Justin McKenzie. "After our first break in song, the audience roar was deafening. You know, we've played several shows with crowds that big, but I don't think I've ever heard a bigger roar than that."

The Savants of Soul are a Gainesville staple, bringing their modern Motown sound to the forefront of the local music scene and garnering quite a following in their nearly seven years of existence.

In 2011, John Gray Shermyen, a lifelong soul fanatic, convinced

his roommate Alex Klausner to start a soul band. The Savants, as they were known at the time, was born. While the band was still in its conceptual phase, Klausner reached out to McKenzie, offering him the role of lead singer.

"I was kind of waiting for them to ask me," McKenzie said. "It was a bunch of, you know, white dudes playing soul. When are they going to ask their only black friend? They did. I joined, and it's been a wild ride ever since."

Up until about a year before joining The Savants of Soul, McKenzie was playing guitar in a Gainesville ska band called Chupaskabra.

Joining The Savants of Soul was McKenzie's first dive into the genre. While he'd enjoyed the Motown classics before, McKenzie said the extensive musical

study the band did refined his love of the sound.

This study, McKenzie said, is what has allowed the group to capture the spirit of soul and Motown without simply repeating the past. The group draws inspiration from the music of the past but incorporates modern influences to create something new yet nostalgic.

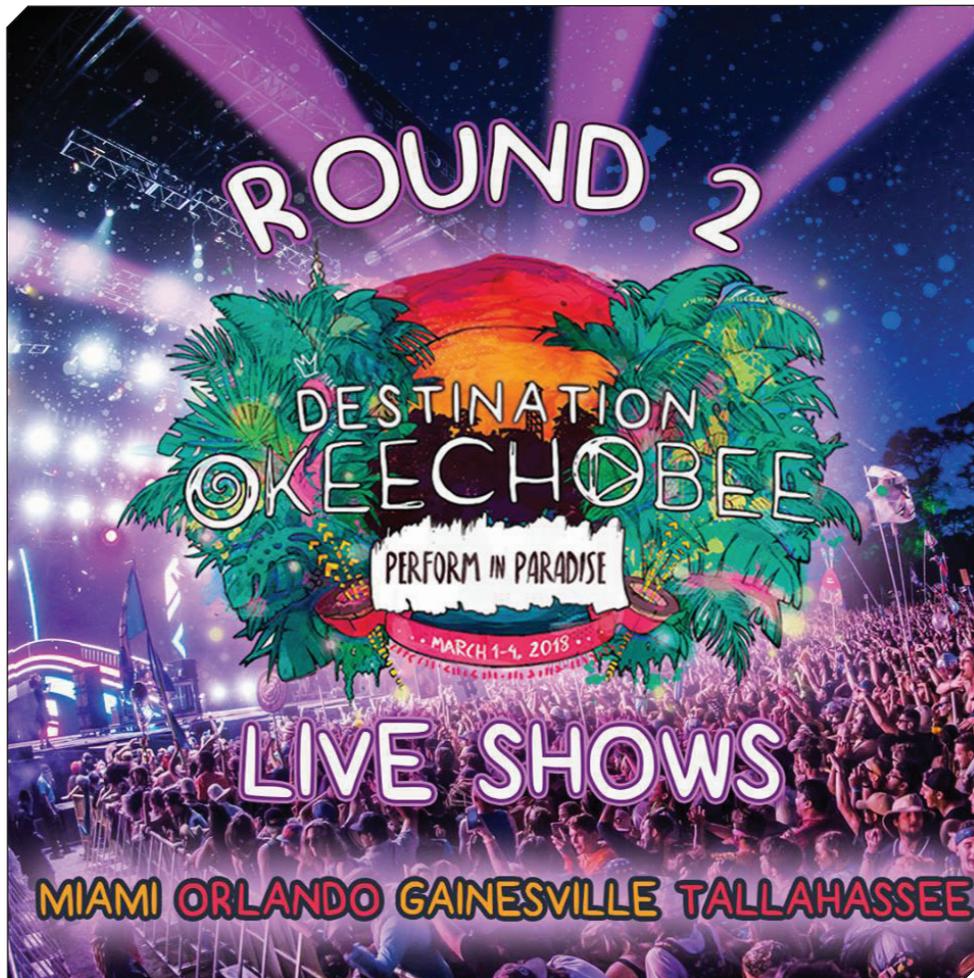
"It's not just an audio thing; it's a visual thing. It gets people really into the groove," McKenzie said. "We're not just like the bands that were around in the '60s and '70s, but I think we do it justice. If nothing else, we bring the same amount of energy."

Visual, indeed. In addition to their retro sound, The Savants of Soul are known for their iconic stage presence. The band is always found dressed to the nines:

suits, ties and often sunglasses. Most iconic of all is McKenzie's look.

At front and center stage, McKenzie, a big guy with a big afro, roars out his vocals in a baby blue, polyester bell-bottom suit his brother brought home from a garage sale when McKenzie was in his early teens. While the choice to make it part of his performance wardrobe was spontaneous, the suit has become one of the most recognizable images in Gainesville music.

Okeechobee Music & Arts Festival will take place from March 1 to 4 at Sunshine Grove in Okeechobee, Florida. Although The Savants of Soul's timeslot is yet to be announced, tickets are still available at okeechobeefest.com/tickets/ga/. The festival is expected to sell out.



Courtesy to The Alligator

The Savants of Soul won round two of Destination Okeechobee, in which bands competed battle of the bands style for a spot.



Photo by Natalie Rao

Justin McKenzie, the frontman and lead singer of The Savants of Soul, belts out the vocals at Thursday's show.



Keep up with the Avenue on Twitter. Tweet us @TheFloridaAve.

"Younger":
A Q&A with The Hails about their newest single (pg. 9)

Heartwood Music Festival:
Avenue's must-see artists (pg. 10)

MUSIC

Q&A: Local alt-rock group The Hails discuss their new single, songwriting

By Emma Witmer
Avenue Writer

Gainesville alternative rockers The Hails release their newest single, “Younger,” tomorrow.

I sat down with The Hails’ Robbie Kingsley, Dylan McCue, Zach Levy and Franco Solari for an early listen and to chat about what is in store. Here’s what’s coming your way.

The Hails are a five-piece band that released their freshman EP, “Impel,” during summer 2017. The six-track set undoubtedly shows this is a group worth keeping an eye on. The release of “Younger” shows The Hails’ ability to evolve quickly and the group’s potential for musical longevity.

“Younger” takes the rhythmic quality shown in their song “Parking Lot” and adds a clean, strong groove line, giving the track full body. Kingsley’s vocals, full of controlled emotion, shine their brightest on “Younger.”

“Younger” was produced by 23-year-old Northeastern University graduate Matthew Lewin. Read below for The Hails’ comments on their new track.

Q: I noticed that this song is a lot groovier than some of the songs on “Impel.” What’s the inspiration behind that sound shift?

McCue: I’m glad you noticed that. It’s partly due to the fact that we want to modernize our sound, really. Infectious grooves like that are the future; people want that kind of guttural, primal groove to hit them right away. I think this song does that pretty well.

Q: You guys have talked about your writing process being a bit unstructured, but tell me about “Younger,” is there a story there?

Kingsley: There’s not a story, but, like, an overall theme of nostalgia and just looking back on your life. Dylan had a good amount of the words coming into the idea.

McCue: Yeah, I don’t normally write lyrics, but for this song I was trying to improvise a vocal melody, just like the notes themselves, and I was just spontaneously getting these phrases. They just came to me. “Tell me how it was when you were younger,” “it’s in the light that she left him” and the pre-chorus, “you don’t know me like that.” Random phrases that came to me just all seemed to evoke this similar image or similar sort of feeling on nostalgia. I think it’s especially relevant to us in our lives now because we’re in this sort of



Photo by Vanessa Vlandis

(From left) Andre Escobar, Robbie Kingsley, Zachary Levy, Dylan McCue and Franco Solari make up The Hails, a local alternative rock group that’s been making waves since their debut EP, “Impel,” dropped in 2017.

mode now where we are transitioning to different chapters. Robbie and Zach just finished college. Franco and I are in our later half of college. So, I think it’s like a nostalgic look back in a time of transition.

Q: You mentioned that you’ve been performing this song at shows. What kind of reactions have you been getting live?

Kingsley: Good ones.

McCue: Very good ones.

Kingsley: That’s what inspired us to make this the first one we put out. I mean, I remember when we played it here for Zach’s birthday. Nick and Hanna, two of our friends

were like, “oh my gosh, that song is amazing.”

McCue: I think we should tell the story about how the song was born.

Kingsley: Yeah. So, the idea came at a house show here, like a spontaneous house show.... It was only me, Zach and Dylan.

McCue: We had played, like, six songs, and we had no idea what to play next, so we just decided to jam on a couple chords and just fool around. I started playing those two chords, Zach laid down a beat, and we just sort of improvised it for, like, four and a half minutes.

Kingsley: That was the bare bones of it.

Levy: The song was completely different.

McCue: Then, after the show, Robbie’s friend Logan, who is one of our biggest supporters, was like, “you guys have to write that song.”

Q: Is this a single teasing another release, or just a single?

Kingsley: I mean, we didn’t record just one song. There will be more music, but we don’t know. This is all we have planned for right now.

“Younger” drops Feb. 22. Stream the single on Spotify, YouTube and Apple Music.

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Wyatt's Coffee to host grand opening downtown Friday

By Gabriella Paul
Avenue Writer

The ghost of coffee shop past is returning to the heart of downtown Gainesville on Friday.

After closing its Midtown location, Wyatt's Coffee has relocated to 202 SE 2nd Ave. and is now welcoming all coffee and tea lovers for its grand opening 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday.

There are multiple opportunities for customers to earn free drinks in exchange for interacting with Wyatt's social media. More information can be found on Wyatt's Facebook page at facebook.com/wyattscoffee/.

General manager Danielle Ballou said Wyatt's relocated because the old building lacked space and visibility and was constantly disturbed by the Midtown construction.

"At one point, the entire sidewalk was ripped up, and there was nowhere for people to park," she said.

The new space has around 34 seats and is in a great location, she said.

Although this change is large, Ballou said Wyatt's mission remains the same.

"The whole vision of Wyatt's is to be this place that combines science with coffee," she said. "It's all about how can we make the best cup of coffee possible, starting from the roast of the beans all the way through to the final brewing methods."

Wyatt's offers handpicked roasts and six brewing methods including drip, immersion



Photo by Seth Boyce

Wyatt's, which struggled with visibility and constant construction in its Midtown location, made the move to downtown Gainesville this month.

brew, French press, pour over, cold brew and espresso, with more information on the website at wyattscoffee.com/coffee/.

Ballou said Wyatt's Japanese-style cold brew method is what truly makes them stand out.

Instead of steeping the beans in cold water,

they are brewed steaming hot, flash frozen in a 50-foot copper coil submerged in an ice bath and served out of a nitrogen-charged tap, according to the website.

"It provides the bold flavors of a hot coffee," she said, "but the nice, smooth, refreshing texture of a normal cold brew."

She emphasized, however, Wyatt's complicated methods for brewing coffee should not intimidate the regular coffee drinker.

"Wyatt's is for coffee connoisseurs and coffee novices," she said.

Although Wyatt's uses a scientific method to brew coffee, the atmosphere is just the opposite, she said.

Madi Florence, a UF sophomore, could not agree more.

After attending Wyatt's soft opening and social media day from 9 to 11 a.m. Sunday, she said she was impressed by the baristas' willingness to take questions and offer personal advice.

"If you come and ask questions, they will help you figure out what you want to try," she said. "I know I get flustered when I'm ordering things at new places."

The downtown regular said compared to Maude's Cafe, Patticakes and Volta Coffee, Tea and Chocolate, Wyatt's is a good balance, serving high-quality coffee while still maintaining a chill atmosphere.

"I think every coffee shop downtown has a different personality to it," she said. "This is a good (choice) in between the extremes."

Wyatt's has a classy and creative vibe, she said.

She can see herself sipping a nitro latte and doing homework, she said, once the craziness of the grand opening simmers down.

Avenue's must-hear performers at Heartwood Music Festival

By Taylor McLamb
Avenue Writer

Despite only opening a year ago, Heartwood Soundstage, Gainesville's multi-stage live recording venue, has become a budding hotspot for musicians and concertgoers alike.

Whether it's the high-end sound equipment, detailed listening room constructed to eliminate any noisy distractions or its devotion to providing the best acoustics, Heartwood strives to provide listeners with the best experience. To celebrate the anniversary of its opening, Heartwood Soundstage will have its second annual family-friendly Heartwood Music Festival on Saturday. The event features a variety of Florida bands as well as a compilation of food trucks, craft vendors and art installations. Although there are 24 equally amazing bands that are performing, here are the top six must-hear artists to get you pumped before heading to the festival.

Performing on Heartwood's Outside

Stage:

Just Neighbors (Performing at 3:20 p.m.)

While having only just emerged into Gainesville's local music scene in August 2015, Just Neighbors have quickly attracted fans in droves. This is most likely due to the band's warm balance of post-rock and math-rock, creating a blend that will instantly get you hooked. The band promotes itself as "just your friendly neighborhood band," which makes perfect sense as members Dan Lohr, Justice Diamond, Jarrett Haines and Reid Casey, live in Gainesville. Their most recent 9-track album, "Being Where I Thought I'd Be," includes beautiful artwork by Alfred Phillips and was met with positive reviews. Before the concert Saturday, give a listen to their song "Disconnect," and be warned: It may just become your new favorite song.

HEDGES (Performing at 9:20 p.m.)

Lead singer Jason Hedges is no stranger to the Gainesville music scene. Fans of the local Tom Petty cover band, Heavy Petty, will be able to experience Hedges' original music

in his second band, HEDGES, where he also collaborates with three other members from the tribute band, Daniel App, Logan Fischer and Jonathon McCravy. The band consists of Hedges, App, Fischer and McCravy, as well as Jonathan Parker, Matt Rippetoe and Jonathan Barnes. The high-energy rock 'n' roll group humorously best sums up their music to listeners that if Elvis Costello and Tom Petty had a baby, their band's sound would be the offspring. Their album, "MIXED SIGNALS," was mixed, mastered and produced by the legendary Don Zientara, who also worked with artists such as Fugazi, Minor Threat, Foo Fighters and Bad Brains. The album is a love letter to classic rock 'n' roll, successfully creating a tribute to the nostalgic genre that inspires them as artists.

Be sure to stream HEDGES' "Record Turns" from their debut album "MIXED SIGNALS."

Flipturn (Performing at 10:20 p.m.)

From being a handful of dreamers playing in a hot, Fernandina Beach garage, to winning first prize at Impact Gainesville's 2016 Battle of the Bands, flipturn is quickly making a name for itself in Florida's thriving indie scene. The band's dreamy, feel-good sound is heavily inspired by bands like The Black Keys, Hippo Campus, The Killers and Saint Motel. The band, which consists of Dillon Basse, Tristan Duncan, Taylor Allen, Madeline Jarman and Adrian Walker, best describe their sound as a blend of surf-rock, garage, new wave and pop. Their debut EP, "Heavy Colors," which was released in March 2017, consists of five songs and impressively achieved more than 180,000 streams on Spotify in less than a year. Flipturn will be playing at The Wetlands Music Festival this Sunday alongside A\$AP Ferg, Snakehips and Saint Motel. So after you watch them at Heartwood, make sure to support this up-and-coming band on their steady rise.

Check out their song "Vanilla" from their EP "Heavy Colors."

Locochino (Performing at 11:20 p.m.)

Locochino does the unthinkable in that it perfectly blends a variety of genres that should not work well together, but do. In

fact, it takes you on a psychedelic whirlwind of sound that makes you feel like you've unearthed something new. Created in September of 2014, Locochino is made up of Benny Cannon, Blake Briand, Brian Johnson, Nick Melms, Sam Coplin and Dave Johnson, and they're the reason why the sound works the way it does. Just by listening to their music you get a taste of rock, funk, jam and psychedelic sounds that each reflect a specific member. Perhaps the reason they've been so successful is, even in their music, every member of the band is equally integral. Locochino won't have to trek too far as they recently recorded their newest song, "On My Feet," live at the Heartwood Soundstage this month. Give it a listen, and let's cross our fingers they play it this weekend.

Performing on Heartwood's Inside Stage: Blackbird Morning (Performing at 6 p.m.)

Traveling all the way from St. Petersburg, Blackbird Morning consists of Danielle DeCosmo, Vincent DeCosmo, Richard Jimenez and Anthony Goodwin. The band is a blend of modern and classic rock, touching on hints of Pink Floyd and The Zombies mixed with The Black Keys and My Morning Jacket, according to their Facebook page. DeCosmo delivers hauntingly beautiful vocals that are unapologetically honest in the band's song "The Way" from their album "Horizons." The band announced on Facebook they're currently working on a new album that will arrive in May, so you won't have to wait long for more. Stream "The Way," a perfect example of what you'll hear this weekend.

Matthew Fowler (Performing at 8 p.m.)

Matthew Fowler, a singer-songwriter based out of Orlando, has both the lyrical components and voice of someone incredibly wise beyond his years. Fowler's music is comfortable, relatable and makes you feel at home. His album, "Beginning," released in March 2014, is compiled of nine songs written from the ages of 14 and 19. Fowler lets you into his life, and through his raw storytelling you feel as if you personally know him. Fowler's music has been steadily gaining a devoted fan

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SWAMP RECORDS HEARTWOOD CHILLER

Courtesy to the Alligator

The second annual Heartwood Music Festival returns Saturday.

base. He was praised in a variety of notable publications including The Bluegrass Situation, CMT Edge and HuffPost. Fowler has also had the opportunity to open for acts such as Richard Thompson, Damien Jurado, Sea Wolf and Angel Olsen. Fowler's chill, feel-good music would be perfectly paired with a hot cup of coffee on a long morning drive. Listen to Fowler's song "Blankets" from his album "Beginning," which is available for free on his Bandcamp.

Tickets for the all-day festival are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for student tickets. Tickets are available online at heartwoodsoundstage.com and at Hear Again Records. Kids 12 and under get in free.

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4-25-18-43-10

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2-28-18-22-14

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20 Events/Notices

IS YOUR BUSINESS, CLUB OR ORGANIZATION HAVING AN EVENT? DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT? PLACE YOUR AD HERE AND GET IT NOTICED!

FREE GRE WORKSHOP. UF Teaching Center offers this workshop M - R, 2/19-2/22 from 5-7 p.m. Math sessions are M & W; Verbal sessions are T & R. Go to www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu, then "study skills" then "workshops" to register. 2-19-18-4-20

20 Events/Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area announces a public meeting to which all interested persons are invited.

DATE & TIME: February 26, 2018, 3:00 p.m.
PLACE: Jack Durrance Auditorium, County Administration Building, Gainesville, Florida

PURPOSE: Regular Business Meeting of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization

A copy of the agenda may be obtained by calling 352.955.2200, visiting our website at www.ncfrpc.org (click Metropolitan Transportation Planning), or appearing in person, during regular business hours, at 2009 NW 67 th Place, Gainesville, Florida. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, familial status, religious status, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Mike Escalante at 352.955.2200, extension 114, at least 48 hours prior to the public meeting. 2-21-1-21

21 Entertainment

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12-5-111-21

22 Tickets

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23 Rides

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24 Pets

Furry, feathery, scaly...no, not your roommate...pets. Find or advertise your pets or pet products here in the Pets section of the Alligator.

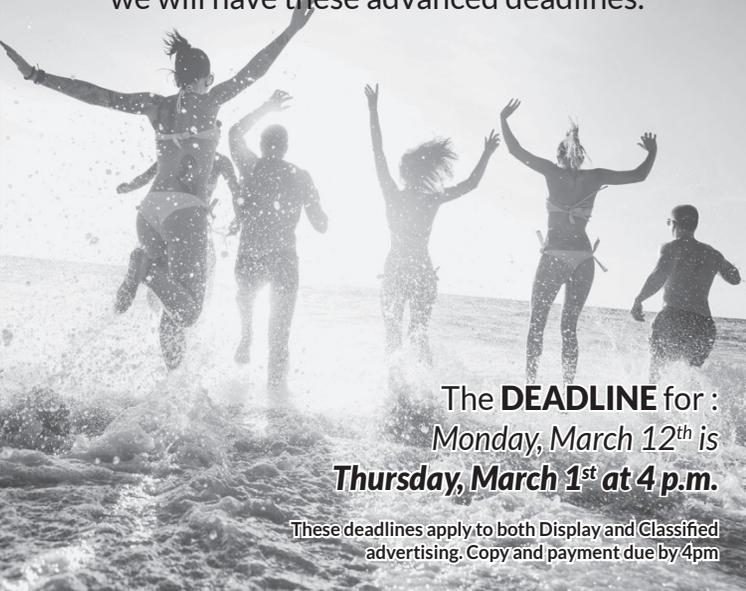
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RELEASE DATE- Wednesday, February 21, 2018

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle
Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 5 "Hidden Figures" actor Mahershala _____ | 43 Satiric magazine since 1952 | 53 Bart and Lisa's bus driver |
| 1 Your business is her business | 6 Tiny cut | 46 Fill and then some | 54 Professor Higgins' creator |
| 10 Jeans line | 14 Spreadsheet program | 49 Converse | 56 Swedish soprano Jenny |
| 15 Comes to the rescue of | 16 "The Time Machine" race | 50 Partner of pray | 57 Hathaway of "The Intern" (2015) |
| 17 Like a cowboy in denial? | 18 Vegas illuminator | 51 Ingrid's "Casablanca" role | 58 Winter Palace resident |
| 20 Emotional wound | 19 Nook or cranny | 52 "Tiny House Hunters" cable channel | 60 Org. for teachers |
| 21 "At _____, soldier!" | 22 Quartet in "Whose woods these are I think I know" | | 61 17th Greek letter |
| 23 Fodder for Forbes, initially | 24 Peach dessert | | |
| 25 Play a part | 25 Many "Suits" characters: Abbr. | | |
| 26 Like an eager cowboy? | 26 Busser's target | | |
| 35 Riveting icon | 27 Maker of Clarity alternative fuel cars | | |
| 36 Overplay a part | 28 Jelly made from meat stock | | |
| 37 Mission lead-in | 29 "Caspice?" | | |
| 38 Potentially offensive, for short | 30 Anabaptist descendants | | |
| 39 Tends to the sauce | 31 Velvet-voiced Mel | | |
| 40 Nerve | 32 Like most books | | |
| 41 Early 16th-century date | 33 Recon goal | | |
| 42 Earthquake | 34 Palate | | |
| 43 "Impression, Sunrise" painter | 39 FedEx, say | | |
| 44 Like a cowboy out of retirement? | 40 "Safe travels!" | | |
| 47 Ky. neighbor | 42 Egyptian peninsula | | |
| 48 Show stoppers | | | |
| 49 Limoges product | | | |
| 52 Entertainment show VIP | | | |
| 55 Builder's map | | | |
| 59 Like a cowboy in charge? | | | |
| 62 Area behind an altar | | | |
| 63 Wonder Woman's friend Candy _____ | | | |
| 64 Temporary tattoo dye | | | |
| 65 Get weepy, with "up" | | | |
| 66 State openly | | | |
| 67 More curious | | | |

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

A	P	P	S	W	I	R	E	S	M	E	I	N	
B	E	A	U	A	R	E	N	A	A	U	R	A	
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02/20/18

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DOWN
1 Trees that sound like sheep
2 Corporate VIP
3 Final Four letters
4 Marvelous

By Amy Johnson
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02/21/18

BASEBALL

Leftwich keeps Gators undefeated in first career start



Courtesy of UAA Communications

Freshman pitcher Jack Leftwich notched five strikeouts and gave up one run in his first career start on Tuesday against FAU. The Gators defeated the Owls 6-1 at McKethan Stadium.

By Morgan McMullen
Sports Writer

Gators pitcher Jack Leftwich had retired his previous 12 batters when FAU second baseman Eric Rivera stepped into the batter's box to lead off the fifth inning.

A light breeze intruded upon McKethan Stadium from center field. Leftwich, both figuratively and literally, had momentum behind him.

The freshman worked like clockwork. When he got his pitches back from catcher JJ Schwarz, he turned, gathered himself and delivered again, all in five seconds or fewer. Rivera called for time, loitered just outside the batter's box and kept one foot outside the chalk to try and delay the right-hander.

But it didn't work.

Rivera chopped a ball softly back to Leftwich, who jogged toward first base and underhanded it to teammate Keenan Bell for his 13th consecutive out.

It was that type of aggression from Leftwich that led the Gators to a 6-1 win over FAU on Tuesday night.

The mindset showed itself early. After allowing a leadoff single, Leftwich settled into his streamlined rhythm and started mowing down Owls batters.

The freshman flamethrower marked his first career start by consistently tossing his fastball in the 94-mph range while allowing just three balls to leave the infield. He finished the night having pitched 4.1 innings, striking out five and allowing one earned run on two hits and a walk.

"I really wasn't trying to overthink it," Leftwich said. "I just like to get the ball and go."

Florida's batters showed their eagerness early on. Left fielder Austin Langworthy and designated hitter Nelson Maldonado each swung at the second pitch they saw.

Schwarz tempered the ten-

SEE **BASEBALL**, PAGE 15

MEN'S BASKETBALL

UF facing Volunteers tonight in midst of two-game skid

By Benjamin Brandt
Sports Writer

Florida men's basketball coach Mike White stripped himself of certain formalities before Monday's practice.

"I'll just be very, very clear," he said. "There's a chance we can play in the NCAA Tournament and there's a chance we can go to the NIT. Period."

For a team that held the nation's No. 5 ranking in early December and currently boasts a 4-1 record against top-25 opponents, the possibility of ending the season excluded from the 68 programs participating in the NCAA Tournament might seem puzzling.

White would agree.

"It's been a rollercoaster ride," he said. "We're just very, very inconsistent, offensively and defensively."

While the Gators have seen success against some of their tougher opponents,

they have struggled in matchups with teams in the bottom half of the SEC's standings. After last week's pair of losses to Georgia and Vanderbilt, UF is 4-5 against conference foes with a sub-.500 record.

Tonight, Florida (17-10, 8-6 SEC) will look to prevent its longest losing streak of the calendar year as it takes on No. 19 Tennessee in Knoxville at 9.

The Volunteers (19-7, 9-5 SEC) are led by the physical play of forwards Grant Williams and Admiral Schofield. Williams leads the team in scoring (15.7 points per game), although he only shot 1 of 8 from the field in UT's most recent outing – a 73-62 loss to Georgia on Saturday.

Schofield is second to Williams in scoring, averaging 12.2 points per game, and leads Tennessee in rebounds (6.1 per game).

SEE **MEN'S B-BALL**, PAGE 15

Sweet and Bauer / Opinion

Recruiting is a necessary part of college sports. It's also completely ridiculous.

Feleipe Franks was a lucky one.

Coming out of high school, he had everything college coaches look for: Elite size, an arm that could double as a rocket launcher, a winning team and a great attitude. All those skills — and, let's be honest, lucky breaks — contributed to him being ranked the nation's fifth-best pocket passer in the class of 2015.

Franks hasn't played up to his ranking's expectations at Florida, and because of all the hype he carried when he arrived in Gainesville, he has been crucified for it.

"I REGRET THIS TWEET," wrote Twitter user @thenamesrodgy, quoting a previous tweet thanking God for Franks' commitment to the Gators. "GOD IS STILL GOOD AND SITS ON THE THRONE, BUT FELEIPE IS NOT. I REPEAT. FELEIPE FRANKS IS BAD AT FOOTBALL."

Meanwhile, little has been said about the equally unsuccessful Kyle Trask, who came to



Ethan Bauer
twitter: @ebaueri

Florida in the same class as Franks but, as a three-star recruit, carried significantly less hype.

Franks' stars and rankings heaped massive expectations and massive amounts of pressure on him before he arrived on campus, and his case is just one microcosm of the very strange, often absurd world of college recruiting.

This ecosystem starts when recruits are young — in some extreme cases, they're still in middle school — and conditions them to base a tremendous amount of self worth on the number of stars they carry or the number of offers they boast.

Just like you or me if we were looking for work, it's natural to want the most options and to have the highest ratings. I get that. But we're talking about a rankings circus, or offer charades.

In this world, offers mean little, as do pledg-

SEE **COLUMN**, PAGE 15



In the Florida softball team's doubleheader with Oakland today, sophomore pitcher **Katie Chronister** is expected to receive playing time, pg. 16

Pirreca receives weekly honor

Florida lacrosse player **Sydney Pirreca** was named Big East Midfielder of the Week on Tuesday. Pirreca recorded career highs in goals (six), points (eight) and draw controls (seven) on Saturday against Maryland.

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For updates on UF athletics, follow us on Twitter at @alligatorSports or online at www.alligator.org/sports



WOMEN'S GOLF

Brooks dominates, Florida wins first event of the spring

By Chris O'Brien

Sports Writer

Sierra Brooks' career at Florida is off to an impressive start.

The sophomore transfer from Wake Forest won her first tournament with the Gators at the Florida Challenge on Jan. 29.



Brooks

Now, Brooks can add a new tournament to her list of wins: the Allstate Sugar Bowl Intercollegiate Golf Championship in New Orleans, where she finished at the top of the individual leaderboard and propelled Florida to its first victory of 2018.

She displayed a masterful three rounds of golf, finishing four strokes ahead of the competition with a 7 under.

Brooks' emergence appears to be the

missing key for Florida, as it had previously finished in the top four in four of five tournaments this season but had yet to win one prior to the Sugar Bowl.

"This is definitely the start to an exciting year for us," Brooks said in a release.

The final day of the competition saw a complete performance from the Gators' entire lineup, which ran away from the pack as the round progressed. Florida finished nine strokes ahead of second-place USC and 15 strokes ahead of third-place Michigan State.

Behind Brooks was sophomore Marta Perez who shot a 2 under on Tuesday, the second-best score of the day. This brought her tally down to 2 over, moving her up 10 spots into a tie for sixth.

Senior Taylor Tomlinson finished third on the team at 6 over after shooting 3 over in the final round.

Sophomore Carlotta Ricolfi ended the Sugar Bowl nicely after a rough second round, closing out with a 2 over on

Tuesday. That brought her overall score up to 11 over, tied for 32nd.

Freshman Addie Baggarly also tied for 32nd, shot 2 over and finished with an overall score of 11 over.

Redshirt freshman Elin Esborn continued to dazzle on Tuesday. Esborn competed as an individual after a rough showing at the Northrop Grumman Regional Challenge in Palos Verdes, California, in mid-February.

She finished tied for fourth after finishing with a third-round score of 1 under and an overall score of 2 under. Had she been inserted into the starting lineup, the Gators would have won by 22 strokes.

"We talked yesterday after the round about controlling our emotions and have better attitudes, and they really bought in," coach Emily Glaser said in a release. "It paid off today."

@THEChrisOB
cobrien@alligator.org

UF'S FINAL INDIVIDUAL SCORES

Sierra Brooks
7 under (First Place)

Elin Esborn
2 under (T-Fourth Place)

Marta Perez
2 over (T-Sixth Place)

Taylor Tomlinson
6 over (T-11th Place)

Carlotta Ricolfi
11 over (T-32nd Place)

Addie Baggarly
11 over (T-32nd Place)



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White: Chiozza under 'a lot of pressure'



Alan Alvarez / Alligator Staff

UF men's basketball coach Mike White is impressed with what he has seen from Tennessee this year. "They're a strong, tough, physical team."

MEN'S B-BALL, from pg. 13

"They're a strong, tough, physical team," White said. "I think they have a lot of character."

The Gators will need to adopt a more efficient brand of basketball if they want to steal a win on the road tonight. They currently rank in the bottom half of the SEC in field goal percentage. In Saturday's 71-68 loss to Vanderbilt, UF attempted 22 more shots than the Commodores and still came up short of victory.

In stretches of offensive stagnation, the Gators turn to senior guard Chris Chiozza as a source of production. His explosiveness and ability to find open teammates can single-handedly carry the Gators at times.

However, in his last five games combined, Chiozza has shot below 30 percent from the field and has seen a decrease in his assist-to-turnover ratio.

White understands that if the Gators are going to turn things around against Tennessee tonight, it starts with Chiozza.

"He's got a lot of pressure on him," White said. "He's got to play well for us to have a chance."

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UF scored season-low six runs against FAU

BASEBALL, from pg. 13

dency with his at-bat by drawing a 3-2 walk, but he still echoed the game plan when he attempted a steal just a couple of pitches later.

Though he was easily gunned down at second, the failure didn't put a dent in coach Kevin O'Sullivan's game plan, as his team had five stolen base attempts on the night.

"In the past, I think we've made some mistakes where we've kind of relied on our bats," O'Sullivan said. "And you look up in the sixth inning and you're having a bad night offensively."

Langworthy answered the call for mid-week energy. In the third inning, the sophomore lined what looked to be a single over the second baseman and into right-center field.

Instead of meandering to first, Langworthy turned on the jets and rounded the bag, heading full-speed into second ahead of the tag. He scored after a Maldonado line-drive single to left.

Overall, Florida's offense wasn't as explosive as it was in its opening series with Siena.

The six runs it scored were the fewest in the Gators' four games so far.

Still, O'Sullivan said he was pleased with the pace of his offense.

"We ran the bases, put a couple of hit-and-runs on," he said. "I think forcing the action... may ignite our offense a little more in these midweek games."

Florida comes back out to McKethan Stadium tonight at 6 to play Bethune-Cookman.

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COLUMN, from pg. 13

es. Schools can change their minds and pull those offers, and recruits can commit and de-commit as much as they want. The fact that their commitments are still even called commitments is an insult to the word's meaning.

But some people have realized there's a market for that kind of drama. Following recruiting betters a fan's relationship with his/her team, so fans are willing to pay for insider coverage.

Websites like Rivals, 247Sports and Scout know this well. They specialize in recruiting,

compiling lists of the top prospects and hosting actual skills camps, which they use to determine their rankings and acquire recruits' contact information for their reporters.

As a result, recruits will often tweet updates on their recruitment with a *NO INTERVIEWS* disclaimer.

This can be annoying as a reporter. But as a human being, were I one of those players, how could I not say no interviews when my every tweet unleashes an army of phone calls and messages?

I bring this up now because National Signing Day was less than two weeks ago, but as any coach will tell you, recruiting never stops.

Which is why UF is hosting a junior day for top high school talent this weekend.

The ink is still wet on the 2018 class, but 2019 and beyond are already very much in the works for Dan Mullen and his staff. It's a necessary evil, because the unfortunate truth is the system works.

Sure, there are hits and misses.

Former Florida defensive end Ronald Powell was billed as the top player in the nation, but he didn't play like it at UF. Jadeveon Clowney held the same designation when he enrolled at South Carolina, meanwhile, and his No. 1 ranking translated to his selection at No. 1 overall in the NFL Draft.

But despite the inexact science of rankings, there's an undeniable link between successful recruiting and successful on-field product, which leads coaches to do some truly remarkable, often embarrassing things.

It's all an unfortunate byproduct of an environment our insatiable fandom has created. An environment where a 9-year-old's mother has to worry about agents and top youth teams taking advantage of her son.

An environment where offers and commitments mean nothing, but also everything.

Ethan Bauer is a sports writer. Contact him at ebauer@alligator.org.

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SOFTBALL

Underclassmen expected to make an impact today against Oakland

By Mari Faiello

Sports Writer

One of the most notable factors about Florida's softball team this season is its deep roster.

In addition to nine juniors and seniors, Florida has 10 underclassmen who are at the ready in game-time situations.

As the No. 2 Gators (8-1) go into a doubleheader against the Oakland Golden Grizzlies (2-2) today starting 4 p.m. at Katie Seashole Pressly Stadium, freshman Natalie Lugo and sophomore Katie Chronister are expected to get some time in the circle.

Lugo, a right-handed pitcher from West Covina, California, made her collegiate debut on Feb. 10 in Florida's matchup against Georgia State.

In two innings of work, she recorded two strikeouts on 22 pitches.

Chronister, a left-handed pitcher and Gainesville native, has more experience coming off a successful first year with the

Gators in 2017.

Last season, she finished with a 2.21 ERA in 19 innings of work. She also threw 15 strikeouts in seven appearances.

Upperclassmen pitchers Kelly Barnhill and Aleshia Ocasio have set a strong standard in the bullpen for the Gators.

Coach Tim Walton notices the gap between the No. 1 and 2 pitchers and the No. 3 and 4 pitchers, saying the disparity this year is larger than it has been in the past.

But that isn't deterring his confidence in Chronister and Lugo's pitching abilities for today's games against the Golden Grizzlies.

"I'm looking forward to them going out and getting the chance to compete here at home," he said. "To go out and just show me and the rest of the club that they have been working really hard in the weight room and in the bullpen."

Walton said the underclassmen have been working on their

pitch arsenal, specifically with their location and velocity.

When Chronister and Lugo were recruited by the Gators, Walton said he was looking for more depth in the bullpen.

With only three official pitchers on the roster (Ocasio being listed as a utility player), it's important now more than ever that they're managed well enough to tackle a long season.

"The only thing I worry about is that we become a little bit one- or two-dimensional," Walton said. "That's the one thing you'll try to see us do a better job of is getting them more innings."

With the Gators using Chronister and Lugo more as they move deeper into the season, this will give the team more opportunities to create a tougher environment.

"They got to get a chance to step their game up," Walton said. "And we're gonna give it to them."



Alligator File Photo

Sophomore Katie Chronister will see time in the circle today during UF's doubleheader against Oakland, according to coach Tim Walton.

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MEN'S TENNIS

Florida's doubles-play woes persisting as season progresses

By Dylan Rudolph

Sports Writer

The Florida men's tennis team left Seattle with a bad taste in its mouth after dropping two of three matches at the ITA National Team Indoor Championships between Friday and Sunday.

Although many issues stuck out, none

were more apparent than the problems UF (5-4) faced during doubles play, as the team dropped all three doubles points during the weekend tournament.

Florida has lost the doubles point in five of its last six contests and is 1-4 in matches that it has lost the doubles point.

"Our doubles play has not been our best," coach Bryan Shelton said in release.

The team will have time to make adjustments as it gets a much-needed break before taking on No. 4 Georgia on March 2.

The Bulldogs have one of the best doubles teams in the nation in the No. 12-ranked duo of junior Jan Zielinski and sophomore Robert Loeb.

UF sophomore Johannes Ingildsen and junior Alfredo Perez make up the nation's No.

1-ranked duo and has never lost a set together.

The pair has not played together since Feb. 3 against Florida State, but Shelton might look for that consistency to return heading into SEC play.

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