In memory of
USF St. Petersburg campus passed away March 1, 1999.

Sam 1945 - 1999
Samuel faculty remembers life of friend
Fustukjian, 54,
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Wednesday, March 17.
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rized to dock because of its

First post-embargo Cuban ship in U.S.

John Ellis and Krista Reiner
Next Column

The first Cuban research vessel autho-
rized to dock in a U.S. port since Castro
came to power arrived in St. Petersburg
Wednesday, March 17.

"We've never had a Cuban vessel here
before in Tampa Bay," said Joseph Perez,
port director for the port of St. Petersburg
U.S. Customs Service Bureau.

Michael Hahn, a public affairs officer
with the Cuban Affairs Bureau of the U.S.
Department of State, said it was an even
more unique development.

"It is the first time such a vessel has
come into a U.S. port," Hahn said.

Hahn said that the trade embargo
against Cuba does not prevent Cuban ves-
sels from being able to dock in U.S. ports
when participating in humanitarian
exchanges such as scientific or oceanogra-
graphic research.

The U.S. Department of State granted
the ship permission to dock because of its
scientific mission. The collaborative effort
was facilitated in January of this year
when Secretary of State Madeleine
Albright, announced that the U.S. govern-
ment would streamline visa and licensing
procedures for travel between the two
countries to encourage scientific,
educational and other exchanges between the
peoples of both nations.

The team of scientists from the U.S.,
Mexico, Canada and Cuba—including
three researchers from USF—will cruise
the Gulf of Mexico to study the patterns of
currents in the Gulf of Mexico.

The 2149-ton, 253-foot-long B.I.C.
Ulises, a converted fishing vessel and the
largest ship in the Cuban government's
research fleet, is in St. Petersburg to pick
up scientific equipment and the final mem-
bers of the research team.

Prior to docking in Bayboro Harbor,
the ship was inspected by the U.S.
Customs Service, Immigration and
The Crows Nest

Features

Sam's Story, continued from page 1

Sam and Ray both came to USF St. Petersburg in the same week of 1980 and knew each other's names before they were ever introduced. A local real estate agent had sent letters welcoming them to St. Petersburg. Ironically, the letters were mistakenly addressed and Ray and Sam received one another's letters.

Ray did not have to wonder who the intended receiver was for very long. When officially introduced for the first time on campus Ray and Sam shared a laugh that would echo for the next 19 years.

Jerry describes Sam as "his mentor and his inspiration." Back in 1985, Jerry wasn't too sure about leaving Indianapolis for a job on a small regional campus in St. Petersburg. But it didn't take Sam long to convince Jerry that together, Sam's vision of a state of the art library and media center could become a reality.

Intrigued by Sam's deep-set philosophy of service and forward thinking, Jerry accepted the job enthusiastically. Jerry knew so deeply and completely about his position that Jerry said the first month of their relationship was a bit rocky. Sam was reluctant to give up responsibility until he trusted the people working for him had the best intentions in mind.

Although the men disagreed at times, Sam was flexible. "If Sam thought what you were doing was in the best interest of the University and its students, he'd back you 100 percent," Jerry said.

Both Ray and Jerry described Sam Fustukjian as relentless in his pursuit of excellence in a resource library. He served for a year as the library director for the University of South Florida St. Pete campus to enhance their education and their loyalty to his friends and colleagues touched many people.

"Sam's passion and loyalty went far beyond his role as a university administrator. Sam's Armenian heritage and Christian faith could not be subtracted out from Sam's performance in and for the University of South Florida. Sam possessed a loyalty born in the Mediterranean tradition, said Ray, and spoke often of his love for his home country of Lebanon and the city of Beirut, "the Paris of the Middle East."

True to his character, Sam would often suggest that Ray take a sabbatical in Lebanon. Sam spoke tirelessly of the beauty and rich historical heritage of his country. "But," Ray said, "you could see the sadness in his eyes."

In 1983, Sam returned to Beirut and served for a year as the library director for the American University. His time there was not peaceful, as battles were waged in the neighborhoods he lived, loved and worked in. It was the mid-1980s and Beirut was in the midst of civil unrest. Sam, his wife Cynthia, and their two young children stayed the year, despite perilous conditions. Two weeks after his position ended, the president of the university, Malcolm Kerr, was murdered in an elevator. Ray remembered Sam commenting that had he remained in Beirut, he very well might have been in that elevator.

But potential dangers did not diminish Sam's level of commitment. During the 18-month period Sam spent as interim dean on the St. Pete campus, Hurricane Elena blew into town. When Sam's Shore Acres neighborhood was evacuated, Sam found shelter for his family in the old library in Bayboro Hall. "They slept between the stacks," Ray said, still somewhat awed at the thought.

Sam thrived on challenge and always "found some way to do the right thing," Ray said. Jerry also said that when Sam thought an action on his part would be in the best interest of the University and its students, he would "fight for it - night and day."

As part of a state university, Sam "needed to be at the administrative level," Jerry said, because his skills and personality were best suited for negotiating and executing a plan. His ability to "spark a room" into action was integral to the job he performed, Jerry said. And Ray recalled Sam as "a regional faculty advocate who was instrumental in arguing for campus party."

When Sam left the St. Pete campus to assume the library directorship in Tampa, both Jerry and Ray kept in touch. Ray and Sam would chat and get together on weekends. Sam was a great tennis partner; although he never took a lesson, he would "run through a wall to get a shot," Ray said.

Jerry's and Sam's families also maintained close relationships after Sam moved to Tampa. Although the distance made it more difficult, Sam always made himself available personally and professionally. Sam was even known to call Jerry's mother and rave about her cooking "just to get invited to dinner," Jerry said.

Throughout Sam Fustukjian's 19 years at the University of South Florida, his gen­erous nature, his broad range dedication and his loyalty to his friends and colleagues touched many people.

The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library stands as a testament to what Sam envisioned as the best library a university could provide. New students coming to USF St. Pete can enhance their education by using the facility Sam Fustukjian helped create. Many will "never really know what he did for this University," Jerry said. "We owe him a big, big debt."

Don't forget about Student Government Elections

Vote in Davis Lobby from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. on March 30, 31, and April 1.

Unique Northeast Apartment

One bedroom, studio apartment in restored Victorian house at City Beach Drive in Old Northeast, $300 - $550 with all utilities and cable included. 900 off first month's rent with this ad. Call 360-3043.

HELP WANTED

NCAA Final Four Merchandising

Looking for fun and easy going people to staff stores on Central Avenue.

Good Quick Cash $7 - $9 an hour. Please call after noon and leave message 429-567-6582, ext. 22.
This idea holds true for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

Dr. Harry Vanden, professor of government and international affairs at USF, whose areas of expertise include Latin America and Cuba, said that, in the recent past, ships that had docked in Cuba were not allowed into an U.S. port for a six-month period.

Vanden said that the State Department's willingness to allow the ship into a U.S. port surprised him.

"We do not have official diplomatic relationships with Cuba. The embargo has made it difficult to have any intercourse with Cuba. The U.S. makes it very hard to sell medicine and even food to Cuba," Vanden said.

Former U.S. Representative Sam Gibbons, of Tampa, who is associated with the American Chamber of Commerce, was pleased by the indication of goodwill.

"I think our food and medicine embargo on Cuba is one of the stupidest and meaner and most illogical things we have done in the last 40 years. We need to engage the Cuban people and try not to isolate them. We are so big and strong and powerful that it ill behooves us to act as we do. We have nothing to fear from Cuba," Gibbons said.

According to faculty at the USF-Marine Science department and the Florida Institute of Oceanography, the joint-research project is a win-win situation. While Cuba is funding the $100,000 cruise, other institutions are donating researchers' time and the use of scientific equipment.

"We are proud to host this ship," Olsen said. "It is great that Cuba has such a vessel."

"[At first] we had a lot of misgivings about people wanting to escape. But, we don't see that happening," Olsen said.

- Nicole Stinger and Akira Hibino contributed to this report.

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The computer-based test offers year-round availability at over 600 test centers, flexible scheduling and immediate viewing of unofficial test scores.

The computer-based tests are tailored to each taker's ability level. The software can detect when the examinee is having difficulty answering the questions. The computer-based test starts out by presenting questions of average difficulty. As each question is answered, the computer scores the question and uses that information to determine the next question.

As long as the questions are being answered correctly, the computer increases the difficulty of the questions. Once incorrect responses are entered, the computer presents less-difficult questions. This results in different individuals taking different tests.

"Computer testing is part of our future. We have been preparing students for both paper-based and computer-adapted tests all along. Now instead of addressing both, we can just address CAT (computer-adapted tests)," said Sherry Yagovane, program manager at Kaplan education Center.

According to Yagovane, even though some people feel intimidated by the use of computers, there is no academic research available that would suggest a difference in the result of either testing format.

"It is all a matter of personal preference. Students often find the computer challenging at first, but much easier with some practice," Yagovane said.

Test-taking strategies for the CBT General Test are different than those for paper-based tests. Yagovane said that students should become familiar with the type of questions, practice answering questions, read directions thoroughly and monitor their time.

A CBT demo can be downloaded from www.gre.org/index.html> so students can learn how the test works. Other preparation options include preparation courses, study guides, books and computer software.
Within hours of landing at Tampa's airport, midnight hour, Dawn Ades feared that her lyrical English accent and constant hand gesture would never work. Ades, an internationally acclaimed author and authority on Dali and Surrealism, appeared in the CAC on Monday, March 1, as the midpoint feature of USF's 12-part "Out of the Sun" lecture series. Currently touring as a co-curator of the Salvador Dalí Museum's Spring exhibit, "Dalí: A Mythology," Ades is an art history and theory professor at the University of Essex, who has been studying Dalí and Surrealism for over 30 years. Earlier in her life, she also was one of few privileged to meet Dalí, the man.

Speaking less than a mile north of the permanent home of the masterpiece, the "Hallucinogenic Toreador," whose creation she witnessed, a diverse audience of students, faculty and visitors turned out to listen to Ades' well-read and first-hand knowledge. Simultaneously projecting two prints on the screen behind her, she was not only compared Dalí's works with those of other painters, but the repetitive themes that appeared during different periods of his life.

Most of his themes centered around parental betrayal and sexual deprivation. Surrealists, she explained, believe that he was creating works that have a "true functioning thought outside all moral consideration." They believe in suspending functioning thought outside all moral preconceived idea, giving them access to desires otherwise hidden.

Using a laser's beam, she pointed out repetitive symbols and influences in Dalí's paintings. She abstained, however, from providing a clear interpretation of any one piece. She cautioned that a true single reading of either the man or his paintings does not exist.

"It's very dangerous to try to treat these paintings as if they can be right off Dalí's mind," she explained. "It's not really possible nor possibly desirable to extract a true Dalí."

According to Ades, he detested sim-plicity in all forms. Corresponding with the extremes in his paintings, his personal life was a strange mixture as well. Dalí staged the outrageous for the public — his highly- waxed and curved mustache — "his ambiguities in titles (that were) deliberate" — even the slash to stress the last syllable of his name.

Because of an initial misconception, she was able to view the private side of Dalí as well. In 1969, she believed that she was a model and invited her inside his extended fisherman's house at Cadaques. He was painting the "Hallucinogenic Toreador" with a surprisingly small brush, and she was "only a student and had no conception of seeing (his) double image."

Today the immense work takes up a third of the southernmost wall of St. Petersburg's Dalí Museum. That day, Ades was fascinated by his talent and intrigued by his essence. She found him both intellectual and generous. Dalí asked her to come back the next evening. She did. The next night, however, he, or he was cloaked in his public persona — decked out for his fans and friends. "I'm glad I met him in both guises," she said, "and not just as the showman."

Now it's Ades' turn to help students and the public understand the double vision of both Dalí's paintings and Dalí the man. She still leaves the interpretations open, though, for no one can truly understand him. All that she's learned should have made him more simple, yet, she expressed, he's become more complex.

The next lecture series is Tuesday, March 30. "American Art Comes of Age: Paintings from the Lawrence Collection" is hosted by Jennifer Hardin, curator of collections and exhibitions at the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts. Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m. at the CAC. For information call 555-3458.
McKenzie awaits directorial debut
Lori Helfand
Next Assistant Editor

A few years back, Bob McKenzie didn’t know “what the hell” he was going to do with the rest of his life. He worked in several photo labs, but he found the work boring and repetitive. He videotaped weddings for a while, but he found the work “too stressful,” dealing with upright couples, who expected perfection on that “special day.” After a series of odd jobs, McKenzie was at wits end. But, in 1994, his life took an odd turn, and he fell into his career—literally.

McKenzie was helping his father out by sweeping leaves off of his roof, when he slipped on a rickety tile and plunged to the ground. He broke his right arm and right leg. The accident left him “incapacitated” for 9 months. He was stuck at home and spent his days “doing nothing” but sitting around and watching TV.

Never a fan of prime time TV, he tuned into educational programs on the discovery channel and other educational networks. They sparked an interest in him, and he thought that maybe someday he would like to be involved in similar projects. A friend who was studying engineering at Pinellas Technical Educational Center (PTEC) stopped by and visited him. McKenzie shared his newfound interest with him and his friend told him to sign up for the video production program at PTEC.

In 1995, McKenzie entered the program at PTEC, and today, at 43, he is an audiovisual specialist on the St. Petersburg campus, and he’s chomping at the bit to produce a documentary about the marine science department. He came up with the idea for the project while studying at PTEC, but graduated from the program before he could pursue the venture so he “let the documentary go by the wayside” until 8 months ago.

McKenzie originally began working in the campus mushroom back in 1988. As he delivered mail throughout the campus, he became fascinated by the workings of the marine science department. A year later he went to work in the campus activities center with “Sadie” Tschiderer, a fixture on this campus whose influence was monumental in stirring McKenzie’s enthusiasm in campus history.

During his training at PTEC, he also began working on “Project Oceanography,” a live educational children’s program produced on campus. He still runs camera for the show and provides additional education assistance whenever necessary.

Last year he brought up his documentary concept up to “Project Oceanography” producer Robin Cooper, and she decided to jump on ship. She joined forces with McKenzie because she has a high regard for the campus and the marine science department and she says, “I wanted to help brag about it.” Now, Cooper is McKenzie’s “right hand person” on the documentary.

Last June, McKenzie wrote up a proposal for the project and presented it to Dr. Peter Betzer, the head of the marine science department. Betzer says he and McKenzie have like interests. Both men believe the project will be significant, not only to highlight the university and the marine science department, but also to draw attention to the contributions of the city and community members who have made the department what it is today. Betzer is attempting to track down some funding resources for McKenzie’s project, but he admits that the task will be challenging due to the extensive nature of McKenzie’s project.

McKenzie also admits the costs will be high because he’s producing a “real documentary” and that type of project requires “high end equipment.”

McKenzie calls the Bayboro area a “jewel.” Years ago, he says, the area “was really run down,” and he’s looking forward to highlighting the tremendous progress the area has made over the years, concentrating on the marine science department in particular. His documentary will trace the harbor’s roots as a merchant marine training center prior to World War II and will follow its development through the years.

One of those future endeavors is the renovation of Bayboro Harbor which will include the development of Port Discovery, a multi-million dollar learning center and tourist spot. On March 18 the City Council met for a public hearing and approved those plans. McKenzie says, Port Discovery will be a crucial highlight of his project.

For now, he’s waiting for the “final push.” In other words, he’s trying his best to be patient while he waits for the funds to come through. From a preparatory stance, however, this aspiring documentary producer is “ready to roll.”

Ten good tips for majoring in success
Kaerrie Simmons
Next Contributor

Let’s face it: we probably all want our college experience to help us land our dream job. But are we choosing for ourselves should be something you admire for what he or she has accomplished, someone who has the time to help you on a consistent basis and a person who genuinely cares about you. But Combs warned the mentor-student relationship goes both ways. “Your job in mentoring,” he said, “is to be absolutely teachable.”

Suggestion 2: Do volunteer work for your school. Perhaps you can write for the campus paper, assist a professor, give campus tours, or hold a student government office. Pick something you enjoy, but get involved.

Suggestion 3: Amy Hopkins of the USF-St. Petersburg Counseling and Career Center suggests students join campus clubs that are geared toward their particular career field. They help students develop good work skills and usually offer networking opportunities through club meetings, parties, and other events. Just take a look at the club bulletin boards in Davis lobby to find the latest information on meeting times and locations.

Suggestion 4: “The most important homework you will ever do in college is not assigned.” —Deborah Lowe

Suggestion 3: Amy Hopkins of the USF-St. Petersburg Counseling and Career Center suggests students join campus clubs that are geared toward their particular career field. They help students develop good work skills and usually offer networking opportunities through club meetings, parties, and other events. Just take a look at the club bulletin boards in Davis lobby to find the latest information on meeting times and locations.

Suggestion 4: “Don’t even think of graduating without an internship,” Combs said. One is fine, two is great, but “three internships is a magic number,” he said. For one, interns are frequently offered a permanent job through an internship so the number of internships raises the probability you’ll be hired. Two, it gives you additional opportunities to sample jobs and job responsibilities to help you determine what you would like to permanently do with your career. And three, the experience at an internship in your career field is invaluable regardless of its temporary status. Even if you don’t get a job with the company you intern for, it may be the foot in the door you need for the next, even better company.

Suggestion 5: Develop computer skills as these are increasingly being required of potential employees. Depending on your career choice, you might want to learn advanced skills or particular programs since that can help make your resume more attractive than someone else’s. Many jobs may require at least a working knowledge of the Internet; some may expect the ability to design web pages. USF offers students courses that may help, including introduction to the Internet, Web Page Design and Management, and Internet Resources. These classes can be found in USF’s Schedule of Classes under the Library and Information Sciences section.

Suggestion 6: Prepare for your future job by reading up on the subject. Read articles and books related to your field; keep up to date on new technologies in your career; and conduct computer searches for specific articles or information on the companies you plan to solicit for a future job. Combs suggested actually taking copies of such articles with you to an interview. That way you can tell the company you’ve read up on them and why what you’ve learned makes them the company you want to be employed by.

Please see Success on page 6
Commentary

Is anyone really sure what will happen in Y2K??

Tom Foster
Next Contributor

Apparently, this Y2K problem is worse than I thought. Every company I do business with has recently mailed me a brochure (enclosed with my bill) about what it is doing to combat the Y2K problem, or the millennium bug, as some computer nerds like to call it.

For those of us who aren’t computer savvy, myself included, the Y2K problem is the inability of certain computers to correctly recognize dates after 1999, because their programming may recognize dates ending in 00 as 1900, instead of 2000. I’m sure you’ve heard about the millennium bug. This is a worldwide computer problem, and could spell potential disaster for some computer systems. So far I have received pamphlets from my bank, the power company, the phone company, and credit card companies—all reassuring me that each institution is doing all it can to prepare for the problem. Here’s the general message of the pamphlets, summarized for your convenience.

We have been aggressively working on the Y2K issue for several years with a comprehensive approach to year 2000 readiness. Our dedicated project team is working eight days a week to ensure flaw-free system readiness which encompasses all phases of our operations.

Well, that is a relief, because all these pamphlets could potentially make one feel uneasy. But, with all this reassurance, how could one feel uneasy? I mean, with everyone working so hard to fix the problem, there’s nothing to worry about, right? I picture a task force of stern, but fair computer programmers, with machine guns, dark glasses and fake mustaches harassing a smirking, uncooperative computer.

AGGRESSIVE TASK FORCE GUY: OK, computer, let’s go over this again. What day comes after Jan 31, 1999?

COMPUTER: Computers can’t talk.

What really scares me is that each of these pamphlets usually has a section claiming that its company is working as hard as it can to fix the problem, but vaguely implies that other companies sure could be working harder. A typical sentence: “Of course, we have been working for the last 779 years to insure our systems will be fully tested and compliant by January 1, 1999, but you should be aware that not all companies are working as hard as we are. In fact, a little bird told us that (INSERT COMPETITOR’S NAME) is sitting around, eating Hostess Ding Dongs and drinking Yoo-Hoo instead of working on the problem. Just thought you’d like to know.”

To further edify you, the reader, I have read these pamphlets completely and carefully, digesting each pertinent morsel of information, in order to provide you with a helpful list of things that may be affected by the Y2K bug.

Suggestion 7: Take advantage of the programs and assistance available through the CCC in Davis Hall. Among Hopkins’ suggestions: bring your resume in for a critique; check out job postings in the office; attend career expos available on campus; and participate in workshops available on everything from resume preparation to job strategies and interviewing skills development.

Suggestion 8: Combs suggests becoming “a junkie for your career.” Surround yourself with the people and publications of your dream job.

Join your career field’s professional organizations through membership in student chapters, and talk to people in the business.

Suggestion 9: Borrowing from the creative slogan of Nike: Just do it.

Combs said one of the most important things to remember is that “college is not teaching you the steps to a great career. You need to feed the career part of your brain on your own.” He reminds students of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s quote: “What would you do if you had the power? Do it, and you will have the power.”

Suggestion 10: Above all else, do what makes you happy. Combs said when you find the job that makes you say, “This is my calling, this is what my heart wants to do,” be “courageous enough to turn in that direction.”

Getting prepared for that moment while you’re in college will help you point your compass the right way at the right time.

Books to send you to the head of the class

Kaeve Simons
Next Contributor

Patrick Combs said “books are treasures” that can help you be the kind of candidate your dream job will be hiring. So besides checking out the career section of bookstores for specific subjects related to your major, Combs suggested some titles that offer general help for job seekers. They include:

* "How To Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie. "This is such an incredible book;

Combs said, "I read it every year!"

Sometimes getting a job comes down to being the one the employer really liked." This book can be an invaluable resource for learning how best to get along with others.

* "Great Jobs for Communications Majors" and the rest of the series (each book dedicated to a particular career field). The only book not available in this series, Combs joked, is "Great Jobs for Undecided Majors."
March 23 Harborside Productions Meeting, 3 p.m., CAC 133.
March 24 Lecture: The Psychological & Spiritual Aspects of Beloved, 6-7 p.m., CAC
March 24 Lecture: "Women and Money" with Lorraine Jones, personal financial analyst. 6:30-7:30 p.m. DAV 130. Call 553-1108 for info.
March 24 Career Expo, 8 p.m., Davis Hall.
March 24 Anthropology Club meeting, 3 p.m., CAC 133.
March 29 Watch the final game of Final Four. Party in CAC. 6-11 p.m. Snacks and beer available. Call 553-1144 for info.
March 30 Harborside Productions Meeting, 3 p.m., CAC 133.
March 30 (New date) Lecture: American Art Conies of Age: paintings from the Lawrence collection, 6:30 p.m., CAC. Call 553-1114 for info.
March 30 Orientation to on-campus recruiting, 5-6 p.m., DAV 112, 553-1129 for info.
March 30 - April 1 Student government elections, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-7 p.m., Davil Hall Lobby.
March 31 Ethics Center presents: "Candidate Outreach to Older-Voters: You Won't Believe the New Strategies" by Susan Macmanus, 12-1:30 p.m., DAV 130. Free & open to public. RSVP to 553-3171 or 553-3172.
April 1 Workshop: Preparing for Exams, 5-6 p.m., DAV 112, 553-1129 for info.
April 5 Lecture: Contesting Race in Public: Stories from beyond the Campus, 6:30 p.m., CAC.
April 6 Lecture: "The Effect of Sanctions and Assauluts on the People of Iraq" with former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. 7 p.m. CAC. Call 553-3458 for info.
April 6 Harborside Productions Meeting, 3 p.m., CAC.
April 11-16 Spring Fling. Weeklong fun and games, including Spring Splash at the pool and Mystery Dinner Theater. Sponsored by Harborside Productions. Call 553-1180 for info.
First Tuesday of each month: Women's Health Issues, a brown bag lunch. BAY 117, Call Sandy Blood at 553-3114 for times.
Every Wednesday Campus Crusade for Christ, 11:45-12:45, DAV 108, 786-6325 for info.
Every Thursday MUSE meeting, 4 p.m. DAV BB. Contact <newberry@worldnet.atl.net> for info.
March 26 Volunteer Action Center hosts "Get Downtown" jazz concert, 4-9 p.m., Central Av., between 2nd and 3rd streets. Call 983-1140 for info.
March 26-28 Tampa Bay Blues Festival, Vinoy Park, 7th Ave. N.E. Call 824-6163 for info.
March 27-29 NCAA Final Four, Tropicana Field, Semifinals at 5:42 p.m. and game on Monday at 9:16 p.m.
April 2 Great Explorations Holiday Camp: 'Beam Me Up,' 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Pier, 802 2nd Ave. N.E., 821-8992 for info.
April 3 Big Band Ballroom Series, The Coliseum, 535 4th Ave. N., 8 p.m.-midnight, 892-5202 for info.
March 26-April 11 1999 Festival of States. Entertainment activities around the city of St. Petersburg. Call 898-3654 for schedule and info.

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Japanese and U.S. baseball share enthusiastic fans

Akira Hibino
Sports Editor

Major League Baseball is on its way. Floridians might feel that way because here, in the Sunshine State most Major League teams are in spring training to prepare for the season. The Tampa Bay Devil Rays' exhibition games are at Al Lang Field, a few blocks away from the USF St. Petersburg campus.

Fans, as well as players, seem eager for the 99’ baseball season to begin. They crowd into the pre-season games to ask for autographs, take pictures of their favorite players, and, of course, watch the games.

Local enthusiasm could be indicative of baseball's popularity in America. However, the United States is not only the country where people are passionate about the sport. One particular country has its own professional baseball league, and people there are also thrilled by the sport. That country is Japan (my native land). And, in fact, certain members of the Major Baseball Professional baseball league, and people there are primarily women, introduce players in a monotonous manner as opposed to American announcers who introduce players emphatically.

Japanese baseball stadiums also have unique structure. Spectators may feel disenchantment from the action due to high wire fences lead fans at every game. Each party has their own distinct cheering techniques. One cheering party, for example, leads spectators by urging them to open blue team-colored, vinyl umbrellas and wave them up and down when their teams are taking the offensive. Another party encourages fans to fly balloons that make shrill noises at the bottom of the seventh inning instead of singing “Take Me out to the Ball Game.”

When a team player is at bat, the party plays rooting music, using trumpets and whistles, usually playing different tunes for each player. Here are some other differences:

Although the Japanese professional league also consists of two leagues, the Central league and Pacific league, there are no division leagues, and there are fewer teams. Six teams belong to each league, and 140 games are played as opposed to 162 in the MLB.

Although it is evident that Japanese baseball is very different from American baseball, both have one major similarity -- enthusiastic and supportive fans.

Championship decisions are also made differently. In Japan, after the regular season, no play-offs are held unless two teams in the same league earn the same number of victories. The top two teams in each league compete in the championships. The regular season in the Japanese league is extremely important since the run-ups have no chance to win.

Some Japanese baseball stars were actually in the music industry. In fact, Sadaharu Oh, who hit 868 home runs—the world record—was a prominent recording artist. Imagine Mark McGwire as a pop performer.

Japanese baseball announcers, who are primarily women, introduce players in a monotone manner as opposed to American announcers who introduce players emphatically.

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When a team player is at bat, the party plays rooting music, using trumpets and whistles, usually playing different tunes for each player. Here are some other differences:

Although the Japanese professional league also consists of two leagues, the Central league and Pacific league, there are no division leagues, and there are fewer teams. Six teams belong to each league, and 140 games are played as opposed to 162 in the MLB.

And it must be working because according to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the number of drunk driving fatalities has decreased 39% since 1982.* That's great news. Budweiser would like to acknowledge the people who deserve the credit: the 109 million Americans who have either been or used a designated driver.** Thanks to each and every one of you for having the drive to do the right thing. We encourage everyone else to follow your lead. Be responsible. Designate a driver.


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