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Wong joins USFSP

By KEELEY SHEEHAN
Editor in Chief

Julie Wong, regional associate vice chancellor for student affairs, began her new position at USF St. Petersburg on August 1, after serving as the vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Wong received a bachelor’s degree in recreation and leisure studies from San Jose State University, a master’s degree in student affairs administration from Michigan State University and a doctorate degree in higher education administration from the University of Southern California.

While studying at San Jose State, Wong completed an internship at the University of California, Davis, in the area of campus recreation. She enjoyed being on a college campus, and after discovering that her advisor had attended Michigan State to learn how to work on a college campus, considered it for her own future and ultimately decided to attend.

Wong said she enjoys working within the intellectual community found on a college campus.

“I like the opportunity to be on a campus with cutting edge issues,” she said. “Whether it’s politics, education, government, the economy, you’ll have faculty members that are interested in researching certain things.”

Tuition increases amid continued state budget cuts

By CHRISTOPHER GUINN
Contributing Writer

As the state cuts appropriations to USF, students have to pick up more of the tab, starting with a 15 percent tuition increase this fall.

Julie Jakway, the regional assistant vice chancellor for financial services at USF St. Petersburg, laid several pages out on the table. “This is why tuition is going up,” she said. “State appropriations drive tuition.”

Enrollment at USFSP has increased by 26 percent between 2008 and 2011, but state funds to the university declined by 28 percent, from $31.6 million to $22.8 million.

USFSP faces another $2.4 million cuts in state funding for 2012—$35 percent reduction since 2008.

The number of out-of-state students, who pay more than three times the in-state tuition, is also on a decline.

Since 2001, the percentage of non-resident undergraduates in the USF system has declined from 3.5 percent to 2.4 percent. In that same time, Florida State University had a 6.5 percent decline, to 3.6 percent, and the University of Florida lost nearly 2 percent, to 2.1 percent.

To make up the funding difference, the Florida Board of Governors, the governing body of the state university system, approved an 8 percent tuition increase for all Florida public universities.

In addition, the Board of Governors approved USF’s request for an additional 7 percent increase as a tuition differential fee. According to state law, 70 percent of the revenue generated from this fee must be used to provide for undergraduate education. The remaining 30 percent goes toward need-based financial aid.

Students are exempt from this fee if they have been continuously enrolled in the USF system since July 1, 2007.

Tuition and fees in Florida’s university system is the second lowest in the country for in-state students with an average cost of $5,086 for 30 undergraduate credit hours.

Read more on page 6
Student input matters, says new SG president

By ARIELLE STEVENSON

News Editor

Student Government President Courtney Parish spoke to The Crow’s Nest about her passion for campus leadership and her plans to help students become more connected to USF St. Petersburg.

Tell me a little about yourself; major, hometown, interests, etc. What made you want to get involved with Student Government?

I am a Tampa girl, born and raised. I love traveling, sailing, ceramics, kayaking—basically just going out and exploring. Towards the end of my freshman year I came up with some projects that I wanted to see around campus so I joined Student Government to make them happen.

How’s it going so far serving as president?

So far, I have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure. I have met interesting people and brainstormed on some exciting ideas for our campus. I look forward to the first senate meeting of the fall when we can energize some of the projects and ideas that we have been discussing.

What do you hope to accomplish as president? Are there any projects or programs you want to focus on?

My platform was communication and a stronger campus identity; there are several projects and adjustments that are in the works to facilitate more open and inclusive communication and a more cohesive USF St. Pete identity. We are working on a market on the Walk, putting together freshmen survival guides, getting the campus shirts in the bookstore and thinking of ways to increase communication on campus. Unfortunately, there are a couple of projects that we have to rework due to budget cuts.

The state and country are facing major financial setbacks, resulting in budget cuts to our university. What kinds of challenges does Student Government deal with as a result? How are you navigating those?

We are in the midst of an unprecedented financial crisis but there are still budgets to be worked out and allocations to bechanneled. Education still seems to be the best investment for long-term growth. This year I would like to get a bus full of USFSP students to Rally in Tally. It is a great opportunity for them to talk to local representatives and express their feelings on the budget cuts and how they are affecting them.

What should students do to get involved in the student government process?

Students interested in getting involved in SG should contact me at cparish@mail.usf.edu or our Senate President Cory Hebert at cory.hebert@mail.usf.edu. We have some volunteer positions open in the executive branch and if they are interested in senate, the midterm election in October is a great way to get involved and active on campus.

Are there any programs on campus that are defunct or need improvement?

There is always room for growth on campus. Bulls Bucks and Bulls in the Burg are two programs that tapered off last year that we are working on revising and making more dynamic and intuitive this year.

What should we know about this year’s group at Student Government?

This year’s SG is excited and hard working. It is easier to get involved and have their ideas come to reality. We have seasoned politicians and enthusiastic newcomers, all working toward a great USFSP and a fulfilling college experience.

Construction on the new student center has begun. How will this change USFSP?

The new student center will lead to a boom in student involvement on campus. It will be a multi-purpose facility to meet fellow students, whether for academic discussions or relaxing conversation.

Is there anything else we should know about you, SG or this year at USFSP right now?

We have a gorgeous campus with improving facilities and dynamic faculty. Experience the programs and opportunities that USFSP has to offer and, from a position of involvement, please share your thoughts on improvements and offerings that should be considered to enhance the St. Pete campus.

Bright Futures changes, again

By ARIELLE STEVENSON

News Editor

It has been a roller coaster year for budgets of any sort. As a student, it’s good to know where money for school is coming from. For additional contacts, copy the editor-in-chief.

Press run: 1,000

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Join us at our next staff meeting! Mondays at 5 p.m. in PRW lobby.

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news@crowsneststpete.com

Bright Futures Scholarship Program criteria and requirements are subject to annual legislative review and change,” said Deborah Higgins, information specialist at the Florida Department of Education. “This has resulted in various changes to the program’s requirements and funding since the program was initially funded.”

In 2008-09, students couldn’t make up dropped credit hours but they could make up their GPA. In 2009-10, they could make up hours and their GPA, but they had to reimburse the university for dropped classes.

In 2010-11, students who graduated in 2009-10 or earlier could make up both hours and GPA. Students would often take summer classes to make up hours or grades.

“Students have always been able to take classes in the summer using their own funds and apply the grades or hours to meet the renewal requirements to restore their scholarship,” Higgins said. “For the Florida Medallion Scholarship, students need to earn 24 credit hours for full-time rewards.”

But this year is different. Students that graduated high school in 2010-11 or later could only cover their GPA shortfalls after their first year in the program. After that, students could not make up hours or GPA.

But the legislation was passed after some summer classes had already begun. This potentially leaves some students high and dry, without much time to find alternative funding streams.

“The Department of Education is responsible for implementing what the Legislature enacts into law,” Higgins said. “For legislative intent or rationale for statute changes, we suggest you speak with your legislators or legislative staff.”

The changes are expected to save $87 million for the state next year.

Career Center Events

The Career Center has many events planned for the new semester. Take advantage of these upcoming dates:
The Freedom Riders was a movement that forced national attention on civil rights in 1961 by testing federal interstate travel integration laws in the South. The riders were beaten, bombed and thrown in jail for trying to integrate interstate and bus stations.

This summer, a group of 40 students and teachers from USF St. Petersburg, Stetson University College of Law and Stetson University, Deland, set off for a week on a bus into the heart of the South to learn their story. The itinerary was aggressive—seven days of nearly non-stop touring and lecturing on the Freedom Rides, the civil rights movement and what came after.

USFSP’s group was a mixed bag of graduate Florida studies students and various undergraduates. Our fearless leader, historian and USFSP professor Ray Arsenault’s book “Freedom Riders” was made into a PBS American Experience documentary last year. It gained national attention after “The Oprah Show” invited Arsenault and all living Freedom Riders to come on May 4 for the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides.

We started in Nashville, where the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee originated. In downtown Nashville, SNCC orchestrated sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, stand-ins at the segregated movie theatre and eventually participated in the Freedom Rides. They were taunted, beaten and jailed. We traveled with Rip Patton, one of the 14 students from Tennessee State University who were expelled for participating in the Freedom Rides. The Freedom Rides began long before 1961, but the movement that spurred the most attention began with a group of students in Nashville, Tenn. Nashville’s Student Non-Violent Coordinating Council was composed of mostly Tennessee State University and Fisk University students.

Their efforts wouldn’t have been possible without the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). CORE’s Jim Lawson was an avid civil rights activist who instilled Gandhi’s nonviolence, Jesus Christ and Martin Luther King Jr. In Nashville, SNCC students who trained through CORE began sit-ins to integrate local businesses. Students were instructed how to cover themselves when attacked. They couldn’t talk or joke or laugh. They were instructed to be stoic and steadfast. If the police came, you didn’t fight back, you simply got arrested and either posted bail or spent the night in jail.

But walking through Nashville after dark, the historic civil rights narrative was replaced with country music fare. There aren’t any monuments on the streets of Nashville to commemorate the incredible amount of work and change that happened there. Walking through the streets covered in neon cowboy signs, you’d never know anything had happened here at all.

“There can’t be the bloodstains anymore,” said John Seigenthaler, journalist and former aide to Robert Kennedy. He was knocked unconscious by an angry mob attacking the Freedom Riders in Montgomery.

For the Freedom Riders who still reside in Nashville, it hurts. Some had never even spoken about their participation until a few years ago.

“I didn’t tell my husband until eight or nine years ago,” said Patricia Armstrong, one of the Nashville-based Freedom Riders. “I think part of me was ashamed and part of me feared retaliation.”

A plaque on the side of the road marks the Freedom Riders who were mobbed in Anniston’s Greyhound station, tires slashed and later bombed down the road. The doors marked “colored” have been boarded up but are still visible.

In Birmingham we witnessed utter poverty in an area dubbed Dynamite Hill because of the incredible number of racially charged bombings that occurred there. We watched the landscape of Jim Crow and its fallout from the removal of the Ten Commandments from the rotunda of the Alabama state judicial building. He spoke about what it takes to be a good judge.

“Empathy,” Thompson said. “You have to understand the plight of people who are like you, who are the total opposite of you and still be unbiased towards them.”

We met Federal Judge Myron Thompson in Montgomery. Thomson was one of the key justices in the crafting Brown v. Board of Education decision. Justice Johnson ruled on gay rights, equality for women and prisoner’s rights in a time when it would seem too progressive to do so.

“We all have a little racism, a little sexism that comes from an unconscious place where we want to make a quick decision about who we feel comfortable around,” Thompson said.

“You have to come to grips with your inner self and not get set in your ways and always be open to new ideas.”

Shortly after our return home, the documentary based on Arsenault’s book was nominated in three categories for the Primetime Emmy Awards; Exceptional Merit in Nonfiction Filmmaking, Outstanding Writing for Nonfiction Programming and Outstanding Picture Editing for Nonfiction Programming. The awards are announced in September.
Homegrown Glitz

BY AMANDA PRETULAC

Arts Editor

Movies are a great way for students to enjoy a break from their hectic class schedules. For a change of pace, try taking a short drive over the Howard Frankland Bridge into the heart of downtown Tampa, where you will find the treasured gem the Tampa Theatre.

The non-profit theater has been making the experience of going to the movies glamorous since 1926. The theater tugs at the hearts of the Tampa Bay community, and has gained national and worldwide recognition. Life magazine picked the theater as one of America’s 21 Wonders—a well-deserved title due to its intricate architecture and attention to details.

Adding to the old school charm, some also believe the theater is haunted by a ghost named Fink. “Staff have heard keys jingling and there have been sightings of Fink around the theater,” said Tara Schroeder, of Tampa Theatre public relations.

“It’s almost like an episode of out of Scooby-Doo,” said Kathryn Reina, also with the Tampa Theatre. Ghost stories aside, the charming details make the theater an unforgettable experience.

A 1,400-pipe organ sits atop the stage inside the theater. Volunteers take turns entertaining the audience by playing the organ before shows. The organ is also used for special effects during silent films. An upcoming showing of the 1924 version of “Peter Pan” on August 28 at 3 p.m. will feature the Wurlitzer Organ.

Above the stage and romantic Mediterranean scenery are tons of glittering stars across the ceiling. “We refer to the stars as wishing stars,” Schroeder said. About 99 wishing stars adorn the theater’s night sky.

“The Tampa Theatre is such a beloved community gathering because you can stop in to forget your cares and escape to a fantasyland,” Schroeder said. The theater has become a popular place for proposals with such romantic scenery.

Besides the incredible views, the theater also hosts yearly events that cater to the interests of the community. The documentary “Pearl Jam Twenty,” directed by Academy Award winner Cameron Crowe, will play on September 20 at 7:30 p.m. The highly anticipated 10th annual Tampa Theatre Wine Fest will take place from September 23 to 25. It’s the perfect excuse to dress up while enjoying wine and delicious food from Tampa restaurants. The film “La Dolce Vita” will be playing in background to compliment this year’s theme, La Dolce Vino.

During the holiday season, the theater features movies such as “The Nightmare Before Christmas” and “It’s a Wonderful Life,” but not until carols and sing-a-longs have been sung with help of the Wurlitzer Organ.

The Tampa Theatre and its staff make viewing a classic movie an enchanting experience for everyone—where children’s imaginations can run wild while viewing fairytales and grandparents can re-live their first date.

By AMANDA PRETULAC
Arts Editor

The Tampa Theater lobby gives visitors a chance to step back in time with its extravagant molding and intricate tile work.
St. Pete’s Finest

By AMANDA PRETULAC
Arts Editor

St. Petersburg has a hometown feeling that doesn’t compare with other cities in the Bay area. For the freshmen just starting out, or the seasoned USFSP pro looking to get reaquainted with the city, there are several area hotspots to explore.

Saturday Morning Market
100 First St. SE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Instead of sleeping in on Saturday mornings, opt to shop the market early for the best deals. The Saturday Morning Market is the perfect place to purchase organic lettuce or fresh baked strawberry scones. In addition to food, some of the vendors also sell vintage clothing, fresh flowers, and handmade beaded jewelry.

The Dalí Museum
One Dali Blvd.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Not far from campus is the new Salvador Dalí Museum where visitors can take in the vast art collection of Dalí. Marvel at the beautiful architecture that houses several hundred masterpieces or get lost in the garden maze outside. The museum also offers a number of activities during the week, such as Yoga + Dalí on Sundays. Remember to bring a USFSP student ID for free admission.

Revolve Clothing Exchange
2000 4th St. N
St. Petersburg, FL 33704
Revolve is a great place to shop vintage or brand name clothes and accessories at great prices. The store also purchases clothing in good condition for store credit or cash.

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The Museum of Fine Arts
255 Beach Drive NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Along the waterfront just a few blocks away from the Dali is the Museum of Fine Arts. Enjoy a gourmet lunch in the MFA cafe then stroll the many galleries the museum has to offer. Periodically, the museum has special exhibitions. Visit www.fine-arts.org for more information. Students with a USFSP ID receive a discount.

Tropicana Field Sports Complex
1 Tropicana Drive
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
Baseball season will be winding down soon, so visit Tropicana Field while you still can for a great afternoon of sports while beating the heat indoors.

St. Pete Beach
155 Corey Ave.
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706
Because Florida has sunny weather nearly all year, it is the perfect excuse to visit St. Pete Beach. Fill your up beach tote with sunscreen, a thermos of iced tea and a good read, and you’re all set for a perfect afternoon by the water.

Old Farmer’s Creamery
2531 4th St. North
St. Petersburg, FL 33704
If you are looking for a treat to survive the humidity, stop in at Old Farmer’s Creamery for delicious homemade ice cream in endless flavors. Remember to bring cash since they do not accept credit cards.

Haslam’s Book Store
2025 Central Ave.
St. Petersburg, FL 33713
This historic bookstore, open since 1933, has earned a special spot in the hearts of St. Petersburg locals. Spend an afternoon at Haslam’s perusing the classics or meeting an author for a book signing.

Mazzaro’s Italian Market
2909 22nd Ave. North
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Immerse yourself in Italian cuisine at Mazzaro’s. It’s a great place to shop before whipping up a traditional Italian meal or for grabbing a tasty sandwich on the go. Be sure to stock up on cookies and pastries from their bakery for the ride home.

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Photos by Daniel Mutter | The Crow’s Nest
Panhandling, continued from front page

For the next several years, the Board of Governors and univer-
sity officials will have the option to increase tuition up to 15 percent a year.

While in-state tuition increases, out-of-state students will get a slight reprieve with the USF sys-
tem reducing out-of-state tuition fees by 15 percent.

More competitive out-of-state tuition prices should drive some interest to the university system, Jakway said.

Out-of-state students bring “dif-
ferent regional perspectives and K through 12 experiences,” she said, which are healthy for an institu-
tion. “Plus, they pay more money.”

Tuition is only a part of the true cost, however. In 2010-11, fees constituted roughly 32 percent of tuition and fee costs for USF sys-
tem students. For USFSF students, OASIS displays many of these fees as additional tuition with detail code “PUGC,” which denotes US-
FSP group fees.

These fees are assessed per cred-

Tuition increase, continued from front page

The university also assesses several flat fees. All USFSF stu-
dents pay a $5 flat fee per semester. Half of that revenue goes toward USFSP athletics, and the rest is sent for use by the USF system.

Students that take labs or cours-
es with special equipment, such as the Macintosh computer or lan-
guage labs, pay an additional flat fee determined by the department.

The per-course fee for use of a Ma-
cintosh computer lab, for example, was $43.17 in 2010-11.

All named fees are individually accounted for and spent, Jakway said, and all resultant services and infrastructure are provided at cost.

The cashier’s office hopes to explain tuition bills and fees with more clarity on its website in the near future.

News@crowsneststpete.com

KNOW THE LAWS

The City of St. Petersburg’s City Ordinance 20-79 defines pan-
handling as the act of verbally requesting money or an item or an item of service of little value for a donation.

Aggressive panhandling means to approach or speak to a person in such a manner as would cause a reasonable person to believe that the person is being threatened with:

- Imminent bodily injury;
- The commission of a criminal act upon the person or an other person, or upon property in the person’s immediate possession;
- To persist in panhandling after the person solicited has given a negative response;
- To block, either individually or as part of a group of persons, the path of a solicited person;
- To touch a solicited person;
- To engage in conduct that would reasonably be construed as intended to intimidate, compel or force a solicited person to accede to demands.

Prohibited areas:

It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in an act of pan-
handling when either the panhandler or the person being solicited is located in, on, or at any of the following locations:

- Prohibited zone
- Bus stop
- The bus transfer facility located at 3180 Central Ave.
- Public transportation vehicle
- Sidewalk cafe
- Area within 15 feet (in any direction) of an automatic teller machine or entrance to a bank
- Private property, unless the panhandler has permission from the owner of such property

It shall be unlawful to engage in an act of panhandling on any day after sunset or before sunrise.

Aggressive panhandling does not include:

Standing passively, sitting, performance art, a sign, or other indication that a donation is being sought (without any vocal request other than in response to an inquiry by another person).

You can contact University Police Services at 727-873-4140.

Wong, continued from front page

She also enjoys working with stu-
dents—who have ambitions and aspirations to do great things in the world,” she said.

“I also love the diversity,” Wong said. “It’s an opportunity to learn and to grow. You’re around people who are constantly learning, so that motivates you.”

Education is a great business to be in, she said, because the bottom line is to help students, who are facing challenges in their lives out-
side of school, achieve.

“It’s an opportunity to create environments for people to be suc-
cessful,” she said.

Wong oversees several areas on campus, including housing and residence life; counseling, health and wellness; student life and en-
gagement, including Student Gov-
ernment, clubs and organizations, and the Waterfront; and financial aid, scholarships and Veterans Af-
fairs. She acts as a liaison between students and administration.

“I like it because it’s so varied,” she said. She supervises staff, at-
tends meetings with other campus administrators, attends student events and is involved in the cur-
rent building projects on campus—
the new multipurpose student center and the construction to the Campus Activities Center.

“It’s a lot of problem solving, and community relations,” she said. “It’s a lot of meeting individually with staff and addressing short range needs. Wong plans to work with the directors of various as-
psects of campus—student services, financial aid, housing, student life, health and wellness—on creating a vision for student affairs.

“I think, always, my goal is to create environments and commu-

ties where students feel comfort-
able—where all students feel wel-
come and where they want to get

Fees Broken Down

Included in Tuition and Fees, these charges are per credit hour. They are listed on OASIS with the detail code PUGC Fees. In 2010-11, fees constituted roughly 32 percent of costs for USF system students.

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<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology*</td>
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*Of this, 75 percent stays on the campus where the fee originated and 25 percent goes toward USF system improvements to things such as Blackboard, OASIS and the new DegreeWorks auditing system.

News@crowsneststpete.com
The Crow’s Nest is back with unbiased news for the USFSP community.

In the early morning of April 16, 2007, a 23-year-old mentally ill man with a messianic complex and a hatred for the wealthy carried two semi-automatic handguns to his college campus and shot two people. Two hours later, he opened fire in an academic building. Thirty-three people died that day, including the shooter, and 25 more were injured.

Virginia Tech did not send out notification of the initial incident until around the same time the man began his second rampage. Even after that, the university merely warned people to “stay put.”

The Collegiate Times, an independent, student-run newspaper at Virginia Tech, started online coverage shortly after the second shooting, just before the university warned people not to move. The newspaper delivered extensive coverage of the event in the days after, including a detailed timeline on April 17 and an exclusive list of the confirmed deceased that were both widely quoted by international news outlets.

The Collegiate Times demonstrated that student newspapers are more than just a collection of out-of-touch Hunter S. Thompson emulators. In fact, student newspapers typically hold forth four important functions on a college campus—a chronicle of campus life, a community forum, a watchdog and a training ground for future journalists.

The Crow’s Nest’s first issue of the semester is a testament to our dedication to these roles. With our stories about campus construction and Student Government President Courtney Parrish, we distribute news for student benefit and record campus history. Watch pages 1 through 3 this year for news relevant to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, 4 and 5 for information about local arts and entertainment, page 7 for The Crow’s Nest’s view on the issues and opinion columns written by staff, and page 8 for sports and other Bulls news. We offer the best and most comprehensive selection of USFSP-related content.

We don’t just publish the news, though. Modern journalism is a two-way street. Our article about panhandling on campus was written due to one student’s concern about the issue, and we encourage more students to come to us with their concerns in the future. Students who have an issue they would like investigated, or who think we are doing a particularly good or bad job covering something should let us know.

A newspaper’s role as a watchdog is a particularly important one to us. While college campuses are institutions of learning, its not unusual to have a major scandal or two every so often. The recession and the accompanying budget cuts have created a dangerous atmosphere for students. Our examinations into the recent tuition hikes and the changes to the Bright Futures program reveal the culprits behind these actions, and their motives for doing so.

The watchdog role, however, is the one most likely to get a student newspaper in trouble. School officials and student governments sometimes decry articles critical of them as libelous, and call writers and editors biased. But at The Crow’s Nest, we leave our preconceived thoughts and biases at home. As professional journalists, we seek the truth above all else. It is our duty as a watchdog.

The Crow’s Nest exists solely to serve those functions. We harbor no biases, we pursue no agenda. We’re here to inform the students, faculty and staff about the news they need to know, to discuss the issues that matter and to be as transparent and professional as possible while we do it.

Welcome to a new year at USFSP, and a new Crow’s Nest. We expect to hear from you.

The Crow’s Nest is not the only student newspaper on campus. While some will point to the Collegiate Times, an independent, student-run newspaper at Virginia Tech, as a model, the fact remains that student newspapers hold forth four important functions on a college campus—a chronicle of campus life, a community forum, a watchdog and a training ground for future journalists.

The plan, devised by governor and information you can use to be a critical thinker about government decisions. Their decisions affect your time, your money, and your future.

While you’re committed to being an informed voter, calling your representatives in the classroom, The Crow’s Nest staff is committed to providing you with news and information you can use to be a smart USF St. Petersburg community member outside the classroom.

But don’t stop there. USF St. Petersburg doesn’t exist in a bubble. It’s part of a thriving, eclectic city, where stories about everything from the arts to local politics to important social issues play out daily. Go beyond the campus boundaries—educational institutions are the one most likely to get a student newspaper in trouble. School officials and student governments sometimes decry articles critical of them as libelous, and call writers and editors biased. But at The Crow’s Nest, we leave our preconceived thoughts and biases at home. As professional journalists, we seek the truth above all else. It is our duty as a watchdog.

The Crow’s Nest exists solely to serve those functions. We harbor no biases, we pursue no agenda. We’re here to inform the students, faculty and staff about the news they need to know, to discuss the issues that matter and to be as transparent and professional as possible while we do it.

Welcome to a new year at USFSP, and a new Crow’s Nest. We expect to hear from you.

The kids aren’t alright
Most Florida high school students are not ready for college.

A large number of freshmen reading this newspaper are likely not actually ready for college. ACT scores released on August 17 show that only 17 percent of Florida high school graduates are ready for higher education, better than only Tennessee and Mississippi. This is an alarming figure, even stacked up next to an average 25 percent college readiness rate nationwide.

While some will point to the teachers and the state of public schooling for this statistic, and others will blame the students, the problem here seems to rest mostly with Florida, which has taken its own look at its high schools and given them a resounding F-O-K.

Last year, a record 71 percent of Florida high schools earned an A or B grade from the state. Only 14 percent received a D or an F, even though most students are graduating without meeting required benchmarks.

The inconsistency between these figures and the ACT scores is holding back improvement efforts for Florida schools, according to John Winn, Florida’s interim education commissioner.

“When you change your standards such that you make a school look much better than it is, you can’t get community support for making it better,” Winn said, in an interview with the Associated Press. He said people then say, “We rude’d F’s for all these years and now we’re safe. OK, our work is over.”

Florida’s high school grading formula is based mostly on students’ scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, or FCAT. Public school students in grades three through 10 take the FCAT annually. The state only requires students to actually pass the FCAT in grades three and 10 to advance—all other annual tests exist merely to provide diagnostic information about students and schools to the state.

The state compiles this information to give each school a grade, which is used to determine the amount of funding a school receives. The higher the grade, the more funding a school receives. Under this system, schools that perform well earn more money, while schools that might need additional funding to improve scores see funding stripped away.

There are clearly a few problems here that need to be remedied if Florida wants to get serious about preparing its students for college.

Overhauling the FCAT system and aligning it with other national tests to provide more realistic grades and reduce grade inflation is a good first step. While fixing the way FCAT scores are tallied won’t solve the problem of under-performed Florida students, it will, at least, provide a better indication of how they are faring.

The second step is already underway. Starting this year, kindergarten is getting a little bit tougher. A new set of heightened requirements, called Common Core Standards, is being implemented in 44 states. Common Core Standards will increase expectations at each grade level, starting with kindergarten this year, and will expand uniformity between states.

Students who fall behind under the new, harder standards will not be held back, but instead will be given a progress monitoring plan and extra support and attention to give them more time to develop critical skills.

The plan, devised by governors and school officers across the country, is an attempt to bridge the educational gap between the U.S. and countries with higher rated educational systems, such as China and Finland. Whether Florida will ever stack up to those countries’ schools remains to be seen, but any step forward for the state third-lowest prepared for college is certainly welcome.

We want to hear from you.

The Crow’s Nest will accept and publish, in print or online, letters to the editor at the discretion of the editor in chief. Letters to be published must meet general standards for accuracy of facts and must not contain language that is offensive or libelous in nature. Anonymous letters to the editor will not be accepted for publication.
The Campus Activities Center will be closing soon. However, students can still continue to use the gym facilities while renovations are underway.

**CAC Core to stay open through October**

**By TAYLOR GAUDENS**

The Campus Activities Center will be closed for renovations at the end of October, and the search is underway for an alternate location for basketball, dodgeball and fitness classes. The fitness center will not be affected and will remain open during the construction on the rest of the building. The CAC Core, the aerobics room, and all CAC offices will be closed.

USFSP’s newest addition to campus, Harbor Hall, has a large space comparable to the Core, and will be the main space for events and activities.

Todd Clark, coordinator of fitness and intramurals, is researching parks and facilities in the area for available courts and fields for intramural basketball, volleyball, soccer and football.

Participation in intramurals has grown 70 percent, Clark said. He needs to find locations for the leagues to play.

“Starting the week of August 22, we’ll be talking to students to see where they go,” Clark said.

The goal is to find locations within 10 minutes of school. Clark ensures there will be no fees for intramurals at the off-campus locations because money was set aside last year in preparation for the construction.

“I would be willing to drive within a five or 10 mile radius of the school,” said Alex Sink, senior biology major and intramural participant. “The closer we are in retrospect to the school, the easier it would be for everyone in the dorms and those who live off-campus.”

“I think I can speak for everyone who participates by saying we would rather travel off-campus to play, rather than not have any games at all,” Sink said.

As for the future home for sand volleyball, Clark said the parking lot behind the gym will “eventually become sand courts” but until then, he is researching a location for both sand and indoor volleyball leagues.

Plans for the sport include a tournament in the fall and a league in the spring.

The search also continues for a space for fitness classes. The aerobics room is part of the construction, and there is need for an auxiliary space. The construction will allow the space to provide two or three classes at once.

Despite the construction, Clark is positive about the upcoming changes. He has plans to begin outdoor dodgeball after the Core is no longer available, and indoor dodgeball and cohoole tournaments inside Harbor Hall. Clark hopes this year’s partnerships with HarborSide Activities Board, Student Government, the Waterfront and other clubs will promote student involvement. One-day events and fitness challenges are also on the calendar, with fitness awards and giveaways to give students incentives to participate in fitness center activities.

Clark plans to use signs, partnerships and activities on campus to publicize the fitness center once the Core is closed.

The last event scheduled in the CAC is The St. Petersburg Times Festival of Reading, on October 22. Don McCarty, assistant director of student life, said there are “no plans to schedule anything” the last week of October.

“We’ll run up until then, until we don’t have the space,” Clark said of the fitness center.

Clark is happy about the CAC construction, especially because the fitness center is “gaining more space that’s almost more useable,” he said. He believes the new space will appeal to more people. There will be more “fun stuff, as opposed to competitive,” he said.

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**Fantasy Football:**

**Offseason effects edition**

By HANNAH ULM

Contributing Writer

Although I always felt confident the NFL labor issues would be resolved by the time regular season started, I must admit I breathed a sigh of relief once it was official. Then I thought, “How will that crazy offseason affect my fantasy football draft?” If you think you can approach your draft in the same way you’ve done for the last few years, you’re wrong. Many things have changed. Here are some off-season effects to take into consideration before you form your team.

The Lockout

Duh. The lockout affected every player, but its safe to say the roosters felt it the most. With only 17 days between the end of the lockout and the first preseason game, roosters had a brief period of time to get accustomed to their new teams. Players who were traded to new teams had even less time to adapt, but had an advantage over rookies by already being familiar with the NFL.

So how should this affect your draft? Be wary of any player that still haven’t trained like it was official. If you still love Mark Ingram, consider drafting him as a backup until he gets a little more time to practice.

Also, read up on players you are considering. How did they spend their time during the lockout? If you’re drafting NFL.com reported that San Diego Chargers RB Ryan Mathews arrived to training camp out of shape and was “unable to finish a conditioning test.” Players who trained hard during their break will have an advantage until the slackers can catch up.

New Rules

The only new rule I foresee affecting players is the new kickoff line. Kickoffs will now be done from the 35-yard line, a change from the previous 30-yard line start. The reasoning behind this change is to limit injuries to players returning the ball. But it also limits opportunities for players to return the ball. Without a doubt, more kickoffs will result in touchbacks, and the glory of 100+ yard TD returns for players like Kevin Hester and Josh Cribbs could be lost forever.

Kickoff returns for TDs usually result in points for your defense. Since special teams, depending on your league settings, So you should also consider this rule when picking your defense, especially if you counted on return points in the past.

Trades

Once the lockout ended and trading began, some teams looked to opportunity to revamp their rosters. Those who utilized the trade options well gave themselves an edge and gave us an opportunity for more fantasy points. A few teams to think about:

- **The New England Patriots**
  - I salivate at the thought of Tom Brady, now more so than ever. He played incredibly last season and his throwing arm looks better because of the many weapons at his disposal. The offseason added another one: Chad Ocho-cinco. Yeah, Ochocinco is crazy but I truly expect him to conform to the Patriots’ mature way of playing and become a great option for Brady. Ochocinco has distracted the nation with his antics in the past few years, but let’s not forget he is a six-time Pro Bowler and he accomplished that while on the Cincinnati Bengals. I think this trade made his stock go up, but may have negatively affected other Patriot players.
  - Tom Brady will be throwing to Ochocinco, Wes Welker and Deion Branch. He’ll hand off to BenJarvus|(brady) and the adorably talented Danny Woodhead. Don’t forget about his superb TE options as well. This talent means Brady is going to have to adapt, but had an advantage over rookies by already being familiar with the NFL.

**Water sports** (water volleyball and inner tube water polo) season starts September 25 with game days on Saturdays at the Waterfront pool, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Captains’ meeting is September 13 at 8 p.m in PRW 123.

Visit www.usfsp.edu/studentlife/campus_recreation/fallsports.htm for more details.

Fantasy Football: Offseason effects edition

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