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Heller and Kuttler examine SPJC partnership

Katie Phillips
Next Contributor

At the April 2 Campus Faculty Council meeting in St. Petersburg, Provost Thomas Tighe assured faculty that he was hearing their concerns about teaching assignments and the lack of resources for research activities. Also under discussion were the proposals to centralize library services under a new dean in Tampa and to move the Ethics Center to Tampa from St. Petersburg.

Dr. Jay Black, chair of the Campus Faculty Council said, "Faculty particularly appreciate a chance for a candid give and take with the chief academic officer for the university. The issues of most importance to us were discussed. The faculty members were particularly concerned about the role of the branch campuses as equal players at the Research 1 level. I thought the exchanges were frank, although not everyone heard what they wanted to hear."

The Provost insisted that USF's status as a Research 1 university meant that growth in research would be encouraged across all campuses, although not every individual faculty member would be engaged in research. There was no question of regional campuses becoming teaching-only sites, despite rumors to that effect. Faculty concerns about teaching assignments, however, were matters to discuss with deans of respective schools in Tampa. Pushed on the point that resources were inadequate for faculty to undertake research, Provost Tighe agreed to listen to requests for further faculty and administrative support on regional campuses and also to publicly endorse the policy of encouraging scholarly activities across departments and campuses.

Some faculty pointed to inequalities in their teaching assignments compared to Tampa. While class numbers were often capped in Tampa, this was not allowed on the regional campuses where enrollment pressures are keenly felt.

Kuttler believes that distance learning will have an increasing role in higher education. It provides opportunities, he said, for students who are unable to travel because of work and family responsibilities. He passionately described how those considerations directly affect many students enrolled in SPJC's computer programs, of which 62 percent already have bachelor's degrees and are picking up additional technical skills.

"Should they have to drive three hours a day to the other side of Tampa? he asked. 'There's no way!'" Heller, whose fields are special education and school psychology, is able to see beyond administrative concerns. He said that distance learning may be convenient or even imperative for those students who need to pick up courses after they receive their degrees, but he believes that interaction is an important part of the university experience.

---SPJC President Carl Kuttler

"... there were two years of communications back and forth, and in frustration we went to FSU."

---SPJC President Carl Kuttler

Dr. Margaret Hewitt of the Department of Education said, "Faculty on this campus not only have a heavier teaching assignment compared with Tampa. We also have administrative duties to do here that our colleagues in Tampa don't have. For instance, the Education Department (in St. Petersburg) has approximately 120 interns per semester to supervise, with all the orientation, seminars and cooperating teachers' meetings to organize, as well as the research evaluations and portfolio assessments to grade." On the Tampa campus, she said, "an associate dean and staff do a lot of the administrative work."

The heavy teaching assignments made it more difficult for faculty to undertake research. This was compounded by a lack of seed funding and administrative support at the grant application stage, and by the fact that graduate assistants were not readily assigned to regional campuses.

"If we got a three hour assignment for..."

Kuttler

The text reads: "There were two years of communications back and forth, and in frustration we went to FSU."

"Should they have to drive three hours a day to the other side of Tampa? He asked. 'There's no way!'"
Internet2: what it can do for you

Lauri Helfand
Assistant Editor

You're driving down a country road. Rain is pummeling your windshield as lightning streaks across the sky. You hear the crash of thunder. As you head around the bend, barely able to keep on the road, you see a tornado whip by less than a mile in front of you.

Relax. You're not really in danger. You're simply viewing a severe storm simulation from the web site of the National Center for Supercomputer Applications via Internet2. Dr. William Kearns, Internet2 executive director for USF, demonstrated this powerful technology at the Symposium on 21st Century Teaching Technologies on April 9 at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

On Feb. 1 USF plugged into Internet2, the new high-speed network with capabilities of 2.5 gigabits (billion bits) per second. Available only to universities now, the system supports real-time transmission of massive audio, visual and text files to any participating institution.

"The connection was made possible by a National Science Foundation $350,000 grant in September 1998, in conjunction with matching funds from the university. Today, about 130 universities across the nation have received NSF grants. In 1996 a group of universities, frustrated by the congested Internet, got together to seek an alternative. USF joined the coalition and together the universities formed the University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development, which is now comprised of more than 140 universities and over a dozen corporate sponsors."

Secondary Education Professor Michael Berson also demonstrated Internet2 applications for collaborative instruction at the symposium. This semester Berson became the first USF instructor to use this technology for team-teaching when his secondary education class linked-up with a class at the University of Virginia's taught by Cheryl Mason. Through a high-tech videoconferencing device called the Intel Team Station the classrooms meet twice a week.

"The device looks like an ordinary personal computer with a camera perched on top of it, however, the device permits highly advanced operations. Before the class, Berson presets camera positions, focusing on different groups of students, using a wishbone shaped gadget that resembles a Nintendo gameplay. The camera also has "auto-track" capabilities. During class, technical support staff can program it to visually lock on to either instructor. The camera literally tracks Berson and Mason, allowing for dynamic presentation of class lectures. Berson assigns camera responsibilities to different students each week, so he familiarizes them with the new technology.

The collaborative project also incorporates a high-tech alternative to the blackboard, called the "whiteboard," that allows both students and instructors at both Internet2 universities, with transfer rates of at least 1 gigabit per second.

vBNS: The very high speed network that currently facilitates USF's Internet2 project

The Allegheny Project: The competitive high-speed network instituted by Quest Communications

SwX: The Southern Crossroads is a cooperative venture by the members of the Southeastern Universities Research Association. From the SoX gigapop these universities connect to the vBNS in Atlanta. Think of the gigapop as the trunk of a tree with branches leading to several southern universities.

gigapop: Short for gigabit point of presence. It's basically an interconnection point that delivers data between Internet2 universities, with transfer rates of at least 1 gigabit per second.

vBNS: Very high speed network

2.5 gigabits per second: 2.4 gigabits per second as opposed to 56 thousand bits per second on a typical home modem—approximately 45,000 times faster. (In practical application, however, expect Internet2 speeds of 100 to 1,000 times faster.)

UCAID: The University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development, based in Washington, D.C., is a coalition of over 140 universities and corporate partners exploring the technology and developing standards for the new Internet.

Internet2 lingo for the computer-impaired

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French, unable to attend the meeting, believes the Ethics Center has to be regularly funded by the university in the future. "A lot of our research projects can't go forward so easily on this campus," French said, citing programs in medical and sports ethics and the university program in Development Ethics and Policy. "We've had better luck gaining funding in the Tampa community for some of our projects," he said.

Provost Tighe suggested to faculty that the Ethics Center might drop its university-wide mission and remain in St. Petersburg with a more limited role to fulfill.

Killeberg was sympathetic. "If the university doesn't have the funding for the center to properly express its university-wide mission, then it's probably best to stay where it began and has a good base of support from the community," he said.

Counsel, continued from page 1

research and our fair share of graduate assistants here," Hewitt said, "then there would be no equality problem. As it is, we are being judged on our tenure and promotion packages on the same basis as colleagues in Tampa who have these advantages." She added, "If the conditions aren't going to change, then there has to be some notation written into our tenure package to say what the expectations are for regional campus faculty as regards research activities and publications."

Hewitt believes that the Provost was sympathetic to the concerns expressed. However, she's still skeptical. "Unless he takes it on himself to really foster us and be an advocate for us, and I'm not sure that he will be able to do that, then I don't think there will be any changes in the near future," she said.

"We didn't ask about the proposals to centralize library services under a dean in Tampa, Provost Tighe emphasized that the issue at stake was about reasonable operational economies and efficiencies rather than controls. Tighe assured faculty: "If it will harm your operations, then we'll back off the principle" (of efficiencies). Tighe also indicated he was "not at all convinced we need a dean" (of libraries). Final decisions about the task force recommendations would be left to the library directors to agree on.

Pressed for his views on the controversial proposal to move the Ethics Center to Tampa, Provost Tighe admitted he had not had time to give due consideration to the draft report submitted in January.

The Ethics Center was established on the St. Petersburg campus in 1994 with a university-wide mission to encourage the teaching of ethics across the curriculum, and outreach efforts to the community and professional constituencies. Local donors provided funding for the Poyster-Jamison Chair in Media Ethics, the Cole Chair in Ethics and the Bishop program in ethical leadership.

The appointment of Dr. Peter French, center director and holder of the Cole chair, as Chair of the Department of Philosophy in Tampa, led to a proposal to move the center to Tampa. It could then tap into the resources of philosophy graduate assistants and develop new sources of funding.

Dr. Mike Killenberg, a member of the Ethics Center Review Committee, said the committee recommended the Ethics Center move to Tampa, while the Poyster-Jamison Chair in Media Ethics, together with the Cole Chair and the Bishop program should remain in St. Petersburg. "We would have an operation in St. Petersburg that would work with, but not for the Tampa center," Killeberg said.

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Sanchez, electronic information librarian, worked furiously to update the library's computer network at USF St. Petersburg Campus so that it could handle the Internet2 technology. A dismantled computer, with circuits and wires exposed, rested on the workbench in his office. Part of Sanchez's job is to manually upgrade every single computer in the library with new network cards. He is also in charge of upgrading the entire library network from 10 megabits per sec to 100 megabits per second.

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Dr. Stephen Ritch, director of student affairs at USF-St. Petersburg, also weighs this issue seriously. Although he is open to the benefits of distance learning, he doubts it is satisfactory for most students. In his conversations with more than fifty students, most told him that they enrolled in distance courses because there were no live classroom alternatives. Others chose the courses only because of convenience. Few were satisfied and most expressed disappointment with the experience.

Legislation proposed by Sen. Donald Sullivan, R- Seminole, has also altered the dynamics of the partnership between USF and SPJC. The legislation would permit community colleges to partner with four-year universities to offer bachelor's degrees after approval from Florida's Postsecondary Education Planning Commission. However, if the community college is unable to find a partner for a particular program, it may offer a bachelor's degree in that program after receiving approval from the legislature.

Last summer, as part of a pilot program, SPJC was given the opportunity to provide limited bachelor's degree programs. Three community colleges are expected to pursue the program - South Florida Community College, Miami-Dade Community College and Florida Community College.

Kuttler declined the offer. "We're not trying to become a four-year college," he said, "That's not where we desire to go." A four-year degree would mean a change in name, and a change in the type of student that SPJC serves. But he said, "USF has to become more aggressive in this county if they don't want a lot more competition from (private) universities." USF is becoming more aggressive, Kuttler said. In his opinion, the community colleges were never intended to be four-year institutions. The community colleges are affordable options to provide specific skills and to prime students unprepared for the university. They are also helpful to individuals like his son, who, at 29, chose to return to college. Because he had been out of school for many years, he decided to enroll in community college before transferring to a university.

Heller said that Sullivan, the state senator, expressed the need for four-year access in Pinellas County and that the partnership with SPJC provides that opportunity. "The best scenario," Heller said, "was that students who enroll in SPJC classes on the St. Petersburg campus would decide to continue their education on the same campus." Ritch said the expectation is that SPJC students, who take courses on the St. Petersburg campus, will continue their education there after graduating from SPJC. "Realistically, the jury is still out on much of this," he said. Because the majority of SPJC students on campus are part-time and nontraditional (over 25, married and/or returning to school), he explained, "it is difficult to predict if they will graduate and continue their education at USF-St. Petersburg." That is one of the hopes, but he said, "it would take a couple of years to see if that happens."

Kuttler is frustrated that USF has adopted an "open-door" policy, by being too lenient on admission standards. He believes that 15-20 percent of USF students did not meet those standards and were waived into the university. In effect, he said, the university is taking some of SPJC's students. "The university does adhere to its standards for admission," Heller said, "In my opinion it's too rigid sometimes." The university does waive certain students, he said, but those decisions go through a committee that seriously reviews special cases. In some instances, he said there are extenuating circumstances.

On the other hand, Kuttler said, USF is too strict on transfer students from the junior college. He is irritated that USF does not accept approximately half of SPJC nursing credits. "There is something seriously wrong in this state when USF will not accept the credits of SPJC students," he said. "It's a crime for our students." Kuttler admitted that USF is becoming more lenient, but he said, USF has lost students because of its rigidity.

Because of rigidly, an apparent lack of interest and several delays, Kuttler said SPJC sought out Florida State University for a baccalaureate partnership in nursing in December 1998. USF administrators were surprised by the announcement, which they discovered through an ad promoting the FSU partnership.

Kuttler said he encouraged USF to join in a nursing partnership in the county, but "there were two years of communications back and forth and in frustration we went to FSU." USF did not follow up until after the ad, he said. SPJC decided to work with USF on a nursing curriculum, and it also plans to go ahead with the FSU partnership.

There were communication errors on both sides, Heller said. The university planned to be involved in the nursing partnership, he said, but it hadn't happened by December. Heller said that Kuttler "jumped the gun" by pursuing the partnership with FSU at that time. "The bottom line," according to Heller, "is access to a four-year program in Pinellas County without having to drive over a bridge." Another way to meet that need, he said, is for USF-St. Petersburg to become a four-year campus of the university. He believes that the success of the learning community and the SPJC partnership prove that the St. Petersburg campus can handle the responsibility. And he sees that possibility on the horizon.

"My feeling is that 33 years ago this campus probably should have been created as a four-year campus and developed that way," he said, "but that wasn't my decision." Heller doesn't think SPJC would be harmed by the prospect. In fact he thinks it would probably benefit SPJC. Some students may choose to take general education courses at SPJC while attending USF and others may choose to stay in Pinellas County rather than pursuing degrees elsewhere.

In general, however, Heller said that SPJC and USF have had a positive relationship for years. "We asked for courses on this campus from SPJC in 1993," he said, "All of a sudden somebody thinks it's new." He said that conflicts are unnecessary and that sometimes the recent trend toward formal agreements has hampered the process.

He believes that Kuttler may be threatened by USF-St. Petersburg's prospects for expansion and he said, "There are turf issues out there. When you grow someone else thinks that you may be growing into their area." Heller smiled and let his guard down. In spite of apparent tensions, he said, "Carl and I are very good friends."

Kuttler, the southern gentleman pauses mid sentence, his deep voice rising an octave or two, and said, "I was on a state airplane two mornings ago with Betty (Castor). You know Betty and I are fine. We're gonna have our differences." But he said, "If USF is not flexible enough, they need to know it."

Kuttler said that the recent friction between the institutions is "a drop in a tea cup of concerns." Everything must be kept in perspective. "Sometimes your best friends are those who raise serious questions about what you are doing."
A glimpse at bipolar disorder: a family’s struggle

Claudia Sanchez-Bustamante
Next Contributor

Christian* plops down on the couch, staring blankly into space, with the TV set blaring on a music channel. After one of her hysterical fits, her family seems to walk on egg shells around her. Everyone ignores her, not knowing how to treat her. Her sister Marie, the middle child of three siblings, seems confused, but finally she opens up and lets everything out.

Christian has been in these "crazy" moods for weeks now and no one at home knows what to do about it. Dad lets mom handle it, but mom doesn’t know how to handle it. “She gets away with all this crap,” Marie says about her older sister, “and treats everyone in the worst possible ways.”

This seems to be a typical day at the Avery home. For a while, everyone believed Christian was just moody. They fought and argued, thinking she was just being a rude, spoiled brat. But the mood swings did not change, and the fights did not cease. The tension in their home rose to the point where everyone had to seek counseling, but for Christian the counseling became incessant.

The doctors finally said it was not her fault, she was not doing this to be a brat like everyone had thought. Christian had inherited a mental disorder called Bipolar disorder. Also known as manic-depression, it affects at least 2 million Americans at any given time. It involves episodes of serious mania and depression. The person’s mood usually swings from overly “high” and irritable (mania) to sad and hopeless (depression) and then back again, with periods of normalcy in between. The frequency of the swings between these two states and the duration of the mood varies from person to person.

In Christian’s case, these swings happen often, but for a while they can be controlled through medication and psychotherapy. So Marie’s entire family moved more than 3,000 miles from Canada to Washington D.C. where Christian could get the best professional care in the country. It didn’t matter that Jason was just about to begin his senior year in high school and had just begun to fit in to his new environment. It didn’t matter that mom and dad’s jobs were great and they had just reunited with their family after many years. And it certainly didn’t matter that Marie simply did not want to move.

The whole family simply packed up, putting together their own needs behind them, and moved to where Christian could get help. Dad got transferred from his job and mom dedicated her time to making her oldest daughter well with the help available. Jason started his senior year at a new school and Marie started community college close to the new apartment, which was now home. Christian started to see her psychotherapist daily and began taking medication. Everything changed in the hope of making her well.

In Washington D.C., the Avery’s rented a comfortable three-bedroom apartment. Not comfortable enough though for Marie who got stuck sharing a bedroom with Christian. Even if Marie wanted to get along with her sister and help her see that the world can smile once in a while, she can’t. She wakes up every day not knowing what it is. It’s scary when she’s like that though, because I don’t know what she’s thinking or what she’s up to,” Marie says.

Marie prefers to not even talk to her sister on many days. “What’s the point?” she asks. “You can’t win with her and she will only make me feel terrible for being alive.”

So Marie tries to live a normal life, concentrating on school and her relationships with her friends. She tries to protect Jason from feeling as confused and lost as she does. But just when she starts to believe that life could be normal for her, she comes home to find mom shaking and in tears because Christian has just gone through one of her hysterical fits. A mean one, where she seems deliberately out to hurt those closest to her.

Meanwhile, dad comes home from work denying anything ever happened. Jason storms out of the apartment, slamming the door behind him, while Marie just sighs. She takes a deep breath and sits by her mother’s side. “Why don’t we call the crisis line?” she offers in consolation, but the crisis line will only help if the patient is in “immediate danger” of physically hurting herself or others.

“If we have to wait until she practically kills herself or one of us?” asks Marie, who can’t understand this process. The way in which they intervene is so drastic that it’s too painful to bear. They will come in with cops and paramedics in an ambulance, then they brace Christian into a straight-jacket and take her away. It’s something Mom could not bear to do, even in an extreme case.

Christian’s episodes of acute major depression or mania were the focus of her initial treatment. Medication, according to her doctors, was to be given permanently, but no one can force her to take the medicine, and no one can force her to see her therapist either. She knows this and takes advantage of it. Suddenly, Christian decided that she doesn’t need therapy or medicine. “There is nothing wrong with me,” she says.

So the move to D.C. seems to have lost its purpose. Everyone still seems to be walking on egg shells around her, not knowing what to expect. Mom and dad still attend counseling, while Jason seems to have accepted whatever turn his life takes with a rather casual attitude. Marie talks to a therapist at school when she feels like he might have some good advice and when she can’t take it anymore. Many times she wishes she would just go to sleep and never wake up. But she continues to wake up, every single morning to go to school and live her life as best she knows how.

Bipolar disorder usually begins in adolescence and continues throughout life. It is often not recognized as a serious disorder, but is disregarded as a character flaw. It is a serious mood disorder, however, that is not the patient’s fault but affects their ability to function in everyday activities. It affects their work, family and social life.

Today, more is known about this mental health problem thus, more is known about treatments for it. Contrary to popular belief it is not a purely biochemical or medical disorder. There are biological as well as psychological components in every case. In addition, the best form of treatment is a combination of medication and psychotherapy.

The causes of bipolar disorder are as varied as the number of people suffering from it, according to the mental health Bipolar Web page. It is most often recognized by a mood swing between a mania and depression, which may be related to increased stress or other events in a person’s normal life. Nearly anything can trigger the patient to shift their mood, but sometimes there may be no obvious trigger at all.

Family history and genetics may also play a big role in the greater likelihood of someone suffering from this condition in their lifetime. Inadequate coping mechanisms for increased stress may also contribute to the disorder’s manifestation.

*Names changed to protect privacy.
Great Strides is coming to a close
Sandy Blood
Nest Contributor

The Great Strides Personalized Wellness Program that began in January is coming to an end. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank some very generous local business and merchants for supporting our program by donating prizes.

Renaissance Vinoy Resort
Krippmers Salon
Hubbard's Marina
St. Petersburg Hilton
The Keystone Club
Starlite Cruises
The Wine Cellar
Coconuts Comedy Clubs
Ovo Cafe
MOSI
Atwater's Bayboro Cafe
American Stage
Great Explorations
The Tavern
Bayboro Books

A special thanks to Captain Bob Siwik for offering to take three Great Strides Participants for an airplane ride over our beautiful beaches.

Thanks again for your continued interest in motivating our students, faculty and staff to make a commitment to improving their wellness. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Be apart of the USF-St. Petersburg campus newspaper The Crow's Nest Open Positions for Fall 1999

Production Manager
Requires strong, working knowledge of Macintosh, Quark. Photoshop, Illustrator. Paid Position 10 hours per week.

Advertising Manager
Make 15% commission on all ads, plus pay. Requires strong communication (selling) skills, and familiarity with &. Press. Make your own schedule.

Coppieditors, photographers, contributors-
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Interested? Please call Krista Reiner, 553-3118 or Anthony Joiner, Assistant Director Student Affairs, 553-1162. Or stop by the 'Nest!

Ladies and gentlemen of the class of '99

Tom Foster
Nest Contributor

- Take the advice of the sage who urged you to wear sunscreen. That is good, solid advice that I can neither argue with nor embellish upon. But I would like to offer some helpful hints of my own to those of you graduating and going out into that big, cold ruthless world.
- If you handle hot peppers, wash your hands before you use the restroom. This is especially important if you are a guy.
- Do at least one thing a day that you enjoy. If you find yourself doing more than a hundred enjoyable things a day, maybe this time to get a job.
- Take time for exercise.
- Don't obsess over the Olsen twins' new show, Two of a Kind, Fridays at 8 on ABC.
- Support your local community theater. Those people work hard, darn it!
- Learn Latin, ancient Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit.
- Memorize the Gettysburg Address. In Spanish. Backwards.
- If the government mistakenly overpays your tax refund, be a responsible citizen and do the right thing. Send overpaid refunds to: Tom Foster, c/o The Crow's Nest, USF, St. Petersburg.
- Tens and twenties are preferred but I will take a check with three forms of identification.
- Don't be afraid to say I love you.
- Try not to be so callous and hardened that you routinely and gratuitously ridicule people for their bad driving skills. Don't lose your cool just because a driver cuts across four lanes of traffic to make a left turn instead of driving around the block, requiring you to slam on your brakes and spill coffee all over your new pants.
- Walk, barefoot in the grass.

Watch the sunset. Rub dirt in your hair. Lather. Rinse. Repeat.
- Travel the countryside preaching love, harmony and peace. Don't be afraid of being young and idealistic.
- Assert your beliefs loudly on street corners and in crowded restaurants. Insist to everyone you meet that you believe the skipper from Gilligan's Island was responsible for the Kennedy assassination.
- If you are Elvis, please call home. If you think you are Elvis, please stay lost.
- Help yourself to the fruit.
- Write a best-selling biography on the life and times of rapper Vanilla Ice. Cast me as his new kid brother in the film version of your best-selling biography. Or in the lead role. Either way.
- Become successful in business. Using colleagues as stepping stones, aggressively climb the corporate ladder, taking every advantage possible, undercuts the competition to ensure your achievement. Foreclose on the poor. Destroy ecosystems as you drain the world. "Important?" Please call Judy Prince, Store Manager, at 727-538-4185. Equal Opportunity Employer Committed to the Value of Workforce Diversity.

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**Currents**

**ON CAMPUS**

- **April 20** Harborside Productions Meeting, 3 p.m., CAC 133.
- **April 22** USF Day at Tropicana Field, 7:05 p.m., 1-888-FAN-PAYS for info.
- **April 24** Book Sale, 10-4 p.m., DAV 130.
- **April 26** Workshop: Interviewing 1&2: Say What You Mean, Preparing for and Responding to Interview Questions, 5-6 p.m., DAV 112, 553-3171.
- **April 28** The Ethics Center Presents: "Evil Returns" with Dr. Peter French, 12-1:30 p.m. RSVP by April 26, 553-3171.

**OFF CAMPUS**

- **April 20** Kitaro in concert, new age music, oriental flare, 7 p.m., $3. Mahaffey Theater, 400 First St. S., 438-3149.
- **April 22** St. Petersburg Bar Association presents public forums: "Probate Law", 7 p.m. Palladium Theater, 235 Fifth Ave. N., 823-7474 for info.
- **April 23** St. Pete Yacht Club Regatta. St. Pete to Isla Mujeres, 10 a.m. 822-3113 for info.
- **April 24** Marine Quest 5th Annual Open House. Dept. of Environmental Protection & Fla. Marine Research Institute, 100 Eighth Ave. SE, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free, call 896-8626 ext. 2076 for info.
- **April 24** Nite Riders Annual Ball, 8 p.m., The Historic Coliseum, 535 Fourth Ave. N., 892-5202 for info.
- **April 24** Native Plant Society meeting, 7:30 p.m. ,12175 125th Street, N., Largo, 544-7341 for info.
- **May 2** Graduating Commencement Ceremony for the Sarasota Campus, 7 p.m. College Hall, Bayfront Sarasota. Student registration, 6 p.m.
- **May 2** St. Pete Yacht Club Regatta. St. Pete to Isla Mujeres, 10 a.m. 822-3113 for info.
- **May 5** Pinellas Chapter for the Florida Native Plant Society meeting, 7:30 p.m. ,12175 125th Street, N., Largo, 544-7341 for info.

**ON GOING**

- **April - May 15** Shakespeare in the Park, 8 p.m. Performances on Wednesdays-Sundays. Demens Landing on the downtown St. Petersburg waterfront. 823-PLAY for tickets.
- **Every Wednesday** Tea Dance Series at the Coliseum, 535 Fourth Ave. N., 11:30-12:30 p.m. dance lessons, 12:30-1 p.m. taped music, 1-3 p.m. live band. Call 892-5202 for info.
- **Every First Friday** Gulfport Gallery Walk, 6-10 p.m., 28th Ave. on Beach Blvd. S., 321-7741 for info.
- **Every Saturday & Sunday** African Festival Market, 9 a.m. until sundown. Campbell Park, 16th St. & Fifth Ave S., 821-2437 for info.
- **First Friday every month through May** Get Down Music Series. Outdoor music, 5-9 p.m. In the Quarter, Central Ave. Mocked off from Second St. to Third St.

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Ultrarunning: the race across the sky

Akhile Hiltinis
Next Contributor

On July 19, 1997, a USF-St. Petersburg professor was about to do something she had never done before. She was standing at the start line of an ultrarunning race in Woodstock, Vt. preparing to run her first 100-mile race. Twenty­
hours later, she conquered her goal, crossing the finishing

Three weeks before the competition, Barbara Frye, professor of childhood education, paced a four­ friend for the last 40 miles in a 100­ mile race in Western States, Calif.

"I was so excited about it," she said. "This excitement motivated her to run her first complete 100­mile race. She had competed in five­ mile races before, but most people rarely step up to the 50 to 100­mile race, she said.

In February 1997, Frye participated in a 50­kilometer race (31.07 miles) in Sarasota, her first experience at ultrarunning. "Altitude may be hard for people coming from Florida," Frye said. "The runners have to ascend more than 12,000 feet above sea level. The highest point of the trail is 12,600 feet. The weather, as well as the high altitude makes the race harder."

"The weather is very changeable," said Steve Sigua, web designer for the event. "It sometimes sleet and snows, and during the morning the temperature falls to approximately 38 degrees while it goes up to about 70 degrees in the daytime," he said.

Out of the 394 runners, 209 reached the goal line. With a 27 hour and 54 minute record, Frye placed 94th overall, 11th among the women, third in the 40–49 age group and first among the Florida runners.

Frye, who also swims and cycles, tried a triathlon once, but said she really prefers ultrarunning. In a triathlon competitors need an expensive bike, but in ultrarunning runners just need their bodies, she said. "It's not like someone has better equipment than someone else. It's much fairer to use strength and the mind. It's really a mind sport," she added.

The professor called ultrarunning a "pain management" sport. During the race, she focuses on being happy and tries to "keep in touch with the soul.

You have to deal with yourself, who you are as a human being to get through the hard time," she said.

"You have to overcome it." For Frye, the most difficult part of ultrarunning is the first part of the race. When you see at the 20­ mile point in a 100­mile competition, you don't want to concentrate on there being 80 miles left, so she tries to think about the next 10 miles and how far she has to go.

Strategy is highly necessary in this sport. Before a race, planning how to run the long distance and when to supply food and water is very important she said. "It's similar to a game of chess. There is lots of planning involved in knowing the course," she said. The planning is a big part of why she enjoys ultrarunning.

During the 100 miles, she eats energy gels about every hour and 15 minutes and consistently drinks water. She shares the enjoyment of running with another childhood education professor at USF-St. Petersburg, Kim Stoddard. Frye paced Stoddard in a full marathon race in Jacksonville, Fla last December to help Stoddard finish the race in under four hours. She finished with 3:34, her first time under four hours.

"We are good friends," Frye said. "She is a good runner.

Frye's running career started at Charles City Community High School in Iowa where she was a member of the track team. When she was a senior, she placed sevenths in the 880­ yard race, "the longest race for women back then in high school," she said. On the relay team she ran as an anchor and they won the conference championship in the mile race.

Frye runs about 40 miles in five or six days, but when preparing for a race she runs between 50 and 70 miles a week. She usually runs on Croom Trail in Brooksville, Fla., where she competed in a 50­mile race on March 27, finishing second among the women and fourth overall with a time of 8:32:54.

Her goal is to accomplish the "Grand Slam" in the new millennium. From June to September 2000, four major 100­mile races will be held in Western States, Calif., Leadville, Colo., Old Dominion, Va., and Wasatch, Idaho respectively. Only one runner in Florida has ever achieved the "Grand Slam." Not just anyone can race these four contention, the ability of running and luck are essential.

To be able to participate in the first race in California, applicants have to qualify for the event under a specified time. They also have to show proof of volunteering to clean the trails, then the runners are chosen by lottery. Unless runners get in the first race they can never have the chance to compete in the "Grand Slam.

Every year about 800 people apply for the first race but only 350 qualify for the contest. If Frye receives eligibility she wants to "finish all of them within the time limit," she said.

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Run: Elevation Profile Leadville Trail 100

About the Leadville Trail Run:

In 1982, Leadville, Colo., had the highest unemployment rate in the country. Approximately 3,000 out of 5,000 residents found themselves out of work when the major local mine was closed down. Former county commissioner, Ken Chiloub, now one of the state’s senators, responded to the town’s plight by founding the Leadville Trail Run. Seen as a way to attract "economic development" to one of Colorado’s oldest communities and the nation’s highest city in elevation, the Leadville Trail Run, has become one of the nation’s top locations for ultrarunning.

Chiloub was one of 45 male participants in the first race and has gone on to complete 14 runs in 16 years. Runners from around the nation and the world now come to Leadville to compete in the race, many with aspirations of finishing the Grand Slam, a tournament of ultrarunning that requires completion of Leadville and other regional races. And the race has grown greatly since 1982, attracting national attention through CBS, NBC and ESPN coverage. HBO Real Sports filmed a documentary of the race last year.

According to race director Morrie O’Neal, registration fills up in about two weeks. While the competition is stiff, no required ultrarunning race experience is required.

"The way we look at it," said O’Neal, "if you’ve had enough courage to put your name on the line, we’ll let you run."