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Vagina warriors speak out

Irena Milasinovic
Features Editor

The first benefit production of "The Vagina Monologues" was held at USF St. Petersburg's Campus Activities Center on Friday, March 4. The proceeds went to The Haven, a domestic violence shelter, and Safe Center, a rape crisis center. The event, which was presented by the Campus Women's Collective, drew over 200 attendees.

The Obie-wining play is based on Eve Ensler's inter­national experience, included nine students, eight faculty members and one alumnus. They performed the monologues as part of the 2005 V-Day College Campaign.

On or around Feb. 14, members of college and university communities across the nation perform the benefit production on their campuses as part of the campaign. V-Day, born in 1998 as an outgrowth of Ensler's play, is a global movement create to stop violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation and sexual slavery. The purpose is to raise awareness about violence issues and money for local charities that work to end violence against women. The "V" in V-Day stands for victory, valentine and vagina. It proclaims Valentine's Day as V-Day until the violence stops. When all women live in safety, with no fear or threat of violence, then V-Day will be known as Victory over Violence Day.

The monologues tackled subjects that both women and men had a hard time talking about. "A Not-So-Happy Fact" talked about female genital mutilation and the statistic that 130 million women in Africa have been victimized by this act. "My Angry Vagina" criticized feminine products and how they should be produced with more care in mind. "The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy" was a monologue performed by business major Sarah Babcock that focused on how women moan.

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**HIV on the rise among college students**

By Kristen Bradley

Most college students are worried about their grades, research papers and exams. But an increase of AIDS among college students seems to indicate that not all students are concerned about the risks of having unprotected sex and contracting HIV.

It is estimated that one in 500 college students on campuses with more than 25,000 students is affected with HIV, according to a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and the American College Health Association in 1995.

According to USF’s department of admissions, there are currently more than 30,000 undergraduate students enrolled at the university’s four campuses.

The AIDS epidemic is on the rise. About half of all the new HIV infections occur among teenagers and young adults under 25 years of age, according to the CDC.

Holly Rayko, USF’s coordinator for the Health Education Department and Student Health Services, said if the research reflecting those results is accurate, USF’s statistics wouldn’t be any different.

Anually, USF conducts between 200 and 250 HIV tests, said Rayko, who has been with USF for the last six years. Approximately one out of the 250 students tested positive for HIV. This certainly fits the national statistics, she said. The 250 students tested are between ages 18 and 25, and are from all races and ethnicities. HIV can affect and infect everybody, Rayko said.

“There is a huge need for innovative prevention and early intervention programs,” said Mary Ann Green, director of Communications with The AIDS Institute at the College of Medicine at USF Tampa. Students need comprehensive messages that don’t just apply to one population but to everyone, Green said. “Students need to stop being complacent and get educated and know the facts.”

Green said worldwide AIDS is spreading more rapidly among heterosexuals than among any other population. It is a myth that someone who is heterosexual and looks healthy is not at risk, she said. In regards to health awareness and the general population, people don’t want to discuss their sexuality or to talk about these things with their partner, and this is where people can run into potential problems, Green said.

The priority is abstinence, which is the only 100 percent way not to be at risk. Rayko said. She added that students need to have access to accurate information and instruction regarding the use of clean needles, condoms and prevention for oral sex.

“Many students don’t think they are at risk because they don’t use needles and they know who they’ve been with,” Rayko said. She is at the most risk because college years are a time when many experiment. Students might try things like having same-sex intercourse and other risky behaviors, Rayko said.

“It doesn’t matter who a person is if you are sexually active it puts you at risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases,” she said.

USF Tampa’s Student Health Services has confidential HIV testing available for all USF students who have paid the campus health fee of $475. Students who test positive for HIV are usually referred to outside community resources.

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**Writing and math centers close to expansion**

By Donald Wolf

USF St. Petersburg’s math and writing centers, which offer tutoring for students, will soon expand in terms of programs and office space.

Located in two study rooms in Poynter Memorial Library, the math and writing centers currently help prepare students for tests such as the College Level Academic Skills Test and the Graduate Record Examination. Students can get help on areas including writing, math, test preparation and essay organization, as well as construction of personal statements for law, graduate and medical students.

Bette Diane McKinity, academic director of the writing and math centers, is hoping to expand the programs.

For the past two years, she has been active in creating a proposal that details the expansion, which would allow for more programs and longer hours to accommodate students with different schedules.

The proposal includes the ideas of developing tutoring programs for business, economics and Spanish classes, and providing training for tutors. McKinity also hopes the writing and math centers could offer programs that teach students how to study and prepare for tests more efficiently. The programs would teach better note-taking and techniques to ease test anxiety and curb procrastination. There are even hopes that the center could make syllabi and old tests from different courses available for students.

McKinity also wants to extend the writing and math centers’ weekly hours of operation to 30. Currently the writing and math centers are open for 27 hours a week.

The proposal for expanding the writing and math centers must be approved by USF St. Petersburg’s Campus Executive Team. This team helps determine the acquisition and management of the university’s monetary resources.

McKinity said she did not know when final approval would come from the Campus Executive Team, but said she hoped the team would approve the proposal after spring break.

However, the writing and math centers have already received more office space.

USF St. Petersburg’s Student Government offered the writing and math centers two of its rooms located in the Terrace buildings, a set of portable offices located east of Davis Executive Building.

See WRITING Page 6

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**Correction:** In a story in the Feb. 25 issue of The Crow’s Nest, Professor Joani Spadaro’s name was misspelled. The story should also have stated that USF St. Petersburg offers a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in studio art with a concentration in graphic design.

**Clarification:** In the same story, the full context of a quote from Professor Joani Spadaro was inadvertently omitted.

The quote referenced Spadaro’s disappointment in being assigned office space in Davis Hall rather than the Williams House. The full quote should have read as follows: “I was truly disappointed. Actually, I was furious, but during this time, the entire campus was being displaced in one way or another. Everyone was moved.”

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Editorial

By Adam Fowler
The Oracle (USF Tampa)

Euphorizing upon his keen sense of the human psyche, comedian and 1980 talk-show host Bill Maher told MENBC's Joe Scarborough recently, "I think religion is a neurological disorder. If you look at it logically, it's something that was drilled into your head when you were a small child and then drilled into mine at that age. And you really can't be responsible for what adults put into your head!

Further enlightening the television audience, Maher also said, "We are a nation that is unenlightened because of religion. I do believe that I think that religion stops people from thinking. I think it justifies crimes. I think flying planes into a building was a faith-fueled initiative.

We can all breathe a sigh of relief. Thanks to the FBI, we finally know what's wrong with these religious nuts. It certainly was drilled into mine at an early age. And you really can't be responsible for what adults put into your head when you were a kid for what adults put into your head."

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"The horror, the horror!" These famous final words from Joseph Conrad's disturbing novel "Heart of Darkness" are some of the most misunderstood and misquoted in history. In light of recent headlines, this human tragedy in contemporary African history genocides in Rwanda, civil war in Congo and apartheid in South Africa, to name a few, we have come to see the horror of wars with African barbarity. Yet, this mistake is not only a gross misunderstanding of Conrad, but symptomatic of a naive, racist world vision.

Conrad's novel is the story of a savvy businessman who, upon entering colonial Africa, turns into a cannibalistic, violent character who adorns his horse with several black heads. It is a horrific tale based on the atrocities committed by the so-called "civilized" Westerners against the indigenous populations.

On one level, it's a portrait of the monstrous capacity that lies within all of us, playing out in circumstances to enslave, exploit and kill. On another level, it's a narrative of the brutal structures of colonialism that continue to haunt the African continent.

I now find myself upon that very continent, braving stifling heat and less-than-reliable Internet cafes to write this column. I am in Kampala, Uganda, studying development studies and the linguistic landscape at Makerere University. I am studying here through the School for International Training, an academic institution that believes in global exchange to build cross-cultural competencies.

When most of us think about Africa, we are reminded of the head-hunting, human tragedies in contemporary African history genocides in Rwanda, civil war in Congo and apartheid in South Africa, to name a few, we have come to see the horror of wars with African barbarity. Yet, this mistake is not only a gross misunderstanding of Conrad, but symptomatic of a naive, racist world vision.

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Spring fashion says don't be afraid of color

Ladies and gentlemen, many designers have unveiled their hottest looks for spring. We're dishing out the latest fashion crazes right here. This season is sporting some colorful new trends for both girls and guys. Girls, for clothes, think white, turquoise, green and coral. For shoes, bags, nails and accessories, think metallic and neon.

This year's spring line has ancient Greek influences. The film "Aviator" also heavily inspired spring fashion. Women's fashion is playing on the styles of the roaring '20s flappers and flirty '50s damsels.

Are you still hurting from paying your tuition? Don't worry. We went undercover into the fashion world to reveal where you can pick up the spring wardrobe without emptying your wallet.

Women's Fashion
Think Bohemian diva, think sparkle

Knee-length gypsy skirts, add some ruffles and sequins and you're set
- Charlotte Russe: White, ruffled knee-length skirt by Refuge, $24.99
- Marshall's: Black sequined gypsy skirt with brown and white flower print by Magazine, $16.99
- Macy's*: Bright pink gypsy skirt with sequins by Angie, $36

Btery tailored jackets and trench coats, think safari
- Marshall's: Khaki trench coat by Kenari, $49.99
- Macy's*: Lime-green corduroy jacket with matching rhinestone brooch by XOXO, $59

The Gap: Navy blue pin-striped jacket, $78

Ballet-style flats or moccasins
- Marshall's: Bubblegum-pink ballet flats by Rocketdog, $15
- Journeys: Slide-on sequined ballet shoes in pink, white and black by ShuU, $19.99

The Gap: Leather moccasin/ballet flats, $39.50

Metallic sandals, belts and bags
- Forever 21: Metallic gold purse, $10.80
- The Gap: Metallic gold and silver belt with rhinestones, $19.50
- The Gap: Metallic gold and silver sandals with rhinestones, $24.50

Ripped jeans or capris
- Marshall's: Ripped jean capris by Bubblegum, $14.99
- Macy's*: Ripped jean capris by Bubblegum, $36
- Hollister: Ripped jeans, $59.50

Pheasant, hippie-like tops with sequins and embroidery
- Marshall's: Green, purple and blue pheasant top made in India, $7
- Forever 21: Dark-purple ribbed tank-top with sequin design, $12.99
- Macy's*: Turquoise pheasant top with dark blue embroidery and sequins by Fang, $34

Colorful, wedge shoes
- Marshall's: Lime-green suede wedge shoes by Unisa, $29.99
- Macy's*: Tan leather wedge shoes with turquoise stones, $100

Jackie O-style sunglasses (think big)
- Forever 21: White, large framed sunglasses, $4.80
- Marshall's: Black, large framed sunglasses by Baby Phat, $16.99

Tribal jewelry with hemp, shells, turquoise and coral
- Forever 21: Turquoise tribal jewelry, $4.80
- Hollister: Hemp necklaces with turquoise, shell and coral, $10.50

Men's Fashion
Think preppy surfer, think layers

Plaid shirts and shorts
- American Eagle: Red, blue and brown plaid shorts, $34.50
- Marshall's: Plaid shirt by Buffalo, $19.99
- Macy's*: Purple, pink and yellow plaid shirt by Tommy Hilfiger, $60

Khaki slacks or ripped denim jeans
- Macy's*: Tan dress slacks by Tommy Hilfiger, $65
- Macy's*: Ripped jeans by Tommy Hilfiger, $70
- American Eagle: Ripped jeans, $48

Bright colored Polo shirts, solid and striped
- American Eagle: Green, orange and blue polos, $29.50
- Marshall's: Purple and green striped polo by Ralph Lauren, $29.99
- Macy's*: Red, green, blue and orange striped polo by Ralph Lauren, $69.50

Military-style jackets in green, tan and brown
- Marshall's: Khaki military jacket by RFT Rainforest, $45
- The Gap: Khaki military jacket, $78

Camouflage slacks and shorts
- Marshall's: Jeans with camouflage patches and pocket lining by Pepe, $29.99
- Pacific Sunwear: Camouflage print shorts by Transline, $39.50
- The Gap: Camouflage print shorts and pants, $49.50

Illustrations by Paul Nguyen
Spring Fling kicks off spring break

Genessa Poth  
Senior Staff Writer

Every year, the Harborside Activities Board hosts Spring Fling, a week of fun events designed to help students take a break and relax. This year, the board partnered because USF St. Petersburg’s enrollment services to add a new twist to Spring Fling. Enrollment services invited prospective USF St. Petersburg students to spend their designated college days at the event.

As long as high school students have completed the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, they are usually given a few “college days” off from school to visit colleges and universities they are interested in. USF St. Petersburg campus recruiter John Vassel said that in the past, USF St. Petersburg opened its doors to prospective students in an assembly-style open house. But this year, college days for high school students coincided with Spring Fling, creating the perfect opportunity to try something new, he said. “We wanted prospective students to interact with current students,” Vassel said.

Spring Fling week will be held from Monday, March 7, through Friday, March 11. On March 7, prospective students had the opportunity to talk to recruiters, professors, and current USF St. Petersburg students about what the school has to offer. Prospective students were also able to take advantage of that day’s line-up of festivities. Harborside Activities Board member Heather Willis said some of Spring Fling’s events, such as Sunday Monopoly and the outing contest, have become campus traditions. “We do a lot of repeat events that go over well,” Willis said. Harborside adviser Jennifer Quinlan said that all of the events during Spring Fling week are free for students.

Inform Me

Thursday, March 10

Fun in the Sun

Where: Harborside Lawn

Who: USF St. Petersburg Students

What: Make your own hand wax sculpture, make your own CD or have housekeeping done

Inform Me

Friday, March 11

Casino Night

Where: Campus Activities Center

Who: USF St. Petersburg Students

What: Play poker, blackjack, craps, roulette and other games on real Vegas tables. Win raffle prizes.

From left to right: Student Vedrana Cvetkovic, dance instructor Johanna Krynytsky and student Cassie Haugli practice belly dance moves during the Middle Eastern Dance class in the Campus Activities Center on Feb. 21. Students in the class learn ancient Egyptian belly dancing techniques and other dance combinations.

Exotic exercise

See More Belly Dancing Photos Page 8

An old tradition becomes a new way to exercise at USF St. Petersburg. Wendy Owen  
Staff Writer

Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Sway your hips to the beat of the exotic music that flows all around you — one, two, three. The jiggling around your waist is hypnotic — four, five, six. The sweat rolls down your back. The music and movements are intoxicating — seven, eight, nine. Then suddenly, your instructor snaps you back to reality and tells you it’s time to get into formation. Instructor Zembla Johanna Krynytsky leads her belly dancing class with this illusion. Krynytsky, who has nine years of dance experience, has been teaching the belly dancing class for the last two years at USF St. Petersburg. Each week, it attracts about 20 people, including professors, students, men and women.

Unlike other new types of exercises, such as yoga, tai chi or Pilates, belly dancing offers a little something extra — self-esteem. Krynytsky said many people come to the class for exercise or for fun, but leave with a little more. “You lose in with the jingles and the jangles, but it’s a lot of strength building and femininity building,” Krynytsky said. “When they leave my class I am working on that posture and character and presence and comfort with the body that belly dancing provides.”

Co-instructor Kimberly Freed said that she enjoys belly dancing because it allows her to shed her inhibitions. “Dancing is just me,” Freed said. “I can be noisy, I can make big movements and I can make small movements. It really helps me to express myself non-verbally.”

Based on an American Tribal-style belly dancing, this class offers, along with its own form, a mix of dances from Egypt, Turkey and India. Unlike other styles of dancing, such as flamenco, the rules are much looser and the style is open to dancers for their own interpretation.

Even though the class puts a modern twist on exercise, the art of belly dancing is rooted in tradition. Originally intended as a dance form solely amongst women for births and celebrations, it evolved into an exotic dance of seduction. Krynytsky said that this class helps bring belly dancing back as a form of expression for women.

During the session, a mix of beginners and experts, everyone dances together. The class is kicked off with a stretching session, infused with yoga poses like the downward dog. Then the dancers greet one another in a circle and acknowledge one another.

Instructor Freed leads the circle with a moving meditation. “We bring our hands to center in proper position. We reach around to the right to acknowledge the space that we dance in. We raise our hands to the sky, step forward with our favorite foot, spiral our hands down toward our feet.”

“We touch the ground to acknowledge mother earth, wherever we are dancing, it’s all connected. Our ears for the music that we hear, our minds for coordinating what we hear, and our hearts because we dance for ourselves, for our own happiness.”

USF Tampa student Stacy Reyes said she enjoys belly dancing because it’s great exercise. “It’s an ancient art form,” she said. “Women only used to do it for women. You have a great sense of camaraderie. It’s beautiful.”

To an outsider, this class may seem easy and fun, but it’s actually a lot of hard work. Both coordination and rhythm are essential to mastering the art of belly dancing. Dancers must keep up with the beat of the music, make sure their hips are isolated and keep their arms in the right positions, all at the same time.

This class helps tone the belly, thighs and buttocks, all while wearing a belt of coins or tassels. Instructor Freed said the class may seem hard at first, but once students get into it, they gain confidence and learn to enjoy themselves.
PARKING from Page 2

Whichever Ocean jews primary parking sites at the Skyway Center are full, Central Parking decides to rent out spaces at USF St. Petersburg or Albert Whitted airport. On a weekend, the casino entertainers anywhere from 5,000 to 6,000 people, said Matt Kenagy, Ocean Jewel director of community relations. That number is in excess of the 4,000-plus student body of USF St. Petersburg, and could mean a lot of income for Parking Services.

"We see an opportunity on the weekends when we have no students here to be able to rent out our parking spaces to in getting our garage up," Richmond said. Spaces are rented out for $5 a space half of the proceeds go to Central Parking, the other half go to USF St. Petersburg. Currently, the money from weekend rentals go toward the construction of USF St. Petersburg's parking garage. All parking-related funds go directly into parking services, and pay for improvements, maintenance and parking services salaries.

"The weekend parking ramp only helps USF St. Petersburg. It also helps the Ocean Jewel," Kenagy said. "We are here as part of the community. We want to support the community. The last thing we want to do is cause an inconvenience."

Rick Piccolo said.

Although the centers' current programs focus on helping students with writing and math, the centers are open to students who need tutoring in any subject. McKinstry said that within the last year, tutors have helped students over 20 different disciplines, including criminology and psychology.

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The USF St. Petersburg coed sailing team practices in Bayboro Harbor on Feb. 29.

Sailing team finishes up February schedule

Anthony J. Salvaggi
Assignment Editor

It was a weekend of mixed results for the USF sailing team Feb. 26 and 27. At the Bob Barlier Team Race at the College of Charleston in South Carolina, the coed team came in seventh of eight competitors.

Despite the finish, Coach Garth Reynolds said the trimaran boat speed was as fast as the others; however, it was hampered by penalties, and finished with a 5-9 record.

Over the same weekend, USF St. Petersburg hosted the Old South Regatta in St. Petersburg. The all-freshmen coeds finished fourth of 13 district rivals, behind Charleston, Eckerd and South Alabama. The team was led by Anthony Scrogg and Katie Davis sailing in a Division, and Grant Lockhard and Cody Barnes sailing in B. The women's team also competed in the race, finishing seventh.

Kristen Herman and Jen Lee sailed in A, while Abby Ethington and Ashley Wierzbicki sailed in B. After Feb. 17, the coed and women's teams were ranked 14 and 15 respectively in the Sailing World Magazine collegiate rankings.

VAGINA from Page 1

Dressed in black and red, 19 barefoot women brought laughter and heartache to the audience.

"These women are great," Babcock said about the cast and crew. "What else gets into women's souls like this?"

USF St. Petersburg English professor Julie Armstrong said that "The Vagina Monologues" are "the most empowering work that I've seen in a long time through the official channels slowed down the process," he said.

Koening said the delays have been caused by administrative issues. Other planned upgrades include a rubberized roof, new blinds and a new audio-visual system.

"It's sad because so much money went into this," Piccolo said of the delay. "The university was expected to cost about $150,000, which is in line with the authorized $150,000 budget.

Student Center

If the Florida Legislature gives its approval, the proposed student center could be financed through a support fee, which authorizes the campus board of the university to forward a proposal to levy a student center-support fee to the USF Board of Trustees for approval, was filed with the Senate Jan. 12. It was then referred to the Board of Education Jan. 24.

If approved, the bill would take effect July 1, and would authorize USF St. Petersburg to implement a student fee to build the center. Piccolo said. Students would pay the fees until the student center's debt is retired, he said.

The bill also stipulates that the fee must be recommended by a committee, at least half of whom are students appointed by the student body president, with the campus board appointing the remainder. The committee will then ask students what they will pay, Piccolo said.

If everything goes smoothly and construction is aggressive, the student center should be completed in Fall 2007 or Spring 2008, Piccolo said. He said there is no definite site for the student center yet. According to the Campus Board Workshop Facilities and Master Plan, USF St. Petersburg plans to build a 46,000-square foot student center that includes a dining and food court, health services, limited student government offices, and student activities and retail space. It would later add 30,000 square feet to expand student government, student activities, and space and student affairs administration. Piccolo said that the committee will determine what the student center will contain. It will be what the students want, he said.

that aired Feb. 14, 2002, and knew she had to show up for the casting call.

"I was completely moved when I first saw the 'Monologues' and thought, at the time, that I would have to have been involved in the performance," said psychology professor Chenneville. She said that she hopes that viewers, both men and women, left empowered and inspired, and that they have a greater appreciation for the beauty and power of all that is female, body and soul.

Psychology major Sofia Delgado said that she feels it's time to be involved in what she calls a new revolution.

"Women have come a long way, but there's still work to be done. Some say the radical part of fight for equality has passed, and now it's time to sit down and work on the details," she said.

"The play was fantastic. Cole, who came with his girlfriend and co-workers, said she hopes people who see "The Vagina Monologues" feel a little bit more comfortable saying the word itself.

One of the few men that attended the performance, Jonathan Cole, said the play was fantastic. Cole, who came with his girlfriend and co-workers, said she heard about the "Monologues" before, but the open discussion made him uncomfortable at times, he said.

"I was disturbed when they talked about their first menstrual cycles, and adults' reactions to them, and was performed by professors Julie Armstrong, Diane McKinstry and Ruth Whelchel," she said.

Attendant Linda Spencer, 26, said she didn't hear about the play until one of her girlfriends invited her to come and see the performance from a friend at USF St. Petersburg. It teaches women about themselves and helps the shelters, she said.

Delgado, 24, said the show is a great way to funnel financial support to the local women's charities. "USF students have really come through in ticket sales and donations for 'The Haven and the Safe Center,'" she said.

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Christine Keoster

The Oracle (USF Tampa)

Don't be devastated if you can't afford a cruise to the Bahamas or a trip to the Keys this spring break. You don't have to be bored because the Tampa Bay area has a lot to offer.

During the day, you can kick back and relax at the many beaches around the Bay Area. Clearwater Beach is the hot spot, and there's always something going on around the beach. Frenchy's Rockaway Grill can tempt you with good food and ice-cold drinks just a few feet away from the sandy beach. If you're planning to go to Clearwater, you have to get there early. During spring break, the beach is packed with high school and college students, and traffic can get frustrating. If you find Clearwater Beach a little too crowded, St. Pete Beach can offer a calmer setting. Along Gulf Boulevard are several motels, restaurants and beach shops. An advantage with St. Pete is the free parking near the Dolphin Village shopping center. The beach has water activities, volleyball courts and - if you walk to the Don CeSar - a pink hotel palace where you can enjoy lunch and drinks in a luxury environment.

Travel a little farther north from St. Pete Beach and you will find several smaller beaches. Treasure Island, Sunset Beach and Indian Rocks Beach are among the beaches located on the Gulf Coast. Busch Gardens is a good alternative to the beach if your body cannot handle any more sun or sand. Montu, Ramab, Python, Scorpion and Gwazi will make you scream like a 5-year-old. At Busch Gardens.com, you can visit the theme park and check out the cool rides before you go.

Right next to Busch Gardens is Adventure Island. It consists of four areas of water fun for all ages. If you go there with a group of friends, try the Wahoo Run. After a fun day outside, it is nice to sport your tan at the many nightclubs and bars in Tampa. Worth mentioning are Banana Joe's and Howl at the Moon in Channelside, the strip in Ybor City and the many lounges in Hyde Park. In addition, Volunteer USF can offer you an alternative spring break if you would like to devote your time to helping others. According to Amy Simon, they have 10 trips during the work.

"US students have already signed up, but there are still a few spots available," Simon said. According to their information flyer, "Spring Break doesn't have to be a costly vacation to the Bahamas or Key West. There are plenty of things to do if you are stuck in Tampa. You just have to get creative."

## History

* March 11, 1959 - "Rain in the Sun" first play by a black woman to open on Broadway
* March 12, 1932 - Juliet Gordon Lowe forms Girl Scouts in Savannah
* March 13, 1987 - John Gotti is acquitted of racketeering
* March 14, 1952 - David Byrne, lead singer of The Talking Heads, is born
* March 15, 1965 - First T.G.I. Friday's opens in New York City
* March 16, 1992 - Tango Harding pleads guilty to attack on Nancy Kansinger
* March 17, 1752 - First official St. Patrick's Day

## Slide Show

By Wendy Owen

**"Constantine" intriguing but disappointing**

**Grade C**

Running time: 2 hrs.

On the surface, "Constantine" looks like a mix between "The Devil's Advocate" and "The Matrix", with a lot of twists and non-stop action. But what you actually get is another biblical end-of-the-world movie set in the dark and gritty Los Angeles underworld.

If you don't know your Bible history you better brush up before you see this movie or you will be lost. Seriously - make a study guide of angel's names, Heaven, hell and Catholicism basics and you will be okay.

Keanu Reeves stars as John Constantine, a chain-smoking exotic hero for hire. Like most unexpected heroes that titter-totter between good and evil, he leads a lonely, solitary life (like the heroes in 'Hellboy' and 'The Punisher'). After a series of make-you-jump-in-your-seat events, Constantine meets Angela, played by Rachel Weisz. Together, they learn that they have become a part of some master plan to bring hell on earth.

If the movie has a familiar comic-book feel, that is because it is based on the comic book series "HellBlazer". Even though the plot holes in its story are often bigger than Tropicana Field, Constantine still entertains. Cheesy computerized graphics of demons are trumped by better special effects used later in the movie (one scene in particular shows demons masquerading as people on a bus and well – it was pretty creepy).

The "Constantine" script is familiar territory for Reeves, and it's hard to picture anyone else in this role. Even though Reeves has made a name for himself in similar dark/fantasy/science fiction roles, he doesn't do a Neo rehash as Constantine.

This movie gets extra bonus points for introducing the sinfully hot (sorry, bad pun) Gavin Rossdale, as the fallen angel Balthazar. Rossdale, front man for alternative band Bush and husband to singer Gwen Stefani, makes his lead acting debut in this film. He's nothing special as an actor, but Rosdale is still nice to look at, and you feel a little sad when Constantine tips him to the side. Tilda Swinton also hypnotizes as the androgynously beautiful angel Gabriel, who has a wardrobe to die for. However, this film's greatest asset is the tangible, icy feeling the audience gets from the grizzly city of angels setting, Los Angeles.

This movie offers up some of the best characters I have seen in recent movies. Constantine, though lonely, angry and generally mean-spirited, has many interesting demon-fighting associates. From Constantine's nebbishy cab-driving sidekick to his gadget associates, many of the supporting characters in this film were almost more interesting than the lead character. Also, keep your eyes open for this movie's hilarious rendition of the devil, played by Peter Stormare.

My recommendation? Wait until it comes out on DVD. The special effects weren't good enough to be a must-see on the big screen. If you do go see it, remember to ignore the cheesy one-liners, put your religious opinions aside and remember - it's just a movie.

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HistoryToday

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Student Vedrana Cvetkovic and classmates practice belly dance techniques during the Middle Eastern Dance class in the Campus Activities Center on Feb. 21.

Middle Eastern Dance instructor Johanna Krynitzky, left, leads a class on Feb. 21 in the Campus Activities Center. Students in the class learn ancient Egyptian belly dancing techniques and other dance combinations.

Above: USF St. Petersburg student Mudit Bhatt, 22, talks to Walgreens store manager Todd Howells during the Career Expo at the Campus Activities Center on March 3. Local employers gather at the Career Expo each semester to offer job opportunities to students and community members.

Right: Jeff Meister, a representative of "Mad Science of West & South Tampa Bay," waits for patrons to explore his table during USF St. Petersburg’s Career Expo in the Campus Activities Center on March 1. Meister hoped to recruit USF St. Petersburg students who would help his organization teach science to children.

What are you doing for spring break?

"I’m going to Augusta, Ga., with some friends. They have a big party there for Saint Patrick’s day."
Lindsay Robinson, 20, junior

"My girlfriend and I are going to Disney World for three days."
Mark Barnes, 22, senior

"I don’t really know."
Jim Anderson, 18, freshman