Big plans for Waterfront

BY JUSTIN LOWERY  STAFF WRITER

When Jim Stull became Waterfront coordinator in February 2005, he took over a program in much need of repair. The pool had gone unused for much of 2005. To use the pool, law requires a certified pool operator, one the Waterfront didn’t have.

Many of the lifeguards had also quit, leaving the Waterfront in a bind.

The revenue generated by the Waterfront had been on a downward trend the past three years. Many of the boats were in a state of disrepair; there weren’t any classes for sailing or swimming, and there wasn’t the full-time staff needed to run Waterfront to its full potential.

However, Jim Stull said the Waterfront is making progress since his appointment last February.

“Looking at the situation and looking at what I knew there was potential for, I wanted to reevaluate and redesign the organizational structure of the department,” said Stull.

He credits the turnaround with the hiring of two new staff members: Teresa Oppenheim as aquatic program coordinator and Zac Oppenheim as watercraft coordinator.

“We’ve been fortunate in hiring some capable and competent people that can implement their skills to the Waterfront,” said Stull.

Stull hired Oppenheim on March 6 and immediately began to see progress with many of the watercraft. All but one of the sailing vessels that had been broken down have been fixed and are ready for use.

Including Stull, the Waterfront now has three American Red Cross Water Safety instructors, the other two being Pratsnicki and David Stevenson. It can also boast a full staff of lifeguards.

The brains behind anti-terrorism

BY CASEY CORA  CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Docked along Bayboro Harbor at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, the G.K. Gilbert sways lazily on the Tampa Bay. A few yards away, USF students study and relax in the sunshine at the University’s commons. The sailing team departs in their dinghies, practicing for an upcoming regatta.

Students are generally unaware that the G.K. Gilbert houses an instrument that may one day save their lives. While Washington, D.C. debates agencies and universities, the center provides an all-in-one approach to port security.

“What you had is one company tracking containers, one government agency sponsoring the mobile inspection packages, and another concentrating on access methods,” he said. “No one is taking a comprehensive systems approach to port security.”

The center’s technological approach to port security includes tracking devices designed to detect undersea anomalies, including remotely operated vehicles (ROV) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs). In 2004, the ROBOT was developed to work with the Mobile Inspection Package. The center also expressed interest in the technology.

“The ROBOT is a $1.2 million dollar optical instrument that creates three-dimensional color images of underwater surfaces,” he said.

These images then become information on a database that is monitored by a command center stationed on land or within the vessel. The next time the ROBOT is deployed, it can then detect anomalies previously unregistered on the database.

“When the industrial brown needs engineering brains, or when research and development questions are raised, that’s where the universities are excelled,” Brown said.

Located on the University of South Florida’s main campus in Tampa, the USF Research Park accommodates laboratories focused primarily on biotechnology and life sciences research.

“The Center for Maritime and Ocean Technology research vessel, Docked along Bayboro Harbor is part of a larger COT program called the Mobile Inspection Package, a suite of sensors designed to detect underwater anomalies. The Mobile Inspection Package’s roster includes the ROBOT, a suite of sensors designed to detect underwater anomalies. The Mobile Inspection Package’s roster includes the ROBOT, a suite of sensors designed to detect underwater anomalies. The Mobile Inspection Package’s roster includes the ROBOT, a suite of sensors designed to detect underwater anomalies.
Scholars address the import behind the journalist’s privilege

BY ANTHONY SALVEGGI

For a group held in lower regard than car salesmen, journalists can be forgiven if they feel their profession is misunderstood.

But as a panel of media and law scholars explained to students last Wednesday, they also serve the noble function of keeping the public informed — even at the expense of their own liberty.

Most of the audience that gathered in Davis 130 was comprised of Professor Killenberg’s mass media law class and Associate Professor Robert Darroch’s Writing for the Mass Media students.

Throughout the two-and-a-half hour talk, the speakers made clear the many issues at stake when journalists are confronted with demands to turn over their notes or whether unattributed information is highly relevant to the case and cannot be obtained by other means.

One of the evening’s four speakers, attorney David Snyder, pointed out that the lack of a federal or national shield law has confused the arena of journalists’ privilege.

For instance, if a reporter from one state recognizing a type of privilege is called to testify in a state that construes it differently (or not at all), which law holds precedence?

Anthony Fargo, a professor of media law at the Indiana University School of Journalism, noted that there are two bills in the Senate calling for the establishment of a federal shield for journalists. But he noted that it might be three to four years before such a law is passed.

The need for a journalist’s privilege is rooted in the conception of keepers as those providing important information to the public. Forcing reporters to surrender documents and give up sources could lead to a loss of journalistic credibility and a dwindling number of those willing to talk to reporters on the condition of anonymity.

For this reason, some journalists have chosen to go to jail rather than break their promises or compromise their ability to gather information.

Confounding the issue is whether unattributed information in a news story does more harm than good to the journalistic enterprise. Snyder, who will teach mass media law at USF St. Petersburg in the fall, told the audience that sometimes printing information without attribution is about as valuable as having no source at all — the public won’t buy it.

When the panel opened the

One-minute news

BY ANTHONY SALVEGGI

Harborlside Live — The final Harborlside Live of the semester will be held on the Harborlside Lawn Wednesday, April 19 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Call (727) 873-6099 for more information.

Tomorrow’s Leaders Symposium — The annual event showcasing undergraduate student research in creative work in collaboration with faculty will be held Thursday, April 20, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Dovet Lobby.

Quit smoking class offered — If you are a smoker but would like to quit and are interested in attending a Smoking Cessation Class, contact campus Health Education Shannon Chn at (727) 873-4146 or choose@stpete.edu.

Rural Florida literature — Former Professor Bob Hall will present “Short Stories from Small-Town Florida” on Wednesday, April 19 at 7:30 p.m. in Davis 130. The event, which will include an examination of the works by Van Hoose Mastin Rawlings and Mayne Salmon Douglas, is sponsored by the Florida Studies Program.

Graphic design show — Students in the graphic design program at USF St. Petersburg will present their work at White Gallery on Friday, April 21 from 7 to 10 p.m. The gallery is located at 1900 First Ave. S. in St. Petersburg.

Poetry night — The Florida Studies Program presents its Second Annual Night of Florida Poetry at the Stuck/Wilkins House Court yard on April 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Spring commencement — Spring commencement is scheduled for Sunday, May 7 at 2 p.m. in the Mahaffey Theater, located at 400 First St. S., just to the northeast of campus.

Summer classes — Summer A and C classes begin May 15.

New coordinator finds fulfillment on the water

BY JOHN TERRANA

Staff Writer

If home is where the heart is, then being on campus suits Zac Oppenheim just fine.

Oppenheim, USF St. Petersburg’s new watercraft programs coordinator, began his first day of work at the Waterfront Office on March 6. Oppenheim attended Michigan State University where he majored in elementary education. While there, he taught sailing clinics, trained employees and had a passion for boating.

"It was basically the job I have right now," he said. "It just wasn’t full-time." He then moved to Chicago to teach at an elementary school in its computer lab.

"I missed being on the water," Oppenheim said.

He found the job posting for watercraft programs coordinator at USF St. Petersburg through the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association Web site. He applied for the job and was hired by Waterfront Coordinator Jim Stull.

Oppenheim said he loved the campus when he saw it. "Being right on the water is wonderful," he said. "The pool, the boathouse and the boats are gorgeous."

He added that the staff is also very supportive and cooperative.

New activities are coming to the waterfront, he said. Oppenheim wants to hold hour-long "miniature clinics" that would be less of a commitment than going out on an all day kayak trip. The excursions would allow students to determine if they were "ready for more adventure," he said.

"The greatest thing about our programs is that they are designed for someone with no experience," Oppenheim said. "Someone could do it [sail] even if they’ve never been in a boat before.

This said his other hobbies include mountain biking, wakeboarding and "basically anything out on the water."

Use of a kayak or a sailboat for the day is included in student fees. Students who are willing to pay a fee of five dollars per day may also take kayaks off campus.
We don’t need another hero

Near the end of a panel lecture on the issues surrounding journalist’s privilege (see story, page 2), Department of Journalism and Mass Media Studies Director Tony Silvia commented that journalism requires another “Woodward and Bernstein moment” to raise the profession in the eyes of the public and re-establish its credibility. As a broad statement on a likely fix for today’s perception of journalists, Silvia’s pronouncement seems to have merit. And yet if our current political climate remains the same, those reporters who attach themselves too securely to such a notion are likely to be disappointed.

We need only consider the scandals involving the mainstream press over the past 10 years to apprehend the disconnect that has fallen upon the profession of journalists. From Stephen Glass and Jayson Blair and their faux reporting, to Judith Miller and her highly criticized work for the New York Times while reporting on Iraq’s alleged weapons of mass destruction, journalists as a noble enterprise in the Woodward/Bernstein tradition no longer stands as an unassailable paradigm.

The rise of the blogosphere on the World Wide Web has underemphasized the notion that the mainstream media (or MSM as they are derisively called) have any proprietary rights over the collection and dissemination of truth. To the contrary, embarrasing incidents such as the presentation of allegedly tainted documents concerning George Bush’s service in the National Guard on “60 Minutes” have brought discredit to traditional media outlets — and led to Dan Rather stepping down from his anchor position on the CBS Evening News.” This is the unfortunate setting from which many high-minded reporters must practice their craft.

Journalists have worn many descriptive labels since the 19th century, from unbiased partisans to disinterested conveyors of fact to unswerving dupes of established power structures. Today, the fashion is to portray journalists as just another interest group, one that has a vested interest in deciding what “the news” is and how it is packaged. Such a conception lends itself to conservative and liberal critiques of the media. For conservatives, the news industry is dominated by liberals who frame and present story content in accordance with their biases. Liberals are more likely to see reporters as the tools of corporate entities that subordinate the individual to concerns for wealth accumulation and maintaining power. The prison abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib could have been a moment of “silence” Silvia talked about. But for every article documenting the torture and the chain of command that allowed it to happen, voices of indignation — mostly from the right side of the political spectrum — rose up to protect the media’s overexposure of the story. Rather than assess the photos at the prison for what they were — portraits of disembermant — the critics viewed them in light of what they were not: the kind of torture paradigm.

Even when elderly W. Mark Felt came forward to reveal his identity as Deep Throat in the Watergate scandal, he was lambasted by conservative voices for his disloyalty to Pres- ident Nixon. American journalist Jim Carroll, recently released by Iraqi kidnappers, has been the brunt of uncoercionable attacks — again by conservatives — for not being critical enough of her captors. Better to be a beleaguered hero, I suppose. This is all indicative of a cultural problem of which society’s low opinion of journalists is a symptom.

If journalism is to once again grow in stature and respectability, the likely cause may not be a singular moment that shows the value of traditional reporting to the public. My fear is that we are too fragmented and cynical a culture to buy into the romantic notion of the press as government watchdog protecting the interests of the citizenry. No matter how big the story, the spin doctors will find a way to drown out the coverage with hyperbole and hype just long enough for the story to reach its “sell by” date and we all move on to the next distraction.

Instead, dominant forces at the societal and cultural level will likely have to shift first forces that make the value of journalism apparent to citizens even in the absence of momentary stories such as the Watergate break-in coverage. Perhaps the best thing jour- nalists can do is strive for the big Pulitzer Prize winning story, but stay focused on doing the valuable work of news gathering and reporting, especially when the inevitable chorus of critics tries to drown out what it doesn’t want to hear.

" — Anthony Salveggi is a gradu­ ate student in the journalism program. He can be reached at usfcrowsnest@yahoo.com."

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The Crow's Nest

Opinion

opinion
Lives of learning

For three students at USF St. Petersburg, it's never too late to go back to school

BY MEgan Ruldson
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Mother, inventor, writer, reader, tennis player, health enthusiast and entrepreneur. At 49, Romona Gale is also something else, a student who shares the opinion that no matter what age you reach, education should never stop.

When Gale was 17, she invented her own granola recipe. Because of her determination and confidence, the product "Mona's Granola" quickly became available in every store in the Publix grocery chain.

Gale learned early in life that she would never be content with a formal desk job. Instead, she has lived a life marked by a drive to learn new things and achieve new goals.

Gale is not alone in this pursuit. Wandering the sidewalks and hallways of USF St. Petersburg are hundreds of adults who exceed the average college-student age.

They include students in the senior auditing program. Kevin Coughlin, the director of enrollment management, said Florida residents over the age of 60 are encouraged to sign up for classes. In most cases, tuition fees are waived for these senior learners.

"The biggest advertisement for the program is through word of mouth," said Coughlin, who claims there are so many senior auditors he can not remember each by name.

Syfria Masters is one auditing student who heard about the program through word of mouth. Masters, 81, has been involved in the senior auditing program since she turned 60. Because she has never driven a day in her life, she was on a city bus 21 years ago when another passenger mentioned the program to her.

"I was so excited when I found out. I could hardly wait to get off that bus and go sign up for classes," said Masters.

Aurora Kellman has taken advantage of the program for almost 14 years. She attended the University of Wisconsin from 1939 to 1941. When America entered World War II, Kellman left school to work at a Navy shipyard in Brooklyn.

"I actually worked on the battleship 'Missouri', which was the ship that the American-Japanese peace agreement was signed on," said Kellman.

This semester, Kellman is enrolled in two classes: Contemporary Social Problems, and War and Society. "No matter how much education I may have previously received, I always learn new things because this world is constantly changing," she said.

Masters also speaks to the benefits of staying active. "The mental stimulus I receive from these classes is enough to keep me coming back," she said.

Gale, who started her college career at Santa Fe Junior College in the 1970s, is working toward her bachelor's degree in journalism. With that degree, Gale aspires to either write for a magazine or possibly create her own health magazine.

After that? There's always, in time, the senior learning program.

Persistence key to Gale's success

BY ANGELA M. CHIN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Mona Gale, a successful business owner who has a bachelor's degree in journalism, is not quite a household name.

But if you like granola and shop at Publix, you probably know her.

Gale is the originator and owner of Mona's Granola, and a picture of her and her sons, when they were growing up, appears on the bright yellow zip-locked bags that compete for shelf space in Publix and other grocery stores nationwide with boxes of mass-produced cereal.

"I have that stuff. I buy it all the time," fellow student Shawn Geoghegan said in Gale's celebrity status was revealed to her classmates at USF St. Petersburg.

Gale created the granola, at first homemade and now produced at a plant in Elk Grove, California, and many other food markets around the world.

"There's nothing artificial about it," she said.

Twenty-five years ago, Gale, now 49, went straight to school to work at a Navy shipyard in Brooklyn.

A few weeks later, she had a plan and a jar of granola in hand. Her efforts and persistence paid off, Publix agreed to try her granola in a few stores. Today you can find Mona's Granola at any Publix store and in many other food markets around the world.

Gale didn't stop with her granola. Her most recent success is a book titled "The Simple Truth About Nutrition." She has several other writing projects in the works, including a nutrition book geared toward kindergartners.

After she earns her journalism degree, Gale's next goal is to produce her own health-related magazine where she can share her knowledge and keys to success. By giving nutrition a twist or presenting it from a new angle, Gale hopes it will become easier to understand.

Mona Gale's success may have started in the kitchen making breakfast, but she doesn't plan to stop there. "I don't think anyone should ever retire," she said. "There is so much to learn and share with others."

Harbor Day Celebration

Event brings advocates for the environment together at USF St. Petersburg

BY EMMA SYLVESTER
STAFF WRITER

"Tampa Bay: Respect it, Protect it, Recycle," and "Litter Bugs Me" complete with bug pictures could be found on the bracelets given away at the Harbor Day Celebration that was held April 12 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Harborside Lawn.

The culmination of the Harbor Day Initiative, the event's goal was to support a healthier coastal environment and emphasize the value of the harbor and the efforts that Student Environmental Awareness Society (SEAS) members are making along with the community to preserve and restore it.

The Harbor Day Celebration was sponsored by SEAS, the USF St. Petersburg Honors Program and Student Government.

Right now, the pool is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. everyday, but Still said that could change.

"Next fall, we hope to stay open longer or open earlier, depending on student interest," he said.

Since increasing its staff, the Waterfront began in January to add a variety of water classes, including aerobics and swimming lessons.

Scuba diving classes are also on the horizon and will be ready for students, faculty and staff within the next month.

When the residence hall opens in the fall, Still plans work with Fitness Coordinator Marcus Berry to add competitive swimming races and water volleyball.
HARBOR DAY

1. Jim Schout, USF St. Petersburg graduate and librarian at the Powotty Library, points out a large shell mound on the historical map of the USF St. Pete campus.

2. Students, faculty and their families enjoy the beautiful spring weather near Bayboro Harbor as they visit the displays of the county's environmental agencies.

3. Neil Camandel, a USF psychology major, enjoys lunch while he waits for the keynote speaker at the Harbor Day Celebration.

4. Willis Holley, of the Environmental Interaction Service, talks with visitors about the upcoming June 3 rain barrel workshop. For more information, call (727) 582-2100.

5. Bobby, an American Kestrel, was rescued by the Seabird Sanctuary. The American Kestrel is the smallest species of the hawk family.

ALL PHOTOS BY CROW'S NEST PHOTOGRAPHER MARY RUSSELL

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Applications must be turned in by Friday, April 28 to the Campus Activities Center, or may be e-mailed to usfcrowsnest@yahoo.com.

If you mail your application, address it to: Regina Young Hyatt, Director of Student Life USF St. Petersburg Campus Activities Center 140 Seventh Ave. S. St. Petersburg, FL 33701

THE CROW’S NEST • APRIL 19, 2006

Anti-Terrorism — from page 1

"The worst terrorist is nature," said Andrew Cannons, the center’s scientific director. "Not human, as yet. So, we’ve also very cognizant of the fact that we have to worry about emerging infectious disease.”

Established in October 2000, the center is an arm of a larger network of agencies and organizations, including the FBI, the U.S. Army, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, dedicated to preventing attacks, detecting harmful agents, and educating responders in the event of a bioterrorism disaster.

The CBD is housed along with the Tampa branch of Florida Department of Health, providing a unique cross-platform of scientists and increased research capabilities.

"It’s one of the few places where you’ve got a university research center and a public health center working very closely," Cannons said.

After 9/11, the anthrax panic found its way from the shaken sensibilities of the American public to the computer screens of skilled scientists.

Samples of suspicious powders arrived en masse, up to 100 a day. Because the protocol for turning in suspicious samples was relatively new, they were brought in on sets of luggage, on automobile parts, everything, Cannons said.

"We don’t have to that," he said. "We can take swabs, we can take samples"

Cannons estimates that the CBD has trained between 5,000-10,000 emergency responders, including government agencies, law enforcement staffs, and fire and hazardous material personnel on proper threat assessments.

The CBD houses a collection of over 600 culture samples of potential bioterror agents. Constant syndromic surveillance is achieved through the use of the BioDefend Reporting Tool, a device designed to offer instant warnings to health officials.

By transmitting near-real-time alerts to e-mail-enabled devices like PDAs, the BioDefend Reporting Tool is the anti-bioterror equivalent of receiving sports scores on your Blackberry — instant detection of anomalous against an electronic database of infectious diseases and bioterror agents.

Five years after terrorist attacks, anthrax scares and color-coded terror alerts, fear of a large-scale attack — from bioterrorism or otherwise — is on the wane.

"Two or three years ago, it was the peak of what everyone was talking about," Cannons said. "But so much now..." For the American public, that’s a good thing. The less news to come from the center, the better.

"Nothing has been found," he said. "You would have known."
Forum — from page 2

floor to questions and comments, students touched on the topic from a variety of angles, including the appropriateness of granting sources anonymity, and public apathy toward major news stories and the issues facing reporters.

Silvia, who noted the low opinion the public has shown for journalists in yearly polls and brought up the unflattering comparison to used car salesmen, said it would take a "Woodward and Bernstein moment" to restore the public's faith in journalists.

Referring to the Washington Post duo whose reporting led to President Richard Nixon's resignation, Silvia told the students that the rise in journalism departments can be traced to the investigation by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein into the 1972 Watergate break-in.

If Silvia is correct, the ability for journalism to rise as a profession rests largely on the shoulders of its practitioners.

Teachers — from page 8

heads up, because as soon as you handle this problem there's a problem over here," Turner said. "It is six and a half hours of all that."

The warning came from both the experienced and inexperienced on the panel. Roddy Beecroft graduated from the University of South Florida in December and has only been teaching at St. Petersburg High School for three months.

"It was apocalyptic," he said when describing his first day of substituting.

The description elicited a laugh from attendees, but it was also sound advice to a group of aspiring teachers who wanted to learn how to control groups of students.

The panel's emphasis on managing classrooms was particularly appropriate to those in attendance.

"Finding out that they never had a classroom management class, when that is one of the most important things in the classroom, was very shocking," Carrie Kirkpatrick, a co-organizer of the event, said.

What isn't shocking is that teachers don't make a lot of money. Finding a job may not be a huge problem for most new teachers in the area but finding a house on their salary may prove to be nearly impossible.

The cost of housing has been increasing while wages have not. But most people who become teachers know that the real reward of teaching has nothing to do with the money.

"It isn't going to be a secret where you think you're going to make six figures and then they give you $35,000," Turner said.

Housing and lean wages aren't the only reasons Florida has a teacher shortage. A crackdown on sexual predators has run rampant in the country and teachers have been at the forefront of many of those stories.

Educators today have to be very aware that anything they do in the presence of children is something like that, Turner said.

"I'm real careful to be never be alone in a room with a student. I'm careful about what I say or how I touch," Turner said. "I would never teach again if I was accused of something like that."

Most of what the panel said might have discouraged the USF students, but when the presentation was over, they were grateful.

"I'm glad to get a real world perspective with no sugar coating, so I'm not surprised when I go out into the real world," said Diana Secco, an aspiring teacher and student at USF.

Unfortunately, that real world perspective looks bleak for Pinellas County teachers.

To the 2006 recipients of Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges

Jennel Alexander
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Alan Scott Barrier
Carolyn Bolden
Scott E. Brown
Amanda E. Bush
Markita Caphart
Janelle Coffman
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BY CHRISTINA CASTELLANA STAFF WRITER

"Ringside Café is an unassuming restaurant with affordable, palate-pleasing meals."

The weathered interior and dilapidated ceiling of Ringside Café may ruin some people’s appetite, but once the food comes, all is forgotten. Ringside Café is an unassuming restaurant with affordable, palate-pleasing meals. For two people, the tab comes to about $16.00 without tip. The portions are generous, delicious and the menu offers patrons a broad selection of tempting choices.

This eatery gets low marks for property maintenance, but the food, weekly Texas Hold ‘Em poker nights and the evening performances by blue musicians from around the globe ensure steady business. Ringside Café is located in a white, two-story building. The restaurant layout comprises a small bar and a series of tables scattered around the staircase and entertainment area. Framed autographs of blue musicians cover the walls and a couple of televisions continuously play the latest games.

The hamburgers are juicy, flavorful, and best of all, non-greasy. The sloppy joe takes pride in its name, and is flavored with a mild barbecue sauce rather than a traditional tomato sauce. The double stuffed baked potato creamed with butter, herbs and topped with melted cheddar cheese is by far the best you’ll find in St. Pete.

In addition to good ol’ American fare, the menu offers popular Mexican and Italian dishes like enchiladas and Tuscan chicken. If your stomach still has room for a few more morsels, ask the friendly servers for the desserts du jour. The café is frequented by a diverse crowd; from business men and women in Por sches to t-shirt and jeans folks in their beat-up pickups, there are no discriminating airs at this eatery, only the love of good food and good blues.

Ringside’s a knockout

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Teachers help education students meet real life

By Chris George

It is widely known that Florida is in the midst of a teacher shortage. Listening to a five-teacher panel on April 6 at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg left no question as to why. With over 35 years of combined experience, the teachers from public schools in Pinellas County told students about the trials of working as aspiring teachers what to expect.

The first day of school to the cost of housing, teachers didn’t pull any punches when telling aspiring teachers what to expect.

The chronic barrage of testing, scores, data and the amount of paperwork that you’re responsible for on top of teaching, on top of lesson plans is just a lot of information,” Carlson said. The county has encountered a great deal of criticism over the way it has handled the public school system, but not all the teachers on the panel felt the same way.

“If I would say Pinellas County is relatively forward thinking. It is like any other job. Some days are good, some days are bad. Some policies are good, some policies stink,” said Casey Turner, a fifth grade teacher at Sanderlin Elementary.

The first day of school is hardly the biggest challenge for a public school teacher in Pinellas County; however, much bigger concerns weigh heavily on the minds of instructors today. County and state restrictions make it very hard for a teacher to carry out their own curriculum properly.

“The parents. Parental involvement with their children’s school life was a prominent concern that the panel tried to get across to the aspiring teachers.”

That’s a consistent problem across the board no matter where you’re at,” Turner said. “There’s a variety of reasons why parents don’t get involved whether they’re underemployed, have too many jobs or don’t care.” Parents fall on both sides of the spectrum, however.

“I have some parents who are very involved,” said Rosemary Williams, who teaches third and fourth grade at Sanderlin. As much publicity as budget cuts and Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests get, the panel was much more concerned with something students have to deal with everyday.

Some days are good, some days are bad. Some policies are good, some policies stink,” said Casey Turner, a fifth grade teacher at Sanderlin Elementary. As much publicity as budget cuts and Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests get, the panel was much more concerned with something students have to deal with everyday.

Their parents. Parental involvement with their children’s school life was a prominent concern that the panel tried to get across to the aspiring teachers. “That’s a consistent problem across the board no matter where you’re at,” Turner said. “There’s a variety of reasons why parents don’t get involved whether they’re underemployed, have too many jobs or don’t care.”

Parents fall on both sides of the spectrum, however.

“I have some parents who are very involved,” said Rosemary Williams, who teaches third and fourth grade at Sanderlin Elementary. “But then I had one parent who said, ‘Don’t call me anymore. You deal with it.’”

Lack of parental involvement is an especially big problem for Nicole Wilson. She teaches at Thurgood Marshall Fundamental School, which means that parent participation is mandatory. That is why she thinks her school is not fundamental.

“If we were truly fundamental, we would not have any students,” she said. “I would say that fifty percent of our parent’s phone numbers don’t work. We’re going above and beyond, and we still don’t have parental involvement.”

Managing parents can be considered relatively easy compared to managing a classroom, though. The aspiring teachers at the event were forewarned that they probably wouldn’t be prepared for that aspect of school life.

“I compare classroom management to the game you play at Chuck E. Cheese where the hedgeshog pop their heads out,” said Turner.

APPLICATIONS

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