Sexual violence a university concern

By Amanda Starling

Staff Reporter

It started innocently enough. A female student invited a male student to her room in Residence Hall One to hang out and watch a television show on Netflix. After a few episodes, the couple began kissing. Then, according to university police, the 20-year-old man began pressing the woman for sex.

As she protested, police said, the man began to remove his short and her pants, and then sexually assaulted her.

Three days later, Darren Lasso, a sophomore bio major, was arrested on charges of sexual battery. He was kicked out of school, according to his lawyer, and issued a warning not to trespass on campus. He awaits a pre-trial hearing in Pinellas-Pasco criminal court and, if convicted, faces up to 15 years in prison.

The May 20 incident was the only sexual assault listed in USFSP’s annual fire and safety report, which was released Oct. 1, and the first since three cases were reported in 2011.

Although incidents of reported sexual assault at USFSP have been rare, experts say it has become a major problem on America’s college campuses.

President Barack Obama and a task force he created earlier this year to study ways to protect students from sexual assault cite estimates that one in five women on college campuses will be assaulted while they are students.

Many assaults are never reported to authorities. The victims, experts say, are too embarrassed to come forward — especially if they were intoxicated — or reluctant to testify against their attackers in court proceedings.

At USFSP, administrators and police are “paying heightened attention to the topic of sexual assault,” according to Julie Wong, the regional associate vice chancellor of student affairs.

Over the summer, university police conducted training sessions on handling sexual assault incidents for residence hall advisors, staff and advisors of student groups. In an email to faculty, Susan Toler, the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, encouraged professors to put an explanation of the university’s student sexual harassment and violence policy on Canvas or in their syllabi.

In an email to all students last month, Wong said that USFSP “strives to be a campus that leads the nation in promoting a culture where sexual violence is a rare occurrence and simply not tolerated.”

The law also forbids identification of victims of alleged sexual assault. Before the fall semester, faculty and staff were advised there had been an incident on campus, Wong said. Students were not notified.

Unless there are multiple cases of unresolved sexual assault, students are not notified through any emergency alert system, according to David Hendry, the chief of campus police.

Until his dismissal, Lasso was active on campus. He was director of student conduct.

How to report a crime

If you witness or are a victim of a crime, these resources are available to you through USF St. Petersburg:

- Contact the USFSP Victim Advocate line at 727-698-2079. Assistance is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Call 911 to report a crime. You will not be anonymous.
- The campus police department can be reached at 727-873-4140. Are you off campus and need help? The St. Petersburg Police Department is available at 727-893-7780 and the Pinellas County Sheriff Department at 727-582-6200.
- University resources can include the dean of students office and the office of student conduct.
- Contact the following for assistance:
  - Dean of Students Office: 727-873-4326
  - Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity: 813-974-4373
  - Office of Student Conduct: 727-873-3027
- Campus security authorities at USFSP are required by federal law to report crimes and their location according to the Clery Act. The victim’s name and identifiers are always anonymous.
- CSAs can include but are not limited to residence hall assistants, academic advisors, and student activity coordinators.
- Confidential advocacy is available for people who want to report a crime anonymously. There are injunctions for protection, enforced by the USF Police Department to ensure your safety.
- Campus housing will accommodate a victim or witness of a crime.
- Preserve any evidence you intend to report a crime. Follow these steps to protect the evidence of a crime:
  - Do not wash bedding, towels or clothing.
  - Do not erase any voicemails, text messages and/or emails.
  - Avoid bathing, showering, brushing teeth, eating or drinking.
  - Avoid using the toilet or cleaning up the crime scene.

Continued on p. 2

SG senate disapproves of court action

By Emily Wehunt

Staff Reporter

A general assembly meeting for student government voted to formally express disapproval in the actions of Supreme Court Chief Justice Rim Shuman.

On Oct. 1, the SG senate filed three censure resolutions against Supreme Court justices Chloe Kirkland, Kristofer Brown, and Shuman for the dismissal of the impeachment of Student Body President Cody Boyer. The only one to pass was Shuman’s.

The SG court dismissed the trial for Boyer, claiming that the senate impeachment committee did not have enough investigated proof.

The court also expressed concern that the committee did not properly follow the Florida Sunshine Laws, such as giving reasonable notice before meetings occur and providing proper documentation. The committee agreed to press 15 of the 17 accused charges.

“Either way if you guys don’t agree with the document, which I still don’t see how, I just hope that you guys see with the fixed impeachment process that those charges are in fact not charges because they don’t have a fixed investigation of evidence,” Shuman said.

A censure is a voted, expressed extreme disapproval of the actions of a representative. The action can be used in the United States law to punish a member of Congress, a judge, or the president. Censure for SG is determined by a vote in the senate.

The justices argued that it is not their job to do investigations, but rather to hold a fair trial based on evidence that is brought to them.

Senate pro-tempore Jared Pieniazek, who submitted the three censures, expressed that procedures were properly followed.

“The meetings were made public, there was plenty of time deliberate the court has no right to make a decision on the whether or not they feel deliberation was sustainable enough or whether or not that they agree with the actions of the prosecution,” said Pieniazek. "What they did was wrong and it really scares me and worries me for the future and structure of this organization.”

Some students claimed that SG is not doing their role in serving the student body the best way possible. Daniel McGarigal, a senior, openly expressed his opinion at the assembly.

“I would like to point out that in the meantime while we are, as a complete organization, focused on things like this, we are not serving our student body in the capacity that we are meant to,” Daniel McGarigal said.
Incident underscores concerns for sexual violence

“Most of our officers come with experience from other agencies...Our officers are well-trained in helping victims and providing resources...they're positioned and here to help.”

—David Hendry, chief of USF St. Petersburg Police Department

One sexual assault was reported on campus in Residence Hall One in the Annual Fire and Safety Report for USF St. Petersburg.

Continued from p.1

of stage acts for the Harborside Activities Board and worked part-time for the Campus Recreation Department and University Student Center. He was nominated for Sophomore Leader of the Year by the university administration's Department of Student Life and Engagement.

According to court records, he was released from jail after posting $10,000 bail. The Crow's Nest attempted to reach Lasso at his family's home in Pinellas Park. He did not respond to a note left there seeking his comment.

Josh Fuller | The Crow’s Nest

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His attorney, Bryant R. Camareno, said he and Lasso take the charge “very seriously.”

“Nobody wants a trial,” Camareno said. “There is no question that the victim was victimized. No one will be able to justify what happened. Both myself and Mr. Lasso take her complaint very seriously. I'm sure he wouldn't want anything like this to happen to one of his loved ones.”

“Most of our officers come with experience from other agencies,” Hendry said. “Our officers are well-trained in helping victims and providing resources...they're positioned and here to help.”

Hendry said his 28 years' experience in law enforcement in Tallahassee prepared him to handle emergency incidents on campus, including sexual assault. In his three years with the criminal investigation department in Tallahassee, he said, he oversaw more than 100 detectives who handled investigations, often involving students.

His officers at USFSP are well equipped to assist distressed victims or witnesses in a criminal incident, he said.

“I think that goes a long way when it comes to meeting the needs of someone who is reporting a crime,” Hendry said. “What we try to do is put in place an environment where the officers are well-trained to make the report and connect the victim with resources, which is beneficial for the legal process.”

According to the university's residence life coordinator, Deanna Hughes, RAs are instructed to find a safe place for a victim when an incident takes place and ask open-ended questions, but only after verifying that a report will be filed according to the nature of the situation. She credits the training from officers and the skills they provide the RAs.

“Housing does not take any major steps until UPD (police) calls to action,” Hughes said. “We collaborate and have one-on-one meetings to decide what is best for the individual.”

Campus police officers work with residence assistants and faculty in training activities, including a video and slideshow, introducing Title IX, the Clery Act and the Violence Against Women Act, the federal laws that ban discrimination and violence against women.

Hendry said that the campus police department is constantly expanding according to formulas, including student count, staff count and building count.

“We spend a lot of energy on having the most current information,” Hendry said. “We take it straight to orientations and use a multitude of folks. We use a more personalized approach.”

News Briefs

Happy homecoming week! In the rush of the festivities, here are some things you may have missed:

Tuesday, Oct. 7

Any luck on the job hunt? The Career Center is here to help with a workshop focused on the job and internship search. Students can join in the Student Life Center, room 2101, starting at 5 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 9

The Office of Multicultural Affairs celebrates National Coming Out Day in the Reef from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. This will offer support and celebrate the LGBTQ community. Go and get ribbons, stickers and information. Who doesn't like stickers?

Ever wondered what life as a doctor would be like? Clearwater pediatrician Dr. Greg Savel, a USF- Morsani medical school graduate, will be the guest speaker at the next Pre-Med Club meeting. He takes the floor at 6 p.m. in the SLC multipurpose room on the second floor.

Friday, Oct. 10

Well it may not be a Disney parade, but it's the next best thing. Hop on the bus and head over to the USF Homecoming Parade and Concert. Student government will be providing not one, but two buses, and they leave campus at 3 p.m. Buses are also taking students to the Homecoming Game on Saturday, Oct. 11. Reserve your seat on OrgSync.

USFSP has partnered with the Tampa Bay Technology Forum (TBTF) in hopes to identify talents in industry demand and match them with existing talent, which include USFSP students. A TBTF student chapter has formed on campus to help facilitate communication between students and professionals.

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Understanding a crime

The Clery Act, also known as the Campus Security Act, requires all colleges and universities to share an annual crime report for the campus. The Clery Act guarantees that in order for a public or private college or university to receive financial aid, the institution must publish an Annual Fire and Safety Report, maintain a public crime log, provide crime statistics for the institution, issue timely warnings for an ongoing threat, etc.

Title IX protects faculty, students, and staff from sex discrimination in educational programs and activities at any institution that would receive financial assistance. This includes sexual harassment and sexual violence. Report an anonymous complaint online at https://secure.ethicpoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/14773/index.html

Sexual battery, according to the Clery Act, is "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim."

Sexual assault, according to the Florida Statutes, includes oral, anal or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object; however, sexual battery does not include an act done for bona fide medical purpose.

Consent does not mean coerced submission. Consent is intelligent, knowing and voluntary. The pre-trial hearing is a session with a judge that allows the accused to hear the criminal charge before going to trial. The district attorney and the defending attorney gather as much information and evidence in advance to prepare for a trial, including the severity of a crime, the criminal history of the defendant, the defendant’s willingness to admit guilt, and the likelihood of a conviction at the trial stage.

According to Florida law, a felony is punishable by more than one year imprisonment in a state prison.

Club addresses veteran needs

By Jack Moscone
Staff Reporter

For the first time ever, USF St. Petersburg has its own student organization geared toward veterans.

The organization, called the Student Veterans Organization, addresses what was seen as a critical need by veterans on campus. It adds to the programming through-out the USF system, which was ranked No. 4 nationwide for veterans by the Military Times.

"Fellow veterans are the only ones who truly understand each other and know what it’s like to be where we’ve been and how we are trying to transition back into society," said SVO president Jared Alberico, who aims to create a veteran and military friendly campus here.

Members of the group include veterans, eligible dependents, members of the selected reserve and active-duty personnel. Anyone is welcome to join. It is an independent student-run organization that specifically serves veterans and their families through volunteering and fundraising events.

As far as spreading awareness, the organization plans to engage in what Alberico calls "boots on the ground" tactics, going door-to-door and face-to-face on campus.

For a group that started just a few weeks ago, the SVO has widely expanded. It is now composed of not only students, but faculty and staff, as well.

"Our ability to start collaborations is already impressive and exciting to Student Government," Alberico says. "Everywhere we go and every face we see, we are getting great support and the excitement is contagious."

USFSP has been in talks of starting a student veteran program since as early as 2004. This semester, student veterans finally got the group running.

"Because this is a student run organization, we need members with passion, desire, and a goal of helping their fellow brothers and sisters," says Alberico.

The SVO’s first big events and collaborations are just around the corner. They will be working with other student run organizations for the Halloween Party on Oct. 28. On Nov. 1, they will collaborate with USF Tampa’s Student Veteran Association and tailgate before the Bull’s home game. Finally, the SVO will be hosting a Veteran’s Day celebration at Harbor Lawn on Sunday, Nov. 10. There, they will spread the word about the group and student veteran issues and support.

Alberico believes that future volunteer work in the local community will show just how caring USFSP student veterans are, and that they will never stop serving those in need.

"If you want to know what true teamwork and leadership looks like," Alberico said, "Then come work with those who do it best."

1 in 5 women

One in five women on college campuses will be sexually assaulted by the time they graduate. That is an often-cited statistic that President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and a task force on campus safety have repeated this year to draw attention to what they call a serious problem.

What is the basis of this dramatic statistic?

According to PoliFact, the fact-checking arm of the Tampa Bay Times, and the Washington Post, the statistic comes from a 2007 study by the U.S. Justice Department’s National Institute of Justice. The Clery Act, also known as the Campus Security Act, requires all colleges and universities to share a campus crime report for the campus. The Clery Act guarantees that in order for a public or private college or university to receive financial aid, the institution must publish an Annual Fire and Safety Report, maintain a public crime log, provide crime statistics for the institution, issue timely warnings for an ongoing threat, etc.

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New wellness room a stress-free zone

By Angeline del Pilar
Crow’s Nest Contributor

Juggling deadlines, exams, papers and their social lives can often cause students stress.

The Wellness Center, partnering with their student-run counterpart organizations P.E.E.R.S. is working to provide a solution. The Wellness Room, located in the Wellness Center, allows students to check out of their busy lives for an hour of peace and quiet. Use of the room is free to all USF St. Petersburg students.

Victoria Beltran, a Health Educator at the Wellness Center, said stress has one of the highest physiological impacts on student academic success. This room was designed to combat that impact.

"This is for them to be stress-free," Beltran said of the Wellness Room.

The Wellness Room is open anytime during the Wellness Center’s regular business hours. To use the room, students must set up an appointment.

Several amenities are provided, such as a massage chair and the biofeedback program. The biofeedback program monitors the user’s physiological activities, such as heart functions. It can be accessed on the computer available in the room. The goal of the program is to train the mind to control physiological responses to anxiety and stress. The sessions include guided meditations and exercises to slow down breathing.

To start biofeedback sessions, schedule a time to speak with a counselor in the Wellness Center. The counselor will complete a biofeedback screening and provide an orientation to the program.

A bookshelf of pamphlets relevant to student health, ranging from stress management to sexual health, are also provided to read in the room. Students have the freedom to choose what they want to do, whether they read, study or meditate. There are no commitments the student must accomplish in that hour. They are just provided a time to find peace and stability.

"The goal is balancing, not about being perfect," Kelly Stefanski, P.E.E.R.S. Treasurer, said.

For more information on the Wellness Room contact PEERS at USFSPPEERS@gmail.com. To schedule an appointment for the Wellness Room or the biofeedback program visit the Wellness Center, Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. in the Student Life Center 2200.
Albert Whitted Airport scrutinized again

By Joey Vars
Crow’s Nest Contributor

The city of St. Petersburg’s airport became known as Albert Whitted Airport on Oct. 12, 1926, in honor of the World War I pilot.

The only city district that did not have a majority vote to keep the airport was located directly south-west of the facility, where Bayfront Health St. Petersburg, USFSP, and Bayboro Harbor residents wanted larger buildings.

With the approval of the 2003 referendum to keep Albert Whitted open, the airport also received funding from the Federal Aviation Administration. This is a 20-year grant that is scheduled to run out in 2023, with only nine years remaining.

General and private aviation in this country has taken a hit since the Sept. 11 attacks more than 13 years ago. All it would take to close the airport once more would be another voter referendum.

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By Emily Tinti
Staff Reporter

Magical events await for Homecoming Week

The Cardboard Boat Races are a favorite tradition for USFSP students. Student organizations and university departments form teams to build boats out of cardboard, duct tape, and other materials.

Fans of fantasy film join for a whimsical childhood favorite. Starting at 8 p.m., the movie Hook, starring Robin Williams as Peter Pan, will be screened on Harbor Lawn.

Tuesday
Relax with some coffee or tea at “Java Jam,” a performance in the Reef featuring a local band and coffee house vibes from 3-5 p.m. Whip out your Easy-Bake oven (or just ask a friend to use theirs in Residence Hall One) and prepare your best baked good for the Bake-Off. Go online to register for the event, which starts at 11 a.m. in the Student Life Center.

Find your Prince Charming and dance the night away at the Homecoming Ball. Located in the USC Ballroom, guests in their finest dress can attend the announcement and crowning of the Duke and Duchess. Prizes, points, cash or card at the Reef.

Wednesday
Set sail (or cheer on) your favorite teams in the annual Cardboard Boat Race on the Waterfront at 11:30 a.m. Participants and winners alike will not leave without a prize.

The carnival is bigger and better this year with more inflatables, activities, prizes and Homecoming 2014 exclusive promotion items. The carnival extends along Harborwalk from 1-5 p.m. Finger lickin’ good barbecue for a sweet deal? Count us in. Come use your meal plan points, cash or card at the Reef-hosted Pirate-Pickin’ Barbecue on Harborwalk from 5-7 p.m.

By Amanda Starling
Staff Reporter

Everyone wants to be a prince or princess. But how do we become royals? As easy as it seems to don a crown and declare oneself “Daddy’s Little Princess,” it might help if we actually followed the rules of royalty.

For the Homecoming Ball, many of us want to embody that magical air that is of a king or queen.

Happily ever after isn’t easy. After examining the behaviors of British royalty and Disney stories, I’ve discovered a list of qualities you must have in order to become a royal.

Just like the creepy old lady gives you. True love is absolutely linked to your diet. If the old, cackling lady offers you an apple, just eat it. It’s tasty, delicious, and nutritious.

The apple is a dashing, necrophiliac apple, just eat it. Sure, the nap is delicious. It’s one of the best investments (or heists) you must have in order to become royalty? As easy as it seems, it’s not always the easiest to find.

Dirty, man.)

Beans can do anything. They provide condiments for giants and make a great topping in your burrito. Beans are cool.

There is only one smart pig. He built his house with bricks. The others are idiosyncratic.

Dolls are creepy when animated. Dolls are creepier when turned into real people. (Just imagine if Chuckie were brought to life the way Pinocchio was.

The cat is always right. Maybe it’s an omen, but talking cats are always somehow wiser and amused by the antics of the protagonist. Just go with it.

Don’t be suspicious of the overly-friendly animals. So nice don’t usually sew and deer don’t help clean your apartment. But hey, we can use all of the help we can get.

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The annual International Food and Wine Festival offers global cuisines and marketplaces from Sept. 19-Nov. 10.

**By Chelsea Abrams**  
**Crow’s Nest Contributor**

If you’re hungry and want a little something to drink, Disney’s Epcot has it covered. Now through Nov. 10, drive over to Orlando and enjoy the Epcot International Food and Wine Festival at Walt Disney World.

Sample beers, wines, foods and desserts at each of the 36 stops along the World Showcase. Each stop represents a different country from around the world.

New features have arrived to the festival for fans to explore their taste palette.

Two new marketplaces are available during the event, including the latest Patagonia. Patagonia offers traditional South American foods from Argentina and Chile, and Farm Fresh serves gluten-free comfort foods.

A new craft beers section is located inside the Odyssey Center, between the World Showcase and Future World. The section serves American craft beers and foods.

While you’re there, take in the music. The Eat to the Beat Concert Series performers include new additions Fuel, Jim Brickman, Los Lonely Boys and David Cook, as well as returning favorites Smash Mouth, Boyz II Men, Wilson Phillips and Sister Hazel.

The festival is included with general park admission, including the Eat to the Beat concerts. Premium packages are also available for purchase.

After the festival center, it’s best start at Terra, the all-vegan kiosk, and work your way around clock-wise. World Showcase slopes that way downhill, making the walk less tiring.

The festival center is located in Future World between Test Track and the Universe of Energy. Inside you can pick up a passport which lists every kiosk’s offerings, and even has a place to get stamped as you eat around the world. There is also a display of Disney-themed chocolate sculptures, sponsored by Ghirardelli, where you can pick up free chocolate samples.

**Review: Epcot International Food and Wine Festival**

**Try These:**

- **Patagonia’s beef empanada.** The warm meat pocket is flavorful, filling and cheap at $4.50
- **Mexico’s Sangria.** Fruity, but not overly so, and refreshing in the midafternoon heat. $6.75
- **Italy’s chocolate cannoli.** A twist on a traditional cannoli, with sweet ricotta and candied fruit filling in a chocolate-covered pastry shell. $4
- **Hops and barley’s beef slider.** The beef is grass fed and locally sourced from Florida, and is covered in pimento cheese. Another cheap and filling portion at $4
- **Intermissions Café’s peach moscato.** Light, bubbly and fresh. $4.25
- **China’s Mongolian beef.** Served on a steamed bun with chili mayo. The spicy flavors burst in your mouth. $5
- **Brazil’s coconut candy.** Extremely chewy and dense texture. It’s like eating coconut fudge. $1.75

**Avoid These:**

- **Terra’s blacked chick’n breast.** Vegan chicken served over wheat. The texture is limp, and the flavor is bland.
- **Italy’s cheese ravioli.** The cheese on the inside is fresh enough, but the sauce and pasta taste frozen. Save your money and buy a Stouffer’s frozen meal afterward if you want to eat ravioli.

Storm clouds could not keep the activities of the Tangerine Blues Festival from going on.
It’s time for a change in foster care

California-based foster care agency Little People’s World made headlines last month after directors were caught embezzling more than $460,000. The agency is a non-profit funded by tax dollars.

The news is a slap in the face to taxpayers, who shouldn’t have to give up their hard-earned dollars to fund a dishonest family’s vacation. But it is even more unfair to the foster care children who were part of Little People’s World. Once again, they’ve been harmed by the foster care system.

The frequency of fraud within the foster care system raises a red flag to us. Less than one-tenth of the $11 million funds embezzled between 2000 and 2010 by agency non-profits has been recovered, according to the Los Angeles Times.

But the treatment of children in foster care is even more egregious. Ashley Rhodes-Courter, the author of the memoir Three Little Words, spent nine years in the Tampa Bay foster care system in the late 1980s through the 1990s. While she was ultimately adopted, she went through 14 foster homes before finding a permanent home. She rarely stayed at the same school for more than a year.

During that time, she was placed in some good home situations, but also some horrendous ones. She endured an abusive situation in an over-crowded foster home, and the foster system turned a blind eye to the abuse. Her foster mother was convicted of her crimes several years later. Rhodes-Courter was also placed in the home of a pedophile.

Clearly, the foster care system is broken. There are many hard-working, caring people within the system who want to help children. But the system needs a change.

Our society bounces children—stripped away from their parents—from home to home. They change schools so many times that even the most naturally intelligent student couldn’t be expected to succeed. This causes many children to fall behind. In most states around the U.S., when a child turns 18, they age out of the foster care system. So if a child turns 18 and has not yet been adopted, the system refuses to help them anymore.

Florida has tried to rectify this problem. The Nancy C. Detert Common Sense and Compassion Independent Living Act, passed in May 2013, allows children over 18 to stay in foster care as long as they are continuing their education.

But the bill is already short of funding, according to the Orlando Sentinel. So while Florida makes strides to improve the foster care system, its efforts appear to be falling short.

The foster care system needs reforms. We’re not sure how that looks, but it’s time we say we will not tolerate the treatment of children in foster care any longer. We cannot throw more taxpayer money to a system that abuses both the money and the children within the system.

Let’s start the conversation, and look for a better way to protect our children and our dollars.

Photo of the week

Throwback

The early heists of the West were marked by speedy horses and crafty thieves. But on Oct. 6, 1866, the mechanics of thieves found a new target: Midwest trains.

The first great train robbery was lead by the Reno gang. Also known as the Jackson thieves, they carried out the first three peaceful train robberies in American history. J. Wilkinson and brother Bill Reno organized a gang of train thieves that were among the first in the “Brotherhood of Outlaws.”

The first venture on Oct. 6 involved a $10,000 haul from an Ohio and Mississippi train in Jackson County, Indiana. Railroads were easy targets since the trains often housed rare minerals and expensive cargo. Owners of railroads later began to fortify and guard their cargo, but only after a series of thefts conducted by these thieves.

The Reno gang only lasted two years. They were later arrested and executed by a vigilante mob in Indiana in 1868.

And they’re off!

Runners for the Homecoming 5K race past the University Student Center. Participants ran the perimeter of the campus. The event was linked to the Children’s Miracle Network.

Submit a picture with a caption for photo of the week to jnesslar@mail.usf.edu by Friday at 5 p.m. The best photo submission will run next week.
Racism is a rapant concern

By Wesley Elstun

Racism. It’s so prevalent in our society. Yet no one seems to want to admit it, even though some of the most recent and tragic events have largely been fueled by racism. The Ferguson riots were inspired by racial discrimination. Even before that, George Zimmerman managed to weave his way through the justice system. In the fashion of a serpent, Zimmerman avoided being charged for the death of Trayvon Martin. Martin’s unjustifiable death did nothing to let the people of America know the true meaning of our superiority to them. Sounds pathetic doesn’t it? I find it hilarious, because I’m sure Americans could have gotten the exact same results if we hadn’t done what they did to those people. They could’ve hired some translators to figure out the Indian’s language as well as the Romans. They could have asked these people to share the land. But no, they wanted to flex our muscles and prove that they were the best. Pride. It’s a crazy thing isn’t it? A little bit of it goes a long way. When you have too much, you become some egomaniacal maniac set on destroying or changing anything that isn’t what you want it to be.

It does seem like the Hungarian government is going for a double play. All of the signs are present, from kicking out everyone who doesn’t pay to everyone who does. There’s always been bad blood whenever the Romanis are involved.

The government’s trying to keep the majority happy by kicking out the Romanis, thus getting rid of potential opposition from the nationalist parties, and they also get real estate out of it. In the end, the Romanis can put up a fight if they want to, but the odds are stacked against them. It’s basically the movie, 300, but with politics being used as a weapon instead of swords and spears.

Science helps wombs, not kids

By Amanda Starling

Science has challenged the ability of human bodies once more when a series of womb transplants, according to an article by The Telegraph. British physicians have performed an innovative surgery on patients that allows women born without wombs or disabled bodies once more to carry the birth of two children. Drugs must be taken in order to stabilize and maintain the organ without rejection. The surgery is a breakthrough for both the mothers everywhere who have access to a childbirth that was otherwise denied them. Some were told from their own adolescence that it would be impossible to produce their own children. Science evolves alongside humans to grant these special miracles for families.

But we live in a world so populated, to the point of starvation in developing nations. We artificially inseminate and swap organs to preserve our desire to birth children of our own genetic foundation. Customized babies can be altered for the wealthy now, allowing them to select hair color the way they would select their drapes. How are we so thoughtless with the creation of life? How has it lost its value, its meaning to us?

Childbirth is a miracle. Not every woman is blessed with a successful birth. Sperm and eggs coming together is not as easy as our sex education videos make it seem. Subtracting the womb and its ability to house a fertilized egg simply makes birth that more valuable to a young family that anxiously awaits an addition.

It’s beautiful for these women to become mothers. To have such an innate, essential part of their bodies revitalized is indescribable. But I worry for the children who hope for a parent in foster care or shelters. I wonder about their future, to be raised without a parent who cares unconditionally.

For every modified, custom ordered child out there, a matching child that naturally exists needs loving. Children aren’t accidents--they are lives. When a child is born, he or she need support. Children need sincerity and strength. That child needs the love that barren couples so desperately want to give.

I don’t care if my future child has curly hair to match mine or my future husband’s eyes. I want that child to simply be loved. Science holds the capability of our bodies to produce multiple outcomes in birth and the creation of new lives. I only hope it does not become a tool to achieve a selfish means of life for a model child when so many wonderful children exist.
Reflection of the Bulls season

By Andrew Caplan
Staff Reporter

Following their 27-10 loss to the 19th ranked Wisconsin Badgers, the USF Bulls entered their bye week with time to prepare for maybe their toughest challenge yet of the 2014 season.

Through five games, the Bulls hold a 2-3 overall record and are 1-0 in conference play. The remaining seven games on the Bulls’ schedule all are conference matchups.

The Bulls will have their hands full Saturday night as they are set to face off against another top-25 ranked team, the East Carolina Pirates (4-1).

The Pirates are led by senior quarterback Shane Carden, who already has 15 passing touchdowns on the year. Carden and the Pirates offense are ranked sixth in the nation with 392 passing yards per game. The team also ranks ninth in the nation in “points for”, with 43.6 points per game.

Carden’s NFL draft stock continues to rise from week to week, drawing comparisons to Philip Rivers, but some Bulls defenders aren’t worried.

“Nothing special,” Defensive end Eric Lee said. “Just like any other quarterback. He’s short.”

Bulls head coach Willie Taggart jokingly questioned if Lee was referring to the Pirates’ backup QB, knowing Carden is not just “any other quarterback.”

Although the Bulls defense has 12 takeaways so far this season, their woes come on the offensive side of the ball from not being able to put points on the board in order to keep up with their opponents.

“Our defense is doing a great job. They have been putting pressure on the quarterback,” Lee said. “And of course, we are gonna give it our all,” Lee said. “We’re looking for guys that want to make plays,” Taggart said. “We can’t have young guys coming in and dropping balls too. We need guys to catch some footballs.”

Taggart said every day he hopes his team gets better and that they are looking to improve on “everything” moving forward.

“We’re not where we wanna be in any aspect,” Taggart said. “If we could just play consistently on offense I think we could have ourselves a really good football team.”

The Bulls give up an average of 29 points per game and should expect to see similar numbers against the Pirates.

“I feel like its just any other team, just like anybody else and we’re gonna give it our all,” Lee said. “And of course, we are gonna expect a win, just like we expect for any other game.”

All hands on deck for the sailing team

BY ANDREW CAPLAN
Staff Reporter

The sailing team has grown since last year, from 32 to 54 students, with the addition of three recent walk ons.

Allison Jolly and Tim King are the coaches for the USF team, based at USF St. Petersburg. They allow students to join the sailing program, as participating members, with no prior sailing experience, as long as the student is full-time, can swim and is an undergraduate. However, not all students will get the chance to compete in races.

“You never know,” Jolly said.

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