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That’s how long USF St. Petersburg’s election for president and vice president has been in limbo.

It’s been 31 full days since either James Richards and Jordan Iuliucci or Mark Lombardi-Nelson and Christa Hegedus should have been chosen to represent the students of USF St. Petersburg for the 2013-2014 academic year. It’s how long the 358 students who cast a vote for a president and vice president have gone unanswered, their voices lost somewhere between campaign infractions and amicus curiae. For one month, four friends, coworkers and students, burdened by the burning passion to lead, have been caught in a battle of errors that should never have happened — and so has the student body of St. Petersburg, thousands of students unsure about who they can turn to next year for representation.

In a Student Government presidential election so controversial that it received coverage from the Tampa Bay Times, trying to keep up with who’s in and who’s out has been nearly impossible. But where the Times story focuses primarily on a candidate’s absence of undergarments, The Crow’s Nest presents the need-to-know details of the election process. We sifted through the documents submitted to and produced by the SG Supreme Court over the last month to break down each writ, brief, motion and request in terms that don’t require a law degree to understand.

See ELECTION, pg. 3
News Briefs

This week is packed with activities for students, alumni and friends of the university for USF Week.

Monday, April 8
Free food and giveaways on Harborwalk from noon to 2 p.m.

Tuesday, April 9
Live trivia night at the Reef from 7 to 9 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10
Road Rules Campus Challenge featuring Rachel Robinson from MTV’s “Road Rules” in the University Student Center ballroom at 6 p.m.

Thursday, April 11
Undergraduate Research Symposium in the USF Student Union from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. USFSP’s Got Talent! competition in the USC ballroom at 8 p.m.

Friday, April 12
Bus to USF Tampa’s Bullstork concert featuring the All-American Rejects. Bus leaves at 5 p.m. from the USC.

If you’re interested in street prostitution, or at least the subcultures and constructed identities of the system, join Dr. Jill McCracken as she discusses her book, “Street Sex Workers’ Discourse: Realizing Material Change Through Agential Choice.” McCracken’s talk will provide a thorough analysis of the material conditions surrounding street workers and their connection to discourse.

She will speak on Tuesday, April 9 in the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library from 4 to 5 p.m.

Feeling innovative?

On Entrepreneurship Day, April 10, entrepreneurship club members will demonstrate the products they’ve developed.

The event will feature live music, food, and activities, and more on Harborwalk, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Chasing muses through history

By Jennifer Nesslar
Crow’s Next Correspondent

When senior Karleigh Chase wrote her honors thesis, she did something few environmental science and policy majors do: She wrote a play.

Chase performed a portion of her play, “Memoirs of a Painted Woman,” on April 4 at Studio 620 in downtown. In her one-woman show, she portrayed the women of various famous paintings, giving her own adaptation of their thoughts on living life as a muse.

Character in Chase’s play tell the audience how being a muse affected them. Mona Lisa became successful. The Girl with Pearl Earring describes it as tragic. Gala rejoices over the power she achieved. Marilyn Monroe became a martyr, completely destroyed by her experience as a muse.

Chase calls each of the muses “my girls.” She connected with the characters, not only through the writing of the play, but also through her own personal experience — she was a muse herself.

When she began working on her thesis last fall, she was coming out of a relationship with an artist. She described it as a “difficult time ending being his muse.”

Unlike her “girls,” Chase is unsure how her experience as a muse will affect her. At the end of the play, Chase speaks as herself.

“It was incredible and empowering when it began, and tragic and devastating when it ended,” she said. “I am still trying to figure out whether it will strengthen or weaken me. Despite the ending, I would never take it back.”

Chase hopes her play will cause others to consider the lives of muses. She pleads with the audience to realize there is a real woman behind every muse painted by a male artist. She says that women are more than just a “decorative inspiration for a lot of people.”

Theater also has a personal meaning for Chase. She has been involved in the theater since she was 10 years old. She has performed in many local productions, but until now, art has always been separate from her schooling. She now calls environmental science and politics her “fall back” and plans to move to New York City to pursue acting after graduating in May. She wants to continue writing for theatrical productions.

Chase hopes to continue working on her show, so she said it lends itself to traveling around. If other venues will host her, she will perform.

news@crowneststpete.com

Student scammed overseas

By Jaclyn Cayave
Crow’s Next Correspondent

Amber Heddleson was 11 years old the first time she visited London. She fell in love with the city.

“It was only a two-week trip, and we were in London for three days … I told myself, ‘I want to live here!'” Heddleson said.

As a USF St. Petersburg student, living in London wasn’t an option, but studying abroad was. So she made arrangements to do so in fall 2012.

Heddleson decided to pursue off-campus housing, so she posted her information on a website through her host school, Middlesex University. It was called “student pad,” a public forum for people to post their living wants and needs. Because it was through her host school, she figured the forum was safe.

A landlord named Clement Boutielle contacted Heddleson about renting a room in his flat. At 400 English pounds a month, the price was too good to turn down.

“The lease was very renter friendly. My boyfriend and father thought too soon,” Heddleson said. Boutielle sent her more than five pictures of the flat, and even gave her the name and contact information of his roommate, another study abroad student.

Heddleson finalized a three-month rental agreement with Boutielle, who asked her to wire money through Western Union. She used an online payment system called Bluepay that sends money electronically through the bank, then transfers through Western Union to the recipient. Heddleson felt this transaction was more secure than a cash transaction. But then, the three to five business day waiting period for the money wasn’t fast enough for her landlord.

Two days before Heddleson left for London, Boutielle called her about the rent. Until then, they had only communicated through email.

“He was screaming, ‘I need payment! I need payment! I need payment!’” Heddleson said. “He had a foreign accent … I could barely understand him, but I knew he was yelling at me.”

In a panic, she canceled the electronic transaction, pulled out $1,657 in cash, and sent it via Western Union to the address Boutielle provided. She didn’t want to be homeless in London.

When Heddleson landed in London, she hailed a cab and traveled to 9 Tardwell Place, where she expected to find her home of the next three months. A man answered the door.

“Is Clement there?” she asked.

“There’s no Clement here.”

“Are you sure? Because I am supposingly staying here,” she said.

“I live here.” the man replied.

“I’ve lived here for a while.”

Heddleson asked the man if there was another Tardwell Place, or if he knew anyone named of Clement Boutielle. He answered no to both questions.

That’s when Heddleson realized she’d been scammed.

In the week that followed, Heddleson retraced her steps to see where she went wrong instead of getting acquainted to her new environment before starting classes.

What she uncovered shocked her.

She found out that Boutielle had received her money in Scotland. The address he gave her turned out to be an auto shop. The cellphone number he used was registered to an Internet cafe.

A week before leaving for London, Heddleson emailed her roommate, Laura Lee Davies, to introduce herself.

“I thought it was weird that she didn’t email me back, but figured she was just busy preparing to leave,” Heddleson said.

A week into the trip, Davies finally replied to the email. She informed Heddleson that she was not her roommate and that someone was using her name and contact information as part of the scam.

At least six other people had contacted Davies — all introducing themselves as her future roommate.

Clearly, the scam was common.

Raven Villegras, a USF student and intern at the Education Abroad office in Tampa, had a similar experience. Villegras also fell victim to a Western Union scam.

“I did not realize that I had been scammed till I was standing on the doorstep of my so-called flat,” Villegras said. She lost roughly $1,000 in the scam. Her landlord wasn’t real.

“I was just involved in a string of emails that didn’t amount to anything at all,” she said.

Villegras said she requested pictures for verification and received them. She was told she would have a roommate, but she was never given the person’s name and contact information. She eventually realized it was all made up.

Fortunately, things ended positively for both students. Heddleson met a student from California, who invited her to stay in her dorm for a couple of nights. She used Facebook to reach out to her friends and, eventually, was introduced to a fellow dancer who offered her a room at the flat she shared with his cat.

Villegras found permanent housing with help from Middlesex University. Although she did not live on campus, the university was able to assist her in finding a home with a reputable landlord.

Villegras offers her own advice for those planning to study abroad — investigate your landlord. She says students should always attempt to meet with their potential landlord in person or through Skype to confirm they are real people.

“I never give up, I’m not a quitter,” Villegras said. “So I stuck through it I found housing. The first night I moved in, I relaxed, sat there, took a deep breath and was like ‘Ok, this is a new beginning’.”

Heddleson feels her experience made her a stronger person.

Villegras believes her experience in London was a “formative, life altering experience,” despite the housing scam.

There are ways to avoid becoming a victim of fraud when studying abroad. The USF Education Abroad website warns students of the Western Union scams and provides links to websites that reveal the most common online scams. Students are also warned of scams at study abroad orientations.

news@crowneststpete.com
By Tyler Killette
Staff Reporter

ELECTION BREAKDOWN

The Crow's Nest documents the politically and legally fraught Student Government elections for the 2013-2014 president and vice presidential seat.

Suspension of election results

Elections were held March 4 though 7. Since the Election Rules Commission had not yet notified candidates of their violations on March 6, Supreme Court Chief Justice Sean Ericson suspected the results would be skewed so he suspended them until further notice.

This meant that even though results would be counted, they would not be certified or finalized.

Grievance reports

On March 7, three hours after polls closed, the ERC released grievance reports that assessed each party’s campaign violations. SG rules state that candidates must be made aware of their violations while the election is ongoing. Because the ERC failed to meet this requirement, the validity of the grievance reports was questioned.

Lombardi-Nelson and Hegedus were assessed violation points for bribery, plagiarism, the illegal use of student activity and service fees, and failure to put the election title and year on campaign material. The violations totaled 10 points — just enough to disqualify them from the race.

The ERC assessed two points to the Richards and Iuliucci, their only infraction being a failure to include the election year and title on campaign signs.

The preliminary results

On March 8, the day after polls closed, the ERC released preliminary results placing Mark Lombardi-Nelson and Christa Hegedus at 233 votes and Jimmy Richards and Jordan Iuliucci at 125 votes.

Since the Supreme Court put a suspension on the results the day before, they were not certified and no winner was declared.

Retraction of grievance reports

A day later, the ERC retracted the grievance reports, re-qualifying the Lombardi-Nelson/Hegedus ticket. Vincent de Cosmo, head of the ERC, admitted his “malpractice” and said Matt Morrin, director of Student Life and Engagement, strongly encouraged the retraction.

Request for trial

On March 15, Richards submitted a Supreme Court trial to decide whether the alleged campaign violations were valid. The trial would have placed Richards against de Cosmo.

Richards would have argued that regardless of the ERC’s error, campaign violations did occur and points should be assessed. Though de Cosmo admitted to breaking rules, he still believed the points he assessed were valid and would have had no argument for Richards.

Even though no issue existed between plaintiff and defendant, the court scheduled the trial for April 5.

Amicus curiae brief

Lombardi-Nelson and Hegedus submitted an amicus curiae brief — the legal term for something filed with the court by someone who is not a party in the case — on March 28.

The brief asked the court to dismiss the case and rebutted each violation charged by the ERC. According to Ericson, the court can only review motions for dismissal that come from the parties involved in a case, meaning the brief did not have the power to dismiss the trial.

Motion in Limine

In response to the amicus curiae, Richards and Iuliucci submitted for a motion in limine — a request that certain evidence not be used in a trial — claiming the brief “defies logic.”

The motion asked the court not to use the information presented in the amicus as evidence during the trial. The court partially approved the request.

Petition for summary judgment

Richards later submitted a petition for summary judgment, which allowed the court to decide if his campaign was harmed by the ERC’s misconduct without holding a full trial. Because there was no factual conflict between Richards and the ERC, a trial was deemed unnecessary.

The court made a summary judgment stating, “If the ERC assessed the points correctly, it is possible the opposing candidate would have been disqualified, resulting in the plaintiff winning the election by default.”

The judgment, therefore, ruled in favor of Richards. The court dismissed the trial and scheduled a hearing in its place that would decide whether the allegations made against the Lombardi-Nelson campaign were legitimate.

The hearing

On April 5, Lombardi-Nelson and Hegedus were given five minutes to rebut the alleged violations that disqualified them from the race, but evidence was limited to that which had already been submitted. No new arguments the two presented would be considered, Ericson said.

The court upheld most of the points assessed to the campaign, but did not release official numbers. It has until April 12 to do so. Lombardi-Nelson said “the game’s not over,” and announced he had plans to appeal to Regional Associate Vice Chancellor Julie Wong next.

More information about the hearing is available in an article that appears below.

The Tampa Bay Times article

An article written about the election by Lisa Gartner of the Tampa Bay Times raised some concern among students involved in the election process after it was released on the Times’ website on April 5.

In the article, titled “On this USF campus, all’s fair in love and politics,” Gartner references Hegedus’ decision to not wear a bra, and the strife it caused with one-time running mate Iuliucci.

“They really emphasized bras… I didn’t think it had anything to do with what’s happening!” Richards wrote in an open forum for USFSP students. “It was absolutely terrible.”

A handful of other students expressed concern about the purpose of the article. Some said they thought it was funny. Hegedus seemed not to think so.

“[Gartner] will come back to USFSP and try to create another article,” she wrote in the forum. “I warn you to not speak to her due to her lack of professionalism in writing.”

Staff reporter Ren LaFemme contributed to this article.

After hearing, president vows to fight

By Amanda Starling
Staff Reporter

The Student Government Supreme Court held a hearing on April 5 to determine validity of violations assessed to the Mark Lombardi-Nelson and Christa Hegedus campaign. Though polls closed nearly a month ago, the presidential seat remains open.

The hearing gave Lombardi-Nelson and running mate Hegedus five minutes to rebut the alleged violations that allowed the Election Rules Commission to disqualify them from the race.

The discussion was limited to the evidence previously submitted to the court. Supreme Court Chief Justice Sean Ericson made it clear that no further information provided in the party’s oral statement would be considered.

“When it comes to this hearing,” he wrote in an open forum for USFSP students on Facebook. “It was absolutely terrible.”

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Cooking club bubbles over to USFSP

BY NANCY McCANN
CROW’S NEXT CORRESPONDENT

In the galley-style kitchen, Portobello mushrooms are lined up on cookie sheets next to slices of tomato, green pepper, cheese and ham. A young woman with a chef’s hair is at stove stirring a white sauce. The table is set with pink place mats, and a chocolate-colored Labrador retriever is greeting every guest at the door.

It’s a rainy school night, and a meeting of Chefs at USF is about to begin.

Students enter the apartment where University of South Florida roommates Ashley Lackey and Ilda Gjonaj have everything in place for cooking a delicious meal. Lackey, the club’s president, and Gjonaj are working in tandem to host the meeting. Lackey asks everyone to put toppings of their choice on the large mushrooms that are about to go in the oven, and Gjonaj remains in charge of making pasta Alfredo.

“I’m looking forward to home-cooked food,” said Megan Lesh, “and getting away from the everyday routine of having most of my meals out.”

The club meets several times a year to prepare and share tasty cuisine or bake desserts and enjoy the friendship cooking brings.

“I’m Italian, born and raised in Italy,” Gjonaj said. “In Italy, we love friendship cooking.

Lackey said she likes getting new recipes.

Jason Richardson said when he cooks he likes to “wing it” with whatever ingredients are available.

“I’m Italian, born and raised in Italy,” Gjonaj said. “In Italy, we love cooking.

She said her grandmother began teaching her to cook when she was five years old.

Lackey said she started cooking in high school “and just loved it.”

Marvel Chaiser said that she joined the club “to eat.”

Gjonaj, Impemba and Lackey are vegetarians. Lackey said there are always choices for club members that do not eat meat. The evening’s meal was a good example: the pasta Alfredo was a vegetarian dish, and ham could easily be removed from the mushroom dish.

The club has been on a baking spree, making sugar cookies, chocolate cupcakes and crunchy granola bars at recent meetings. They baked red velvet and “lady bug” cookies on Valentine’s Day.

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Lesh said last Halloween they made rice crispy treats, marshmallow men, and — her favorite that night — a bowl of punch with a “frozen hand” in it.

Chefs at USF club hopes to collaborate with a similar cooking club at USF St. Petersburg

Watch out! Giant mosquitoes!

BY CHELSI KALLIS
CROW’S NEXT CORRESPONDENT

Get the insect repellent ready. Scientists expect giant mosquitoes to hit Florida this summer.

The large mosquitoes, known as gallinippers, are believed to have blown in with the wind from Tropical Storm Debby last June. According to Debby Cassill, an associate professor at USF St. Petersburg, gallinipper eggs can lay dormant for years until high waters force them to come to life. Scientists expect the eggs to hatch this summer.

A University of Florida study found that gallinippers are common to low-lying areas with damp soil and grassy overgrowth. Cassill said the mosquitoes lay their eggs along the water.

Gallinippers are known to weigh 20 times more than the average mosquito, with a wingspan of about 6.5 millimeters. With furry legs with black and white stripes, they have been called the “hairy-legged zebra” or “shaggy-legged gallinipper.”

Cassill predicts the mosquitoes will collect near the Florida panhandle, where there is plenty of salt and fresh water.

She defined the insects as “ambush predators” because of their vicious bite.

“They have a mouth part with teeth like a saw that can drill down into the skin tearing the flesh,” she said. “The pain comes when they let go.”

Cassill predicts gallinipper victims to cry out, “We’ve been stabbed!”

The quarter-sized bloodsuckers have an appetite both day and night and their bites can pierce through clothing. They allegedly got their name because they’re so big they can “nip a gallon of blood with a single bite.”

Gallinippers do not carry diseases, like malaria and West Nile, which many other mosquito species do. They also eat the larvae of smaller mosquitoes.

The gallinippers will likely be eliminated with annual insecticide spraying. To prevent them from hark ing around, Cassill suggests getting rid of any stagnant water.

https://news@crownsneststpete.com
The culture behind cruising

By Ryan Ballogg
Staff Reporter

There is a lot more to the longboarding club than taking joyrides.

Established in the fall 2012 semester, members tout it as the fastest growing group on campus, and they are always busy trying to keep up the energy that comes along with that.

[The] English composition two [course] basically describes different subcultures as types of discourse communities. I find longboarding to be a perfect example of that,” said freshman Megan Hostettler, vice president of the club. “There are so many people you can meet, and there’s an entirely different language and skill set that comes from this.

That language includes words like “bombing” — or free-riding down a hill — an activity the group did in a Tampa campus parking garage several weeks ago. It was an icebreaker after meeting the students of USF Tampa’s Skate Club for the first time to discuss an event they attended on April 7.

The event was a longboarding conference of sorts, titled Cruisa Palooza. It took place on sidewalks and they attended on April 7.

The goal of the event was to put people cheering and clapping for students from Tampa. On March 30 they participated in St. Petersburg Skate, riding alongside USF alumnus and pro-longboarder William Royes. They are one of the few clubs that regularly ventures off campus, a fact that makes club president Franklin Alves proud.

“When we’re out riding we look like a really cool gang on longboards — that also happens to love the campus and hand out Valentines,” Alves said.

Alves started the club in the fall at the encouragement of some friends. He had only been riding for six months.

“I honestly knew very little about longboards when I started it,” he said. “But a lot of people seemed really interested, and if you build it, they will come.”

Membership is officially around 50 people, though 15 to 20 attend the Thursday night meetings regularly.

“We’re trying to do all the things that will get us up and running. Our general members give us a lot of ideas,” Hostettler said. “The Resigno twins and Brandon Garrett do a kind of promotional work with the logo.”

Alves had the idea to do something for every holiday, so they stylized the logo for Valentine’s Day and Easter. Club members packaged the logos with candy and passed them out on campus.

Outside of promotion, Alves is constantly trying to push grants through Student Government to expand the club’s opportunities. Among recent efforts are plans for an installation of five or six Santa Cruise longboard racks around campus. They will hold eight to 10 boards, and give riders a place to stow their wheels while in class or eating. Another grant request, just approved, will provide the club with safety equipment.

Alves is most excited about the purchase of three “communal boards” that will be lent out to students and used for teaching. There will be lessons for beginners on campus, and off-campus ones for more experienced riders.

“That is the premise behind this stuff, to get people to learn and get people to join,” Alves said.

The club’s casual and friendly attitude is on display even at meetings. They were so relaxing for Sarah Smith that she didn’t remember that she had been elected secretary, until at one meeting she asked Alves why he wasn’t writing anything down.

“He told me, ‘You’re supposed to be writing everything down!’” Smith said. “I haven’t forgotten since then.”

After meetings, they head out onto the street together for a night ride. For Hostettler, it’s the best part.

“I love being able to freestyle on my board, and I love sharing my passion with other people,” she said.

Students glam up for a cause

By Matthew Thomas
Crow’s Nest Correspondent

Many months of planning culminated in a successful drive for clothes donations at the Fashion-a-Bull show on April 3.

The goal of the event was to put something together that would require the efforts of the housing staff and USF St. Petersburg faculty to raise awareness and get students to donate to Community Action Stops Abuse, Inc.

Models walked out sporting clothes and jewelry by several St. Petersburg boutiques, Resident Assistant Jonathan Boyd emceed the show. The models were confident and showy, and received cheers from the audience as they went down the walkway.

“Being on stage was a very exiting feeling for me. It feels just like being on an actual runway — the emcee calling my name and saying what I was wearing,” said junior and aspiring model Allan Pinkerton. “In the crowd, I hear people cheering and clapping for me but meanwhile being engulfed by the runway lights as well as flashes from cameras.”

Of course, it wasn’t all students on stage. Regional Vice Chancellor Julie Wong, Dustin Pankow, the coordinator of multimedia programs for the University Student Center, and other staff surprised the audience with their own walks down the runway.

The clothes on display were provided by CASA, Benjamin’s Studio, Cometti’s Collections, Plato’s Closet, Rehab, All Sewn Up, Peur Fashion, Mc. B’s Men’s Clothing Broker, Overhead Surf Shop, Mia and Maxx Hair Studio, Stella and Dot by Tracy Meehan and the USFSP Bookstore. The show’s themes were “everyday casual,” “fun in the sun,” “formalwear” and “professional wear.”

During the show, Linda Crossman, the director of records and registration, took the stage to remind the audience why they were there, discussing the facts of domestic abuse and the lack of resources to support everyone that comes to CASA for help.

Many involved felt that the event marked a new standard on campus.

“I have never been more proud of myself and of the RA staff than when I peeked out from backstage and saw a huge crowd having a great time,” said Caitlin Green, a resident assistant.

“We set a bar for ourselves,” Boyd said. “Those shirts, socks, and pants add up.”

Students can definitely expect to see a show like this next year, he said.

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No tolerance for your intolerance

BY TYLER KILLETTE
Staff Columnist

Nearly a year ago, a teenage girl wrote a "rap" about the evils of homosexuality, recorded it in the forest from "FerrisBucky" and laid it on top of a dramatic piano soundtrack. She uploaded her anti-gay anthem to YouTube under the name Apologetics and ironically titled it "Rat's T For Tolerance."

Apologetics' video resurfaced a few months ago, gaining commentary from bloggers across Internet and even a response video from comedian Daniel Tosh on his Comedy Central TV show.

After viewing Apolsgetics' video and somehow refraining from jamming screwdrivers into my ears, I decided to jump in on the fun. The following is my response to this poor, brainwashed young lady.

Dear Apologetics,

From the ring on your finger and the video on your YouTube channel of you playing drums in a wedding dress, I assume you're married. I'm not sure how old you are, but various media outlets labeled you as a teenager and one pinpointed your age at 16. That seems awfully young to be married, but congratulations.

In your rap you say, "Homosexuality can only imitate. It will always be a counterfeit, a fake." Well, Apologetics, I'm glad your love is real. Even though you may only be 16, I'm happy you've married a man (boy?) so you can have an authentic romance.

I hate to veer off topic here, but there are few things about your video that I must address. I assume the ideals you rapped about have been pounded into your narrow mind since birth. Perhaps, instead of Dr. Seuss, your parents read you quotes from Pat Robertson. But regardless of where your bigotry stemmed from, you are wrong.

I would like to point out that the title of your video is quite misleading. Do you know what tolerance means? You experimented with a lot of big words in your rap, like propagate and propaganda, and, though you had some trouble with pronunciation, you almost used them correctly. But your usage of the word tolerance is way off.

Merriam-Webster defines tolerance as "sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own." I regret to inform you, Apologetics, that your rap actually epitomizes intolerance, meaning your video should have been rated "L." I would suggest that you intended to be ironic, but I feel there's an even slimmer chance of you comprehending irony than there is of you understanding what tolerance means.

In your rap, you imply that being gay is a choice. I especially love the line, "It's always a choice with whom you fornicate." Such eloquence. And I admire your proper usage of the word whom.

However, I must again tell you that you are wrong. The American Psychological Association published a study in 2009 disproving the idea that a gay person can be turned straight. The Washington Post reported, "An APA task force found nothing to suggest that therapy could steer a member of a sexual minority toward heterosexualitv."

You say that you're simply trying to show that homosexuality is detrimental to health. Reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that HIV and syphilis rates were more than 40 percent higher in homosexual males than in heterosexual males in 2010. The CDC has since acknowledged that previous STD prevention efforts have failed, recognizing that it's time to "prioritize the needs of gay and bisexual men with HIV prevention efforts."

So, Apologetics, while your proposal that gay people simply stop being gay may be in the best interest of their health, I must support the CDC. Call me a dreamer, but I believe efforts to cure HIV will be more effective than efforts to reverse homosexuality.

You also say that gay people "don't see what's at stake until it's too late." What exactly do you feel is a stake, Apologetics? The opportunity to fall in love? To be happy? To feel comfortable in one's own skin?

At one point in your rap, you tell us being gay is "like a poison that intoxicates the mind that says you can't choose your own fate." Have you perhaps mistaken homosexuality for tequila?

You say gay people will burn in a lake of fire and instead of being admitted through the golden gate to heaven, they'll be shown an alternative entrance to the afterlife. Instead of making a comment about the existence of heaven and hell, I simply ask you, Apologetics, to let me know which gate opens for you. When my time comes, I'd like to choose the opposite.

(Somewhat) sincerely,
Tyler Killette

P.S. Have you considered trying out for "the Voice?"

Tyler Killette is a junior majoring in mass communications and news editor for The Crow’s Nest. She can be reached at tkillette@mail.usf.edu

Editorial Cartoon by Justin Duplain
The Big East, beginning to end

By Frank Kurtz
Staff Columnist

Earlier last week the remaining schools that play Division 1-A football in the Big East Conference announced they would form a new athletic league — the American Athletic Conference.

In case you missed it, the Big East has been in a state of flux since 2005, leaving member teams uncertain about its future. A number of schools have exited stage right, culminating with the Big East basketball schools severing ties with Big East football schools.

How did we get here?

In 1979, a group of small northern-eastern universities decided to create what would become the greatest basketball conference in the history of college athletics — the Big East. Boston College, UConn, Georgetown, Providence, St. John’s, Syracuse and Seton Hall were the original members. Villanova joined in 1980 and Pittsburgh in 1982.

In the 1990s, conference members decided to begin sponsoring football, which is where the real money was and still is. This allowed the league to compete in the new Bowl Coalition, which began in 1992. The job of that organization was to decide the No. 1 and No. 2 football teams on the field.

The Big 8, Big East, Atlantic Coast Conference, Southwest Conference, Southeastern Conference and Notre Dame all participated.

The Bowl Coalition was replaced with the Bowl Alliance in 1995, with the same affiliated conferences. For 1996 and 1997, the Big XII Conference replaced the SWC and Big 8.

The Bowl Alliance was replaced with the Bowl Championship Series in 1998 after the Pac-10 and Big 10 finally agreed to join the party. The BCS will be in its last year as an organization for this season. It will be replaced with a four-team playoff beginning with the 2014-15 season.

How does this affect the Big East and UConn? The Atlantic Coast Conference railed our league in 2004 and 2005 when Miami, Virginia Tech, and Boston College left the Big East for Tobacco Road. They were replaced with Louisville, South Florida, Cincinnati, DePaul and Marquette.

The amount of money that college football makes via television contracts coupled with the fact that our league, since 2005, has been looked upon as the weakest of the BCS conferences made Big East universities prone to be picked off and bolt for greener pastures.

Our rival, West Virginia, left for the Big XII in 2012 along with the newly acquired Texas Christian University, which never played a down in the Big East. Syracuse and Pittsburgh decided to both join the Atlantic Coast Conference beginning in 2013. Future members Boise State and San Diego State, beginning next autumn: South Florida, Central Florida, SMU, Houston, Memphis, Cincinnati, UConn, Temple, Rutgers and Louisville. In 2014, Louisville and Rutgers will leave and be replaced by East Carolina, Tulane and Tulsa. The United States Naval Academy will join in 2015 as a football-only school.

If you thought that Raymond James Stadium was empty during the Rutgers or Cincy games, just wait until Tulane and Memphis come to town. The only positive of the new league is that we will be included in one of the premier leagues.

Once regarded a ‘worthless swamp,’ ‘suitable only for the haunt of noxious vermin or resort of pestilential reptiles,’ we are now calling it a Wetland of International Importance and World Heritage Site. We have certainly come a long way, but our work is far from done. Hopefully days like these will remind us that we must cherish our natural lands and work to protect them at all costs for generations to come.”

-Mac Stone, Everglades Photographer

The inaugural Everglades Day, established by the Florida legislature, took place on Sunday. The Everglades is one of only three wetlands deemed of global importance by UNESCO and about half the size it was before 1947. That year, a plan put forth by Congress built 1,400 miles of canals and levees, draining much of the Everglades for agricultural use. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan of 2000 attempted to restore and preserve the original wetlands, but has been fraught by political and economic battles.

By Erin Murphy
Guest Columnist

My friend Sophie and I were discussing life and boys while sitting on the roof of my church a couple weeks ago when I first heard about the craft project of all craft projects. The memory jar.

After seeing the idea plastered across Pinterest (where else?), Sophie had decided to make her very own memory jar. There are many variations of the project, but the general idea is that you fill a jar with... well, memories. Once the jar is full, you pour your memories out and have Good Nostalgic Times reminiscing.

Seeing as I still have all of my Pokemon cards stashed under my bed (including Venusaur), I knew this project was for me. I asked my mother if she had any mason jars around the house. My mother is something of a shabby chic wizard. Her ability to collect quaint objects of the vintage variety is unparalleled. Read: my mother has so many wicker baskets that she literally has baskets that serve the sole purpose of holding her other baskets. I wasn’t surprised when she offered me not one, but two, Mason jars.

Juxtaposition: In February, I stumbled upon a devotional detailing the life of Ann Voskamp. Despite undergoing the horrific loss of her younger sister, Voskamp’s heart was set on finding joy. She wanted to name 1,000 gifts in her life that she could be grateful for; things that she already had and perhaps hadn’t appreciated. This moved me. Why was I so often thankless?

Fast forward to late March. It had already been over a month since I had decided to make my own 1,000-gifts list, but I had made no progress. The list, which I had scrawled in a little blue notebook and long since forgotten, ended at No. 20.

Pathetic.

My memory jar, which I had started a few days after Sophie told me about hers, had an even shorter life span. I kept it for only a day before turning it into a ‘Thankfulness Jar,’ inspired by Ann Voskamp and the lameness of my own 1,000-gifts list. Now each day I write down something I am thankful for on a slip of paper and toss it in. Music, ice cream and my sister have all made it into the Thankfulness Jar.

Making the jar made me aware of my own ungratefulness. Yet I look around and see so many things to be grateful for: the sound of the birds in the tree outside my window, my best friend’s smile, the cotton comfort of my grandmother’s old quilt. These are the types of things that John Piper described as “things that, if we didn’t have, we would pay a million dollars to have, but having them, ignore.” It’s unfortunate.

What started out as a simple craft project is slowly shaping into a lifestyle. Ann Voskamp knew that there was joy in thankfulness. So often we see what we don’t have, rather than the abundance of blessings that already fill our lives. I want to be more thankful for the everyday things: my favorite pair of jeans, an amazing album, a mug of hot chocolate.

Even my mother’s wicker baskets.

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Thankfulness from a jar

op-ed

The Big East, beginning to end

By Erin Murphy
Guest Columnist

1992. The job of that organization, the Bowl Coalition, which began in the league to compete in the new football, is where the real original members. Villanova joined Georgetown, Providence, St. John’s, create what would become the eastern universities decided to come what the Big East basketball schools severing ties stage left, culminating with the Big East name, but continue to hold on about its future. A number of schools have exited stage right and contain about its future. A number of

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Despite tie, Rowdies eye future

The 2012 NASL Champions once again celebrated their title on Saturday night following a game that was anything but routine. The Rowdies opened the game with two first-half goals, but the game ended in a 0-0 draw, giving Tampa Bay fans something to cheer about.

The Rowdies were able to control the game and dominate possession, but they couldn’t find the back of the net. The offense was stymied by the Needham defense, which kept the Rowdies at bay.

Despite the tie, the Rowdies are still playing for a chance to win the NASL title. They have three games left in the season, and they need to win at least two of them to have a realistic chance of advancing to the playoffs.

The Rowdies have been playing well recently, with wins over the Fort Lauderdale Strikers and the Carolina RailHawks. They need to continue that form if they hope to win the NASL title.

The Rowdies have a tough schedule ahead, with games against the Fort Lauderdale Strikers and the Carolina RailHawks. They need to win those games to have a chance of advancing to the playoffs.

The Rowdies are confident that they can win the NASL title. They have a good team and they are playing well. They just need to win those last three games.

The Rowdies are a team to watch in the NASL. They have a good chance of winning the NASL title, and they are playing well. They just need to win those last three games.