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Bill failure causes division in SG

By Amy Diaz
amydiaz@mail.usf.edu

A proposal to increase openness and outreach in the Student Government senate died in a general assembly meeting on April 8.

And then the fur started to fly.

In a donnybrook of accusations and recriminations that lasted five days, there was a move to unseat Senate president Tiffany Porcelli, a counter move by Porcelli to reprimand the senator who challenged her, a call for a vote of confidence in Porcelli and finally – a letter of apology from Porcelli.

In the middle of it all, there was also a resignation.

Christine Rowe, a member of the SG supreme court, said in a letter that SG “is monopolized by people who are only looking out for themselves and force their opinions and ideas on others. “I don’t want to be in an unpleasant environment to be in,” she wrote. “Eventually, SG becomes toxic to everyone that is in it.”

The proposal that started the week of controversy and chaos came from senators Naya Payne and Gregory Cote.

Their bill, which passed the SG policy committee a week earlier, would create a position called secretary of the senate. The student in the volunteer position would take notes during meetings, maintain easily accessible public records and publicize SG on social media.

The position is “something that we desperately need,” said Cote, noting that the USF campuses in Tampa and Sarasota-Manatee already have it.

But the proposal ran into a buzz saw of opposition. It would violate the SG constitution, said chief legal officer Thaddeus Rowe.

It would duplicate duties that are already handled by senate members, said Porcelli and student body president Ysatis Jordan.

>> SEE FAILURE on p3

Former SG leader gets expulsion lifted

By The Crow’s Nest Staff

A former Student Government leader who was kicked out of school in May 2017 for allegedly assaulting a female student in his dorm room has gotten the expulsion removed from his record.

Instead, the USF St. Petersburg record of Samuel Goetz will show that he was suspended, effective December 2017, with what the university calls “an ongoing restriction from access to the University” thereafter.

The change from expulsion to suspension, hammered out in negotiations between attorneys for Goetz and the university, is a victory for Goetz.

He was elected vice president of Student Government two months before his expulsion, but he has maintained in legal documents that he did not want to return to the university. He just wanted to remove the blot of expulsion from his record.

Although I am not looking to ever return at USF, an expulsion will effectively end my journey anywhere else,” he said. “I will lose all opportunities to obtain a good education as well as to pursue my dream of going to law school.”

According to social media, Goetz is now apparently attending community college and working for an accounting firm in Tallahassee. He declined to comment to The Crow’s Nest.

His attorney, Mark O’Brien, did not respond to several messages from the newspaper.

The turnaround in the Goetz case began in December, when three panel of Circuit Court judges ruled that Goetz’s rights of due process were denied by both the university’s student conduct board and Dean of Students Jacob Diaz.

Reversing their own June 12, 2018, ruling, the judges said the board and the dean relied on a summary of an investigative report – “the orphancourt relied in presenting its case” – in making their decisions.

>> SEE EXPULSION on p2

Violence leads to second arrest in residence hall

By Amy Diaz
amydiaz@mail.usf.edu

For the second time in two months, police have arrested a non-student after a violent incident in Residence Hall One.

In a bulletin to the USF St. Petersburg community, university police said a former boyfriend got in an argument with an RHO resident on April 12 and “hit a student during the incident.”

The former boyfriend “tied the building,” police said, but he was arrested later in the day, taken to the Pinellas County Jail and given a warning not to trespass on campus.

In the bulletin, police did not name the person they arrested or say what he was charged with.

University spokeswoman Carrie O’Brien said on Friday that a report with more information would be available “early next week.”

University Police Chief David Hendry did not respond to two calls from The Crow’s Nest.

The arrest came just two months after another violent incident in RHO.

On Feb. 13, Anthony Xavier Brown, 19, followed a resident into the building to see his ex-girlfriend, whom he went on to beat and batter over the course of seven and a half hours.

The police were able to locate and arrest Brown off campus minutes after receiving a call from the victim.

The bulletin did not say whether the latest suspect sneaked into the building as Brown did.

In an email sent on March 20, Chief Hendry said the department is “working with Residential Housing to evaluate technologies and processes” regarding security.

In the meantime, the crime alert bulletin urged students to “always report suspicious persons or activities on campus immediately to the University Police,” and “stay safe, never walk alone at night and be alert to your surroundings.”

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SG passes final budget restores Campus Movie Fest funding

By Dylan Hart
dhart4@mail.usf.edu

Funding for the Campus Movie Fest, which was eliminated when Student Government approved a budget for 2019-2020, has been restored.

At the recommendation of student body president Daniel “Kaeden” Kelso, the SG senate voted April 8 to give CMF $10,218.40 in leftover funds, plus $721.60 from an account used to take students to football games in Tampa.

“There were a lot of things we had to reduce, and CMF was one of the first to be affected,” Kelso said. “Because CMF was one of the first things to get cut, they’re the first thing to get money back.”

The action came after Kelso vetoed the senate’s original budget and noted the criticism that this year’s budget process generated.

“She insisted the budget process has been very difficult for all parties involved, I thought it would be best to allocate to that toward student clubs and organizations,” Kelso said at the April 8 meeting. “A lot of concern that we have been given is that we at Student Government did not take as much of a reduction as everyone else.”

The final budget, which now goes to university administrators for review, still contains significant cuts for The Crow’s Nest (23.4 percent), Student Life and Engagement (10.5 percent), the Office of Leadership and Student Organizations (9.3 percent), and Campus Recreation (6.8 percent). SG, which is allocated $70,704 in salaries, remains largely unaffected by budget cuts.

The $721.60 cut to SG’s athletic bus program will not significantly affect the program, Kelso said, because the original $5,000 allocated to the program was a “lump sum” used to pay for buses as needed.

CMF is an annual student film festival sponsored by the Harborside Activities Board.

The organization pays the outside CMF Tour to visit USF St. Petersburg with camera and equipment. With the new budget, HAB will be able to host the fifth annual CMF next spring. Kelso read a statement from HAB at the April 8 general assembly. The statement said that this year’s CMF, from Feb. 29 through March 6, had lower turnout than usual because many students were too focused on midterm exams.

“We noticed a 65-percent decrease in students attending the premiere this year,” the statement said. “If these funds are secured, we will continue conversations with CMF to ensure that the timing of the event can happen earlier in February.”

EXPULSION, continued from P1

That meant, the judges wrote, that some evidence and testimony that went into the investigative report was unavailable to Goetz, whose “due process rights were violated by the nondisclosure of information that was available to him or materially affected what was actually presented at the hearing where the judges ordered a rehearing.

University spokeswoman Carrie O’Brion declined to discuss the case, noting that the university “may not disclose the specific details of this student matter as the records and information are confidential and exempt from disclosure.”

However, she confirmed in a statement that “the University complied with the court’s request that requested the matter be reopened. With full participation of all parties, the University imposed the voluntary and mutually agreed upon resolution, which did include a suspension effective December 2017 with an ongoing restriction from access to the university.”

Rightly accused or railroaded?

A month after he was expelled in May 2017, Goetz filed the lawsuit, contending that the charges were false and that he was denied due process in contesting them.

According to documents in his lawsuit, the sexual incident happened during the evening of Sept. 28, 2016, and the early morning of Sept. 29.

The woman encountered Goetz in the dorm room of two of her friends, then later accepted his invitation to come to his room to “cuddle.”

They began kissing, according to the documents, and — at his urging over the course of several hours — she consented to digital penetration. She also asked him to put on a condom.

At that point, documents show, their accounts differ. Goetz says he did not “forcefully” engage her to engage in sexual intercourse … Every moment of my encounter with (her) was consensual. When he expressed that she was uncomfortable with anything that we were doing, I immediately stopped.”

She denies that. She says she repeatedly told him no and he persisted. At one point, he forced her body against a wall.

A few hours after the encounter in his dorm room, Goetz says, the woman invited him to breakfast. After breakfast with two others, he says, they went to the bookstore together.

Later that day, he says, the woman asked him for a date, which he declined. It was only after she learned from social media that he had gone out with somebody else that she filed the complaint, he says.

On Oct. 5, six days after the encounter, the woman called the university’s anonymous hotline to report an assault.

On Nov. 16, she filed a formal complaint under Title IX, the federal law that prohibits sexual discrimination, harassment and violence. She said the sexual interactions “went further than she anticipated or gave consent.”

She did not file criminal charges.

When Goetz was advised of the complaint, documents show, he was ordered to have no contact with the woman, but he was not suspended.

He hired a lawyer and provided a written statement denying the allegations on Jan. 4, 2017. While the case was developing, Goetz continued attending class and serving as a student senator. He was elected vice president of Student Government on March 2.

Just seven weeks later, he suddenly resigned – a move that caught SG by surprise and forced President-elect David Thompson to name a new vice president-elect.

A few hours after the hearing on May 3, the university’s student conduct board – a panel of students and faculty members – found Goetz guilty of “non-consensual sexual conduct.”

Diaz, the dean of students, accepted the board’s findings and expelled Goetz on May 10, then denied his appeal three weeks later.

In pleading his case with university officials and in his lawsuit, Goetz contended he was railroaded.

He said that he was denies due process throughout the university’s investigation and that the university “failed to meet the burden of proof of providing competent substantial evidence.”

He was not allowed to see the text message evidence submitted by the woman or the statement of allegations she made against him, his suit says.

He also was denied the opportunity to cross-examine his accuser. He was permitted to submit written testimony rather than appearing at the conduct board hearing.

Moreover, the suit argues, “at his urging over several hours — every moment of my encounter with (her) was consensual.”

The Goetz case comes at a time when the national debate on sexual conduct on college campuses and the rights of students accused of assault.

Under the administration of President Barack Obama, the U.S. Department of Education worried that campus sexual assaults had become a major problem.

It directed school officials to crack down on alleged offenders or risk losing some federal funds.

But critics of the Obama approach said that meant universities were playing cop, prosecutor, judge and jury in sexual assault cases — a process that sometimes trampled on the rights of the accused.

In recent months, cases in both state and federal courts around the country have tilted the other way, giving the accused broader rights.

Goetz’s attorneys cited one of those cases — at Claremont McKenna College in California — in persuading the judges to order a campus board rehearing for their client.

Meanwhile, Betsy DeVos, the education secretary for President Donald Trump, has issued a proposed rewrite of the rules governing campus sexual misconduct.

Her proposed rules, released in November, would give the accused more rights and narrow the cases that schools must investigate.

Women’s rights groups contend those changes would make college campuses less safe for women, but others argue they restore balance in a process that is skewed too far in favor of accusers.

Student governments at some colleges and universities around the country have responded to DeVos’ proposals with resolutions opposing the changes.

One of them is the Student Government general assembly at USF St. Petersburg. On April 1, it approved a resolution by senator Naya Payne and nine other senators opposing the DeVos proposal.

The Department of Education has received more than 96,000 comments about the proposed changes and must review them before issuing final rules, according to INSIDE HIGHER ED, an online publication that covers colleges and universities.

Compiled from reports by Tim Fanning, Jonah Hinebaugh and Anna Bryson.
A new plan estimated to cost $17.5 million has cleared first hurdle for expansion funding.

The Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, has been transformed into a magnet for tourism to our museum and to the county." Hines wrote. 

By Jonah Hinebaugh
jonahh@mailusf.edu

The Dalí museum set up shop in a building that would turn a selfie into a mobile app to make the artist’s work “come to life.”

The proposed plan will provide more parking for people headed to restaurants and bars downtown – it will also include boards, digital monitors and stages promoting other attractions in Pinellas County.

The museum plans on fundraising the remaining $20.5 million. If approved, the project is estimated to start in March 2020 and will take two years to complete.

The museum draws between 360,000 and 450,000 visitors annually, but is estimated to need an additional 900,000 attendees in the decade following completion.

The Dalí, which at Twenty Meters has a capacity of 10 people, has a growing backlog of appointments by patrons of, and friends with, Dalí. The museum introduced an app that would turn a selfie into Dalí’s “Gala Contemplating the Mediterranean Sea which at Twenty Meters Becomes the Portrait of Abraham Lincoln.”

The museum plans on continuing the experience this year, with two back-to-back exhibits – titled “Dalí Lives” and “Visual Magic.” Dalí’s masterworks in augmented reality – beginning May 11, what would be the artist’s 115th birthday.

“Dalí Lives” will bring the Surrealist back to life using artificial intelligence projected onto screens providing commentary for visitors touring the collection. “Visual Magic” will utilize a mobile app to make the artist’s work “come to life.”

The educational and community space will focus on The Dalí’s Innovative Labs that inspire new ways of thinking by applying the artist’s imaginative artistic problem-solving to business and institutional design, according to Hines.

The 302-square-foot educational program space has a capacity of 10 people, but the new space will help increase the number of participants without the fear of overcrowding.

The museum was conceived by philanthropists Albert and Eleanor Morse after spending 40 years as patrons of, and friends with, Dalí. The Morse displayed their collection in their Ohio home, and then in a self-owned museum across from their offices for most of the 1970s. At the end of the decade, they had a national search for a permanent home.

St. Petersburg community leaders and Florida’s Secretary of State secured a $2 million appropriation for the museum’s construction and startup costs – the state’s largest appropriation for the arts at the time – the Dalí museum set up shop in a rehabilitated marine warehouse.

That building has since been transformed into USF St. Petersburg’s Harbor Hall. The Category 5 Hurricane Andrew sent The Dalí museum on an almost decade-long hunt for a safer location to house the collection that is valued between $500 and $700 million.

Cue the waning Bayfront Complex as a once-thriving indoor arena that hosted sports, concerts and other events, such as WWE wrestling. From the Beach Boys to the Tampa Bay Rowdies, the complex thrived until bigger venues in the Tampa Bay area moved in, notably Tropicana Field.

It got to the point where it was draining funds from the city, and in 2003, The Dalí set its sights on the building, leading to the implosion of the complex in 2004. The Dalí emerged from the rubble in 2011, thanks to designer Yann Weymouth, with 18-inch “hurricane proof” concrete walls and an iconic glass free-form dome.

As an homage to the unique style of Salvador Dalí, the museum features a freeform glass structure wrapping around the museum, standing 75 feet tall and made up of 1062 panes of glass.

After considerable debate, Porcelli announced the general assembly would move to a vote. When Cote objected, Porcelli would not hear the objection – and that triggered the flurry of activity that followed:

** Payne countered by offering to rescind his move if Porcelli would apologize.

** In turn, Payne dropped his request for a trial to contest the notification of non-compliance against him.

“I am acknowledging my role, and I am stopping my addition to the chaos,” Payne said.

“i believe we all have immense potential and our own strong passions, drives and beliefs. That’s going to cause debate, it’s going to cause conflict, but it will also always cause progress, perseverance and accomplishments; as we all have already observed.”

Payne still intends to run for senate president at the general assembly meeting on April 15. Only senators who are returning to SG next year will be eligible to vote.

Naya Payne, senator.
April 11: Musical Theatre Cabaret

By Gabby Dacosta
Contributor

Fooled around, fingers snapped, tears fell and stomachs hurt from laughing as music bounced off the walls and moved around the room, filling it with musical and theatrical delight. The joys of musical theater came alive at The Edge on April 11 when seven USF Tampa students performed in the Musical Theatre Cabaret. It was one of the many events organized by USF ST Petersburg for Short & Sweet Theatre Week, a weekend event that featured poetry, modern dance, improvised comedy and more.

Many audience members sang along and tapped their feet as they recognized the songs from “Mack and Mabel,” “Wicked,” “Guys and Dolls” and other well-known musicals. The bright spotlight shined on each of the performer’s faces as they delivered strong vocals through powerful solos and melodic harmonies. Their voices filled the room and moved the audience in several ways, as the songs had different themes and expressed different emotions. Many struggled to hold back tears as Rosemary Luycx, senior theater major, sang “For Good” from the musical “Wicked.”

“So much of me is made of what I learned from you,” Luycx sang. “You’ll be with me like a handprint on my heart.”

“I every time I see her perform, I want to cry,” said Amy, Luycx’s mother. “I’m so proud of her.”

Along with emotional songs of sisterhood were serious performances about heartbreak and hilarious songs that caused the entire audience to erupt in laughter. Each of the performers allowed their characters to shine through their singing and body language, conveying the appropriate emotions with the songs. Nicolas Gatti, a junior history major, explained how refreshing it was to be able to enjoy a live performance.

“Seeing a performance of pure human voice added a form of realism that is sadly lost in 21st century society,” Gatti said.

He said being close to the live performers allowed the experience to feel more intimate, and that he really enjoyed seeing people live out their passion. Sydney Reddish, a sophomore theater major, was one of the singers in the show. She expressed her passion for musical theater by describing the rush she feels while performing.

“It’s fun and exhilarating; I wouldn’t want to do anything else,” she said.

Many of the other singers also expressed their passion and joy, not only through their singing and acting but also with their smiles as they walked out of the spotlight after finishing a song.

Audience members enjoyed the show, and some expressed their desire for more musical and theater events at USF St. Petersburg.

“I’ve done a lot of work with musicals and I really miss this,” said Melanie Dayan, a freshman criminology major. “I wish we had more opportunities.”

April 11: ‘Hello’

By Kathlynn Mullins
Contributor

A cute barista, an existential crisis, alter egos, grief and Donald Trump — all in under an hour. Welcome to John Mark Jernigan’s “Hello.”

The entire show was a monologue: a glimpse into the mind of Barry (played by Chris Crawford), a theatre critic who didn’t “find fulfillment in criticizing other people’s work.”

The play began with Barry’s favorite barista drawing a heart next to “Bartholomew” that morning. Was he flirting? Was he just trying to get a tip? Was he even gay?

That night, Barry walked downstairs to 7-Eleven for wine, where the cashier addressed him by name. Barry was dumbfounded. He had been going there for as long as he could remember and had never bothered to learn the cashier’s name.

A need for deeper human connection was revealed. The audience was then introduced to Michael, Barry’s ex-boyfriend, and his mother, who died when he was just a child.

The fourth wall was broken by Sally Field and Carrie Fisher, who were audience members picked at random that were supposed to respond “yes” and “no” when addressed. Field and Fisher were reminiscent of the devil and an angel on Barry’s shoulders, but both were powerless.

Paths were weaved between thoughts of suicide, the muscular barista and Donald Trump, who was elected as president three months after he and Michael had broken up.

Though the monologue was dreary, the self-deprecating humor shed positivity in the dimly lit room. It intertwined raw, unforgiving emotion with hope and solidarity.

Finally, after the story was told, things slowed down, and it was time for rest. A message of self-love was given — a promotion of forming connections and fostering relationships.

“We are all worth celebrating without any agenda,” Barry said. The acoustic guitar, played by Anthony R. Smith, adopted a lighter tone to match.

Happiness was greeted by birds chirping excitedly. Eye contact was held with the audience throughout the show, only adding to the power of the message.

The Campus Grind’s low lighting set the mood, and the casual seating arrangement made the intimacy easy — natural, even.

The trio was “used to fringe setups,” where they could control the lighting and stage, but had been looking for a found space like this,” said Jernigan, playwright and director.

Fringe productions don’t follow traditional theatre. They’re simple, yet experimental. Shows are typically shorter and kept minimalist. There is no specific style or genre, but they generally address non-traditional topics.

“Hello” brings this energy, along with a message that has recently become prominent, but has always been significant.
TEDx focuses on personal stories

By Dinorah Prevost
dprevost@my.usf.edu

LEXI Bishop leaned up a bit during her TEDx talk. Parly because of her topic — mental health. Partly because of her mom’s reaction in the audience. “I looked up and saw my mom’s face, and it wasn’t something I had prepared for in rehearsal,” Bishop said after her talk. To look out and see that she was sitting there proud as can be… struck a chord in my heart.” Bishop detailed her struggles with mental health since her senior year of high school. She said she never spoke about something so personal in front of an audience before.

And the freshman biology major was the first person to present. Bishop was one of six speakers at this year’s TEDx event. Hosted by the Office of Leadership and Student Organizations, USF St. Petersburg’s annual TEDx is a smaller scale, community-focused version of the well-known TED talks.

About 50 people attended the event in University Student Center ballrooms on April 11. Albert Moreno, a graduate student, spoke about society’s perceptions of people with criminal records. He said the negative stigma often receive prevents them from working certain jobs and living in certain places. Moreno has faced that stigma firsthand as a convicted felon.

“I was denied the opportunity to work a landscaping job I found on Craigslist. I was denied an opportunity to work at Walmart for a midnight shift,” he said.

He was initially denied admission to USF St. Petersburg because of his record. He had earned his associate degree from St. Petersburg College and eventually needed to be vouched for to get into USF St. Petersburg.

Tristen Johnson talked about her experiences as a black woman working in higher education.

Last semester, studying for an exam for her doctorate, she came across the term “gendered racism.” Now assistant director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Johnson used the phrase to describe her time at a mostly white university in an all-white office.

At first, she dealt with microaggressions: regular, brief insults toward someone based on race, gender and other identifiers.

“I was asked to monitor the trash at my colleague’s event. My supervisor would often tell me that he was ‘afraid of me,’” Johnson said.

Then a co-worker said Johnson allegedly once had a “sexually inappropriate conversation” in her office. A series of events stemming from that incident landed Johnson on paid administrative leave. She believes the situation was unjust and based on her race and gender.

Johnson said black women often feel “isolated, unseen and unheard” in the workplace. They are also underrepresented in student and academic affairs at universities, she said.

But in moving forward from that experience, she remembered “the words of the great philosopher, Beyoncé Giselle Knowles-Carter.”

Behind Johnson, to her left, a screenshot of Beyoncé’s music video for her song “Formation” popped up on a screen, the singer clad in all black.

The lyrics read, “Always stay gracious, best revenge is your paper.”

“The presentations from TEDxUSFSP will be posted to the TEDx YouTube channel later this year. LSO was unable to provide a specific date.”

Pulitzer finalist on the joy of the journey

By Amy Diaz
amydiaz@mail.usf.edu

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Pulitzer Prize finalist and best-selling author Ben Montgomery will speak at 4:30 p.m April 16 in the Lynn Pippenger Hall Auditorium.

Montgomery will present “The Long Haul: What two record-breaking pedestrians can teach us about the joy of the journey,” as part of the ongoing “Thinking through Movement & Mobility” series hosted by the USF St. Petersburg History and Politics department.

Montgomery has written three biographies, two of which are about people who made history by walking.

His first biography, “Grandma Gatewood’s Walk,” was published in 2014. The novel is about Emma Gatewood, the first woman to hike the entire Appalachian Trail alone, and the first person to walk it twice and three times. She got the nickname “Grandma Gatewood” because she did all of this over the age of 65.

Her hike took place during the 1950s and ’60s, and brought attention to the difficulties of the trail, which led to much-needed maintenance. Her hike likely saved the trail from disappearing.

Last year, his novel, “The Man Who Walked Backward,” was published. This was a biography of Plennie Wingo, a Texas man who walked around the world backward during the Great Depression.

Wingo was a victim of the Great Depression, having had his small restaurant forced to close because he could not pay his rent. He turned to digging ditches to support his family before deciding to make his trek around the world to renew his sense of adventure.

Montgomery’s talk about their stories, and what they can teach us, is free and open to the public.
Letter to the Editor: 12 questions Kelso and Jordan refuse to answer

By Timothy Fanning

Student Body President Daniel “Kaeden” Kelso and Ysatis Jordan, the student body vice president, cannot assure their constituents that the 2019-2020 student fee budget was not written or approved out of malice or malcontent.

That’s because Kelso and Jordan refuse to answer questions and concerns about how they allowed a disgruntled former Crow’s Nest staff member-turned-SG deputy chief of staff make suggestions about the newspaper’s budget. This came after nearly a week of excuses and ignored emails. Kelso and Jordan still won’t give me a reason why.

Jordan said speaking to me on the phone was “out of (her) comfort zone.” She then went silent after I emailed the questions. The only other time I heard from Jordan was when she “demanded” that I not tag her on Facebook. Jeffrey Waitevich, the disgruntled former editor, has also refused to elaborate on his role in the budget process. Instead, he took to Facebook to, in too many words, brag about his accomplishments this year. Amazing, considering the process written about last week. Kelso shared Waitevich’s post to USFSP’s Know It All Guide To Knowing It All. Kelso hasn’t publicly said anything else. I’ve lodged a formal complaint with Dwayne Isaacs, director of Student Life and Engagement. Isaacs said there is nothing he can do to serve the will of the people. Daniel “Kaeden” Kelso and Ysatis Jordan are names of the people.

If our elected leaders’ actions are any indication of how they would manage issues in practice, they will definitely keep your concerns on the budget process,” Isaacs wrote in an email. “I can only advise you to consider the students to take your questions, but it is up to them on whether or not they choose to speak with you.”

If our elected leaders’ actions are any indication of how they would manage issues in practice, they will definitely keep your concerns on the budget process,” Isaacs wrote in an email. “I can only advise you to consider the students to take your questions, but it is up to them on whether or not they choose to speak with you.”

So far, it seems Peele has had tremendous input on the reboot, with many of his themes appearing in the new episodes, despite his absence in the director’s chair. Peele took on bigger roles. Shatner brought on a personal favorite of mine, Ana Lily Amirpour, director of “A Girl Walks Home Alone At Night,” to direct the episode titled “A Traveler,” starring Steven Yeun. Each episode features a different director, keeping with the anthology style of the original series. There is potential to give the reboot a new creative team, with many of his favorites, “Nick of Time,” which portrays a supersitious man playing with a fortune teller. It’s often marked by grudges, secrecy and confusion. What do you say to assure the student body that this budget proposal was not written out of malice or malcontent?

Budget cuts were necessary. We all know this. However, Student Government has taken no hits. In the past, SG members have made suggestions about the budget process. If money was tight, why didn’t elected officials take the plunge, like everyone else?

Tim Fanning was managing editor of The Crow’s Nest in fall 2017.
Letter to the Editor: Get it together, 4th term

By Naya Payne
Sophomore science major
nayapayne@mail.usf.edu

Hello, My name is Naya Payne, and I am a senator in Student Government. I am writing this Letter to the Editor because I am very concerned about the current status of our Student Government, and for its future. A Letter to the Editor has not been sent in to The Crow's Nest by a Student Government member since David Thompson served as student body president in 2017. This fact alone concerns me.

As a government, we should be having frequent conversations with student reporters, and we should be having constant editorials and reports about what we are doing and how we are helping others. We have a transparency issue, and I am at the forefront of the fight to get our senate and our government more available to our constituents. I am a sophomore political science major

That being said, this letter will present facts. Before I dive in, let’s be clear: I support and fully believe in the right to a free press, and absolutely believe that the public has a right to have their questions answered. I condemn actions that evade being available and being held accountable. That being said, this budget season has been rough for everyone involved. I am fully aware of the damages done to organizations on campus, but much of that has to be done. As the vice chair of appropriations, I sat in on those hard meetings where tough decisions had to be made; some meetings lasted as long as six hours. There were debates, there were arguments, there was anger and there was sadness. No one prides themselves or enjoys damaging and hurting these organizations vital to our USF St. Petersburg student body.

That is the bottom line, and there was sadness. No one prides themselves or enjoys damaging and hurting these organizations vital to our USF St. Petersburg student body.

From the articles written in The Crow's Nest, to posts and arguments on Facebook, to internal struggles within SG itself... we have got a lot to work on as your elected officials and representatives. I am writing this letter to shed some light on a couple of issues, answer some frequently asked questions, and suggest how we move forward.

In this letter, I will not cast blame, I will not name names, and I will not spout falsehoods and conspiracies. I will address issues, and I will present facts. Before I dive in, let’s be clear: I support and fully believe in the right to a free press, and absolutely believe that the public has a right to have their questions answered. I condemn actions that evade being available and being held accountable.

That being said, this budget season has been rough for everyone involved. I am fully aware of the damages done to organizations on campus, but much of that has to be done. As the vice chair of appropriations, I sat in on those hard meetings where tough decisions had to be made; some meetings lasted as long as six hours. There were debates, there were arguments, there was anger and there was sadness. No one prides themselves or enjoys damaging and hurting these organizations vital to our USF St. Petersburg student body.

To my fellow Student Government members, both current and future: Cut it out. Cut the drama, and let’s get to work. We are not here to have personal battles and to benefit ourselves; we are here to serve. We are here to serve this university and its students to the best of our ability, and that’s what we all swore when we took our Oaths of Office.

We should not hide and lash out when we are not criticized by the public, we should not use the power of respective offices to punish and bully those who disagree with us, and we should be able to respect and work with one another. That is the bottom line, and I am saying this formally and publicly.

So, where do we go from here? I have a couple of solutions.

Firstly, I am calling on Student Body President Kelso to deliver a State of the Campus Address and answer many of the questions and concerns directed his way. There is time before the end of the term, and I believe that such an event, which we should already have been regular, must be had.

Secondly, I am calling for a complete revamp and overhaul for how we work in Student Government, interact and engage with our constituents.

I recently tried to pass a bill that would have served as a first-step remedy specifically for the senate, but it was shot down amidst tensions and attacks. I vow to produce and advocate for similar pieces of legislation in the future to address many of these concerns from constituents, and I am committed to the core value of transparency.

Lastly, I promise to carry out and implement senate-specific remedies if I am given the honor of being chosen as the next senate president April 15. In my prayers, I will also hold the executive branch accountable and set basic standards for how they engage with the student body. I end this commentary with a request. Come to our General Assembly at 5 p.m. on Monday, April 15, in the University Student Center ballrooms.

Come talk to us, voice your concerns, and show us as constituents, you care about what we do, who is in power, and what is going on. We’ve got a lot of work ahead of us, and we need to have strong and competent leadership moving forward. I hold fast to the hope and belief that we will persevere and our future will be right and just. Onward!
Student artist has big aspirations

By Dylan Hart
dhart4@mail.usf.edu

Brandon Santiago says that one day, he’s going to be a famous artist. Santiago, 19, is a graphic design major and painter at USF St. Petersburg. Born in Palm Coast, a city of about 75,000 near Daytona Beach. He displayed his work in front of the Student Life Center on April 11 “just for the pure enjoyment of art,” citing frustration with previous attempts through other channels. He played some of his favorite jazz tunes alongside the display.

Santiago said he enjoyed creating art as a child, and took a drawing class in his sophomore year of high school, but didn’t take art seriously until his junior year. “I took this other art class and my teacher hated all of my stuff,” Santiago said. “I got mad. I thought, ‘I’m going to get good at this.’”

Now, Santiago is preparing to transfer to USF Tampa to seek a degree in studio art, citing a desire to leave the digital focus of USF St. Petersburg’s graphic design program to focus on physical media.

Under the guidance of Palm Coast artist JD Graham, whom Santiago met at an art show he attended for extra credit, he strengthened his skills throughout high school. “Graham didn’t tell me what to do, but he guided me,” Santiago said. “Now, that same teacher from junior year of high school likes all of my stuff!”

Santiago takes a lot of inspiration from New York-based artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, to whom he feels a strong connection. Santiago is half Puerto Rican and half-Jamaican, while Basquiat was half-Puerto Rican and half-Haitian.

“When I started getting into art, I was just tired of the same old kind of stuff,” he said. “I wanted something different, so I researched (Basquiat) and thought, ‘Whoa, his work is cool.’ If this guy could do all this stuff, I could do it too.”

Santiago also takes inspiration from 19th century French artist Paul Cezanne, who headed the post-impressionist movement alongside painters like Vincent Van Gogh. The style is realistic in structure and themes but has a blurry, abstract look that permeates through the paintings.

Santiago’s process is emotionally driven, and he finds that his mood heavily affects the end product. While he doesn’t like to go in with an idea and prefers to let his emotions push the painting along, he does mix West African and Asian themes into his art, including historical and aesthetic references. One of his pieces references the Atlantic slave trade.

He loves rap, jazz and reggae and enjoys listening to music while he paints.

“My art is very grand in ideas,” he said. “I’m not a one-trick pony. I can do various styles, but they all come from my emotions. The music helps that and the people around me help that.”

Outside of art, he says that his favorite pastime is simply consuming media.

After graduation, Santiago hopes to join an art gallery. Eventually, he wants to own a gallery of his own. He spent some time in New York City last summer to participate in an art show and still looks back on the experience fondly.

“One idea I have is probably moving to New York, because there’s a big art market up there and I feel like I could make it,” he said. “Undeniably, a move to the city would serve to strengthen his link to Basquiat. But being an artist is more than just a dream for Santiago — it is a necessary reality.

To be honest, I don’t know what I would do if I weren’t an artist,” he said. “I would probably be stuck — I wouldn’t have any means to express myself.”

You can see more of Santiago’s art on his Instagram @brandonjsantiago.

Painter, punk, professor on display at MFA

By James Bennett III
jamesbennett@mail.usf.edu

Theo Wujcik was a painter, drawer and master printer. His art has been shown in galleries across the world, including New York, Hong Kong and Liverpool, England. He also taught at USF for over 30 years and directed the university’s Graphicstudio.

Now, his work is being shown in a special exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg. Wujcik moved to Ybor City in 1970 after studying art in New York and Los Angeles. The city’s punk scene engulfed him. He could often be found dancing at clubs like The Castle, where he could dart from his studio across the street, then back again after the club was closed. During an Impotent Sea Snakes concert, he even jumped on stage and painted behind the band while they were performing.

Ybor inspired Wujcik. Wire fences, industrial materials and scenes from the city’s punk rock underbelly often appeared in his works.

He died of cancer in March 2014. His obituary in the Tampa Bay Times stated, “He continued to use the fence metaphor in his category-defying art for years. That whirlwind has finally stopped.”

The MFA’s exhibition, titled “Theo Wujcik: Cantos,” is a collection of Wujcik’s decade-spanning series of works centered around his impact on the arts in this region and beyond.

“The exhibition will introduce his art to a new audience who will learn about and appreciate his work to a new audience who will learn about and appreciate his impact on the arts in this region and beyond.”

The exhibition will be on display until this exhibit is over.

“Dante’s Inferno.” The collection is Wujcik’s literal and metaphorical interpretation of the Italian epic poem. It opens with two paintings that represent the poet’s invocation of the muses. Curator and art history professor, Katherine Pill, reported that those two paintings gave Wujcik the most grief.

The exhibit displays 10 pieces, a set of collages that Wujcik used to prepare for his show. Each is adorned with pictures of Wujcik’s handwritten notes on each piece in the exhibition.

The exhibition also displays a jewelry box that Wujcik found in an empty lot.

The box had “dante” written on the inner lid, so — being a superstitious man — Wujcik kept the trunk for good luck. The museum will also host a couple of Wujcik-inspired events.

First, on April 20, the post-punk band ICU/the Catherine Wheel will play together for the first time in over 20 years. They plan on performing their original material from 1987 to 1991, a time period that marks Wujcik’s golden days.

On May 17, the museum will host a dance party called “Theo’s Inferno.” DJ Gabe Echazabal will play Wujcik’s favorite punk and new wave tunes from the ‘80s. Visitors with a VIP pass, which costs $60, will be given a tour of the exhibition by Wujcik’s widow and keeper of his estate, Susan Johnson.

“We are honored to present this focused exhibition celebrating an important aspect of Theo Wujcik’s powerful portfolio,” said Kristen A. Shepherd, executive director of the Museum of Fine Arts, in a press release. “We hope this exhibition will introduce his work to a new audience who will learn about and appreciate his impact on the arts in this region and beyond.”

The exhibition will be on display until June 2.